

ENTERPRISE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 5th June, 2014

Present:-

Councillor Slack (Chair)

Councillors	Bradford	Flood
	Callan	Gibson
	Dyke	Serjeant+

Andy Bond – Town Centre Operations Manager++

Anita Cunningham – Policy and Scrutiny Officer

Carole Grew – Senior Waste Management Officer+++

Andy Pashley – Leisure and Amenities Manager +

Mary Stead – Democratic Services Officer

Darran West – Head of Environment++++ +++++

+ Attended for Minute No. 10

++ Attended for Minute No. 6

+++ Attended for Minute No. 8

++++ Attended for Minute No. 9

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

There were no declarations.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hawksworth and Lang.

3 SCRUTINY PROJECT GROUP RECOMMENDATION ON WATER RATES ARREARS POLICY

The Scrutiny Project Group Recommendations on the Water Arrears Policy were presented by Councillor Flood.

Discrepancies in the operation of the Council's policy towards tenants who were in arrears with water rates payments had been identified. These discrepancies concerned the advice given to tenants on the installation of water meters, and the 'write-off' policy when dealing with arrears.

There was concern that Welfare Reforms would lead to an increase in the number of tenants falling into arrears on water payments, so the policy needed clarification to ensure consistency across the whole Council. The amended policy wording was agreed for recommendation to Cabinet.

RESOLVED –

That the Scrutiny Project Group recommendations be presented to Cabinet for consideration.

4 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 June to 30 September 2014.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Forward Plan be noted.
- (2) That an update on the Careline Consortium decision be requested.

5 SCRUTINY MONITORING

The Committee considered an update on the implementation of approved Scrutiny recommendations. It was noted that progress reports on parking policy and the water rates payment policy were included as separate updates on the meeting agenda.

RESOLVED –

That the update be noted.

6 UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF PARKING POLICY

A written report by the Cultural and Visitor Services Manager and the Town Centre Operations Manager on the implementation of Parking Policy was presented for consideration.

The report included a summary of the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee's parking Project Group, and approved by Cabinet in March 2013.

The update explained the reasons why the approved recommendations had not yet been implemented. These reasons included changes in staff responsibility for parking in Regeneration, and the ongoing review of the Northern Gateway Scheme, which had an impact on the future of the multi-storey car park and surface car parks in Saltergate.

Revised plans for the Northern Gateway site were expected in July 2014, when the prioritisation of car park improvement works would be considered.

A fall in parking ticket revenue, and the Council's financial situation, resulted in a need to review the business case for funding improvements to parking facilities.

Discussions were in progress about the alternative methods of paying for parking, including pay on foot and payment by mobile phone. Greater clarity about pricing, depending on the location of the car park, was also required.

The intention of the medium-term parking strategy, to provide competitively prices, accessible and consumer friendly car parks, reflected the Scrutiny recommendations.

RESOLVED -

That a progress report be requested for the next meeting of this committee.

7 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENTS

The Policy and Scrutiny Officer informed Members that proposals on a new constitution would be presented at the next Learning and Development session, by the Senior Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer.

8 EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT - UPDATE ON FOOD COMPOSTING FACILITY

The Senior Waste Management Officer provided an update on the Food Composting Facility.

Issues had been raised in the local press about the inclusion of food waste in the green bins and the kitchen caddies which had been delivered but there had been few complaints received by the Council. The purchase and distribution of the kitchen caddies had been paid for by Derbyshire County Council, and Borough Council staff had supervised the distribution to be on hand to deal with any enquiries about their use.

A list of frequently asked questions had been given to the Call Centre and to Members of Council, and this information was also on the Council's website.

Residents' concerns were being dealt with on an individual basis, and by providing options most issues had been resolved.

Advice had been provided on where to buy the accredited paper sacks that some residents are choosing to use to line their green bins, because these had to meet certain criteria. Paper sacks were being issued to residents in properties without bins.

Further clear advice would be given to all residents on the correct use of the bins, as part of the publicity for the official opening of the composting facility, and again within the context of the 'love food, hate waste' Government campaign.

Members thanked the officers for this update.

9 **UPDATE ON DOG CONTROL ORDERS AND DOG FOULING**

A written update was provided by the Senior Environmental Health Officer, summarising the work carried out by the Environmental Protection Team since December 2012.

The report included information on positive indicators of progress in reducing dog fouling, and in improving control of dogs in public places. It also gave details of plans for educational and promotional work, and of current and future enforcement activity.

