

**COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

Tuesday, 24th May, 2016

Present:-

Councillor Slack (Chair)

Councillors Borrell
Sarvent

Councillors J Barr

Councillor Blank ++

Anita Cunningham, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
James Drury, Executive Director +
Angela Dunn, Interim Environmental Services Manager +
Brian Offiler, Committee and Scrutiny Coordinator
John Ramsey +
Donna Reddish ++

+ Attended for Minute No. 3

++ Attended for Minute No. 4

**1 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**

No declarations of interest were received.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Flood and Miles.

**3 CABINET MEMBERS FOR HEALTH & WELLBEING AND
GOVERNANCE - FRIENDS OF GROUPS**

The Executive Director, the Interim Environmental Services Manager and the Landscape Development Officer explained the background to the Council's involvement with Friends of Groups.

The Parks and Open Spaces service had dealt with approximately 18 Friends of Groups (such as the Friends of Queen's Park group) over the last 15 years or so, as well as other groups such as Tenant and Resident Associations and a local Community Interest Company. There had been a range of involvement, including specific capital projects or particular activities. There had been good joint working with groups on submission of funding bids and they had generally been useful routes for consultation.

The Council had developed a pack of general information for potential groups, including guidance on activities, aims, roles and relationships and constitutions, and this was available on the Council's website.

It was noted that the Council retained the final decision on proposed schemes or activities, although these were generally mutually agreed with the relevant group.

It was noted that the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy referred to the need for resources to be directed and prioritised appropriately, and it was recognised that consideration needed to be given as part of the health and equalities agenda to relative levels of deprivation across the borough and to levels of support that could realistically be offered.

It was recognised that Friends of Groups may be able to access funding which was not available to the Council to undertake activities (such as litter picking) or events (such as carnivals). However, given the financial constraints on the Council, it was noted that it may not be possible to provide the same levels of support to such groups in the future if their proposed activities were not closely related to the Council's priorities.

It was confirmed that there had previously been a mechanism for the various Friends of Groups to meet together to share good practice with each other, but that this had lapsed in recent years.

The meeting discussed the possibility of greater standardisation of approach across different groups to ensure that all groups' activities and plans aligned with the Council's priorities, whilst recognising that the groups were independent of the Council. The importance of close working between groups and the Council was emphasised to avoid unrealistic expectations.

The issue of how to encourage wider community engagement in such groups was also raised.

It was suggested that a Scrutiny Project Group be established to consider the potential for greater standardisation of approach in respect of the Council's relationship with Friends of Groups, and that Members be invited to express interest in joining the Project Group to start in July.

RESOLVED –

That a Scrutiny Project Group be established to consider the potential for greater standardisation of approach in respect of the Council's relationship with Friends of Groups, and that Members be invited to express interest in joining the Project Group to start in July.

4 CABINET MEMBER FOR GOVERNANCE - DRAFT EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

The Cabinet Member for Governance and the Policy and Communications Manager submitted a report to present a draft of the Council's Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2015/16.

The Council had a duty to positively contribute to equalities within the local community and to publish an annual report on how it had done this.

The draft report included details of the Equality and Diversity Forum's events and activities during the year, how the Council had promoted equality and diversity through its services, its training for staff and its use of Equality Impact Assessments, along with proposals for activities to be undertaken in 2016/17. Further comments would be added to the draft report before submission of the final report to Cabinet in June.

The Cabinet Member for Governance commended the work undertaken during the past year, despite the absence on maternity leave of the Policy Officer. It was noted that there had been high levels of engagement through the Equality and Diversity Forum, working in partnership with other organisations to deliver events and activities to raise awareness of issues affecting local people, such as deaf and hearing support, dementia action alliance and holocaust memorial day.

It was noted that equalities issues were becoming embedded in the everyday business of Council services.

In response to questions from Members it was confirmed that the report, as with other published Council documents, could be made available on request in alternative formats, such as large print, braille, tape or Easy Read. If required, translation and interpretation services could also be provided where it was reasonable to do so.

Members thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for the report and for the good work being undertaken on equalities and diversity issues.

RESOLVED –

That the draft Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2015/16, including the future plans proposed for 2016/17 be supported.

5 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 June – 30 September 2016.

RESOLVED –

That the Forward Plan be noted.

6 WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the list of items included on its proposed Work Programme for 2016/17, which had been developed from the Scrutiny Work Programming Action Days held in March and April and supported by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on 10 May, 2016.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the proposed Work Programme for the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee for 2016/17 be approved.
- (2) That the establishing of the proposed Scrutiny Project Group on Venues be ratified, to be jointly led by Councillors Tricia Gilby and Lisa-Marie Derbyshire.
- (3) That the Scrutiny Project Group on Friends of Groups be added to the Work Programme.

7 **SCRUTINY MONITORING**

The Committee considered the Scrutiny recommendations monitoring schedule.

RESOLVED –

That the Scrutiny monitoring report be approved.

8 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee held on 22 March, 2016 were presented.

Further to Minute No. 34, it was confirmed that a substitute Member was able to attend the Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel in the event of the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing being unable to attend.

RESOLVED –

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