

ENTERPRISE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 6th October, 2015

Present:-

Councillor P Gilby (Chair)

| | | | |
|-------------|---------|-------------|------------|
| Councillors | Perkins | Councillors | Derbyshire |
| | Callan | | Catt |
| | Dyke | | Sarvent |

Ludlow +
Serjeant ++
J. Innes ++

Donna Cairns, Committee and Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Robert Clarke, Parking and CCTV Manager ++
Anita Cunningham, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Trevor Durham, Licensing Manager +
Andy Pashley, Leisure and Amenities Manager ++
Bernadette Wainwright, Cultural and Visitor Services Manager ++

+ Attended for Minute Nos. 19-21

++ Attended for Minute No. 20

19 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

No declarations of interest were received.

20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor V. Diouf.

21 SCRUTINY MONITORING

Hackney Carriage Licence Limit

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and the Licensing manager presented the progress monitoring report on the Hackney Carriage Licence Limit.

The Licensing Manager advised the Committee that, in 2011, the Council had set a cap on the number of hackney carriage licences at 110, however 150 licences were still held. The Licensing Manager explained that the Council had limited powers to reduce this number further. Legislation that had been proposed to prevent the transfer of hackney carriage licences had not been supported by the government. The number of these licences could only be reduced should a driver voluntarily give up their licence or by a licence being revoked for breach of conditions.

The hackney carriage licence limit was due to be reviewed in 2016. The Licensing Manager explained the procedure that the review would follow, including the carrying out of a survey to assess whether there was unmet demand for hackney carriage services in the Borough.

Members commented that it was disappointing that the proposed legislation preventing the transfer of licences had not been brought in. The Committee requested that a further report be provided in July 2016 setting out how the review would be undertaken, including the specifications for the survey.

Parking Policy

The Cabinet Member for Town Centre and Visitor Economy, the Assistant Cabinet Member, the Cultural and Visitor Services Manager and the Parking and CCTV Manager presented the progress monitoring report on the parking policy.

The Cabinet Member for Town Centre and Visitor Economy advised the Committee that some improvements had been made in the town centre car parks, which were outlined in the report, and free parking for residents of the Borough had been extended, however a longer term plan was being prepared for investment in the town centre car parks.

The Cultural and Visitor Services Manager explained the circumstances that had affected the delivery and implementation of the recommendations in respect of the parking policy that had previously made by the Committee and approved by Cabinet in 2013. Further proposals for the implementation of the parking policy were also outlined.

Following consultation with the Highways Authority, it had become clear that the introduction of barrier ticket systems at more of the town centre car parks would not be feasible for financial and logistical reasons.

Circumstances with regards to Beetwell Street and Saltergate multi-storey car parks had changed since 2013 as the proposals for the development of the Northern Gateway were now likely to be leisure led rather than retail based. A full options appraisal for Saltergate multi storey car park had been commissioned and a report with fully costed proposals for the regeneration of the car park was being prepared. This report was to inform the decision making on the level of investment required at both multi-storey car parks.

Members asked whether the stairwells in the Saltergate multi-storey car park were part of the regeneration proposals as they were perceived as being dark and unsafe. The Parking and CCTV Manager advised that the proposals included making the stairwells brighter and lighter and introducing more CCTV cameras to these areas. These proposals were subject to funding being approved as they would require significant investment.

Improvements to information signage had been undertaken at some of the town centre car parks as had been recommended. The cost implications had determined that a variable message signage system that directs drivers to car parks with available spaces was not financially viable and was not a priority. Other improvements to car park signage to provide clear opening times, tariff information and other parking advice were proposed.

The Cultural and Visitor Services Manager advised the Committee that it was proposed that the ticket machines in all car parks be replaced as they were costly to operate and were no longer supported by the supplier. In addition, from 2017, a new £1 coin was due to be introduced which would not be accepted by the machines. The new machines that would be sought would be more customer friendly and be able to take card payments and payments by phone.