An update was given on recent changes in Government policy, which replaced Dog Control Orders by Public Open Space Protection Orders.

Practical issues were considered, including enforcement, fixed penalties, the location of dog waste bins, and the use of other litter bins for dog waste.

It was agreed that more warning notices drawing attention to the health issues around dog waste, especially the risk to children and people using parks for sporting activities should be put up.

The effectiveness of Eastwood Park Dog Control Orders was planned for review in January, 2015.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

10 **EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR LEISURE, CULTURE AND TOURISM - REPORT ON THE CHESTERFIELD SPORT AND LEISURE STRATEGY**

The Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism, and the Leisure and Amenities Manager presented a briefing on the Review of the Chesterfield Parks and Open Spaces Strategy. The Sports and Leisure Strategy had been developed using Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy and Facilities Planning Model. It was in two parts: the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and consideration of Sports and Leisure Facilities.

The updated Parks and Open Spaces Strategy would become a planning tool, to be used to prioritise work to provide, manage and improve green spaces across the Borough. It had been produced with advice from Sport England, and it would be used to develop an Action Plan.

The draft Strategy had been produced after research and consultation with the public, user groups, staff and key partners.

Records on the type and location of open space in the Borough had been updated, and analysis of these records was in progress to identify any gaps in provision of open space.

Draft findings provided data on the quality and quantity of open space, and listed the emerging priorities and objectives for its use. The intention was to ensure that areas of multiple deprivation were well-supplied with open space for sport and leisure use, to promote healthy lifestyles, and to rationalise existing open space to keep maintenance costs within budget. Surplus open space could be sold to provide funding to invest in improving facilities elsewhere.

Within the strategy there were suggestions about emerging policies, which took into account the Council's financial situation and priorities. The strategy would also aim to maximise the possibilities of obtaining external funding to develop publicly-accessible open spaces. Partnership working with voluntary groups acting as Friends of the parks would be promoted.

The draft Strategy would be widely publicised, and if necessary modified, as a result of this public consultation.

The final version would be presented to Councillors for consideration later in 2014.

The Facilities Strategy was at an earlier stage in its development, but it was intended that this would be completed by the end of 2014.

Scrutiny Members requested further information to consider, before the Strategy was presented to Cabinet. The Scrutiny Project Group on New Leisure Facilities asked to see the Strategy so that a decision could be taken on how best to examine the draft strategy.

It was agreed that any comments or questions about this aspect of the Sports and Leisure Strategy should be sent to the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism.

RESOLVED –

That the update be noted and that a further report be given at the next Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee meeting.

11 WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE ENTERPRISE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee considered a list of items raised to date for its Work Programme.

Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum Minute No. 74 (2013/14), on the response to a presentation made to Community Assemblies on the Council's overview and scrutiny role, was also considered.

RESOLVED –

(1) That the Work Programme be agreed.

(2) That a Scrutiny Project Group to look at the Community Assembly issue of dog fouling not be set up at present while other options be considered.

(3) That an update on the following items be considered at the meeting in July, 2014:

- Licensing policies relating to the sale of 'legal highs' and other issues affected by recent changes in Government legislation;
- Leisure and Culture Strategy (Sport and Leisure Strategy and Parks and Open Spaces Strategy).

12 SCRUTINY PROJECT GROUPS - PROGRESS UPDATES

New Sport and Leisure Facilities

Councillor Flood introduced the draft report of the Scrutiny Project Group, as amended by the Head of Environment.

The draft report set out the main objectives of the review, and the reasons for the review and its link with the Corporate Plan.

The review focused on the design of the proposed Queen's Park Sports Centre, the public consultation process, site visits to comparable facilities in other local authority areas, the appointment of the main contractor and building contractor, partnership working with Chesterfield College, funding and consultation with staff.

The recommendations included greater consultation with Leisure staff and all Borough Council staff, and with members of the public, including sports clubs, and clarification of the decision-making process.

It was stressed that this was not the final report, because further meetings were planned with Chesterfield College and the new contractors. There would be a further evaluation six months into the project delivery period.

The recommendations were agreed, and the Scrutiny Project Group was thanked for producing this well-researched report.

Taxi Licence Subsidy

There was no report.

RESOLVED –

That the report and recommendations of the Scrutiny Project Group on New Leisure Facilities be approved for submission to Cabinet.

13 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 MARCH, 2014 AND MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20 March, 2014 were presented.

RESOLVED –

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