Members asked in what way the machines would be more customer friendly. The Cultural and Visitor Services Manager advised that in addition to the new payment methods, it was hoped the machines would be more accessible by being easier to understand and simple to use.

The Cultural and Visitor Services Manager explained that ticket machines do not normally give change for practical reasons due to the size of the machines required to house the necessary coins, and the risk of theft or damage. It was proposed that when the replacement of the machines would be put out to tender, a request for machines that provide change would be included. An assessment would then be carried out to determine if this would be practical and financially viable. The Cultural and Visitor Services Manager advised that the proposed replacement of the car park ticket machines would be considered by Cabinet before the end of 2015. Committee Members noted their approval of this.

Members asked whether the proposed sale of the car park on Ashgate Road had an impact on the implementation of the parking policy. The Cabinet Member for Town Centre and Visitor Economy advised that the site was on the market but no decision had yet been taken to approve the sale. The use of the site as a car park was only a temporary arrangement and it was not included in the strategy for town centre car parking. Significant investment would have been necessary to convert this site into a permanent car park of reasonable condition and this was not considered financially viable.

Members agreed that the limitations on the implementation of the Committee's previous recommendations had been justified and the proposals that were put forward for future developments were supported, specifically as detailed at paragraphs 6.4 to 6.8 of the report.

The Committee agreed that the monitoring of these recommendations had been completed and would be removed from the monitoring form.

Parks and Open Spaces Strategy

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and the Leisure and Amenities Manager presented the progress monitoring report on the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

The Leisure and Amenities Manager advised that consultation had been and would continue to be undertaken for any policy changes or where physical work is proposed for a site, appropriate to the nature of the project and the resources available. He also outlined the range of consultation methods that had been used, working alongside the policy team and other services such as housing.

The Leisure and Amenities Manager recognised that the recommended consultation method that had been used by the Public Health Department, developed by the masters in public health students, was a useful tool but demanded a lot of resources, including staff time. Similar consultation activities had been used in the past and would be considered in the future for suitable projects where resources allowed.

Members noted the wide range of consultative methods that were being used and agreed that the public health method be considered where access to funding, internally or externally, was available.

Members asked for information on the number of responses to consultation that had been carried out in relation to the Somersall Park Play Area and it was agreed that this information would be circulated after the meeting.

The Committee agreed that the monitoring of these recommendations had been completed and would be removed from the monitoring form.

Playing Pitches and Outdoor Sports Strategy

The Sports and Leisure Manager had submitted a progress monitoring report on the Playing Pitches and Outdoor Sports Strategy.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and the Leisure and Amenities Manager advised that there were opportunities for more integrated working between the leisure and environment departments in relation to this strategy. The change in the Cabinet portfolios had brought responsibility for these two areas together and the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing suggested that a review of the corporate management team may also impact on this.

Members raised with the Leisure and Amenities Manager a number of playing pitches in the Borough that they felt were in need of investment

The Leisure and Amenities Manager advised that it was too early to assess the impact of the strategy on the level of registrations for local junior or senior teams and the level of use of the pitches in the Borough.

Members requested that a further progress report regarding recommendation 2 of the monitoring form be provided to the Committee in

July 2016 when there may be more data available to assess the initial impact of the strategy.

Sports Facilities Strategy

The Sports and Leisure Manager had submitted a progress monitoring report on the Sports Facilities Strategy, which included information on the disability and physical access features in the design of the new Queen's Park Sports Centre.

The Committee agreed that the monitoring of these recommendations had been completed and would be removed from the monitoring form.

Water Rates Payment Policy

The Chair reported that the Customer Services and Revenues Manager had attended the pre-agenda meeting to discuss the progress monitoring report on the water rates payment policy.

Members were pleased to note that there had been no evictions carried out for water rates arrears alone.

The Committee agreed that most of the recommendations had been implemented, where practical, and that support and advice was now being offered to tenants for managing the payment of their water rates and on water meters. Members commented, however, that it was not clear, however, who held responsibility for monitoring the contract with Severn Trent Water and requested more information on this responsibility and how the monitoring of the contract is carried out.

Members thanked the Cabinet Members, the Assistant Cabinet Member and the Officers for presenting the reports and answering the Committee's questions.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the Scrutiny Monitoring Report be agreed.
- 2) That a progress report be brought to this Committee in July 2016 on proposals to review the Hackney Carriage Licence Limit.

- 3) That regarding the Parking Policy, the proposals at paragraphs 6.4 to 6.8 of the submitted report, be supported.
- 4) That the monitoring of the recommendations on the Parking Policy be removed from the Monitoring Form.
- 5) That regarding the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy, the committee notes the wide range of consultation methods being used and accepts that methods used need to be within the council's own resources and other resources available to the council.
- 6) That the monitoring of the recommendations on the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy be removed from the Monitoring Form.
- 7) That the monitoring of the recommendations on the sports facilities strategy be removed from the Monitoring Form.
- 8) That a progress report be brought to this committee in July 2016 on the Playing Pitches and Outdoor Sports Strategy.
- 9) That a report be brought to this Committee regarding responsibility for, and the monitoring of, the Severn Trent Water contract.

22 **SCRUTINY PROJECT GROUPS**

Following the recommendation of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum, the Committee agreed that the scope of the Leisure, Sport and Culture Activities Scrutiny Project Group needed to be reviewed.

The Chair, as Leader of the Community Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Scrutiny Project Group, provided the Committee with an update on its progress. The Project Group had met with the Sports and Leisure Manager and following the review of the scope of the Leisure, Sport and Culture Activities Scrutiny Project Group, they would plan the work that could be achieved by the end of the year.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the Leisure, Sport and Culture Activities Scrutiny Project Group scoping document be reviewed.

- 2) That the update on the work of the Community Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Scrutiny Project Group be noted.

23 FORWARD PLAN AND NOTICES OF URGENT DECISIONS

The Forward Plan and Notices of Urgent Decisions were considered.

RESOLVED -

That the Forward Plan and Notices of Urgent Decisions be noted.

24 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENTS

The Chair advised that the Annual Report from the Director for Public Health would be useful for the Committee to consider in relation to health and wellbeing issues related to the Committee's work. The Policy and Scrutiny Officer added that a lot of the services provided by the Borough Council have an impact on the health and wellbeing of residents and this is relevant to the work of the councils scrutiny committees.

The Policy and Scrutiny Officer advised the Committee that a report on Stage 2 of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Review was due to be taken to the next meeting of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum.

RESOLVED –

That the updates be noted and the contents of the Health Annual Report be taken into consideration in undertaking the committee's work.

25 WORK PROGRAMME FOR ENTERPRISE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee considered its Work Programme.

The Committee agreed that a report on the impact of the Summer Budget on the Housing Service, which had been scheduled for this meeting, be brought to the next meeting of the Committee. It was agreed that the report would include statements issued by the Chancellor since the summer budget, including the autumn statement.

The Committee also agreed that a report on the maintenance of footpaths and pavements, which had been scheduled for this meeting, be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Committee discussed the recommendations from the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum (Minute No. 61 (2014/15)), for the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to consider appointing project groups in relation to developing the town centre, and increasing the supply and quality of housing in the Borough. It was agreed that these be considered at the next meeting in December.

Members also agreed that the items pending reschedule or removal on the Work Programme be considered again at the next meeting.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the Work Programme be agreed.
- 2) That a report on the maintenance of pavements and footpaths be added to the agenda for the next Committee meeting.
- 3) That a report on the impact of the Summer Budget on the Housing Service be added to the agenda for the next Committee meeting.
- 4) That the recommendations for the appointment of project groups in relation to developing the town centre, and increasing the supply and quality of housing in the Borough be considered at the next meeting.
- 5) That it be considered at the next meeting whether to reschedule or remove the items pending on the Work Programme.

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MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28 July, 2015 were presented.

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes be accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chair.