

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2 December 2014 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillors Mrs Blacklock, Boad, Mrs Bromley, Ms Dean, Edwards, Gill, Heath, Mrs Higgins, Illingworth, Kinson OBE and Wreford-Bush.

Also Present: Councillors Coker and Cross.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brookes, Copping, Guest and Mrs Falp.

67. **Appointment of Chair**

Resolved that Councillor Mrs Blacklock be appointed as Chair for the meeting.

68. **Substitutes**

Councillor Heath substituted for Councillor Mrs Falp.

69. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

70. **Health & Community Protection Portfolio Holder Update**

The Committee considered a report from the Portfolio Holder for Health & Community Protection, Councillor Coker, giving an update on his portfolio, followed by a Question and Answer Session. Councillor Coker informed the Committee that:

- there had been delays on sustainability work partly due to loss of sustainability officer, but they had now been replaced and work was quickly moving forwards;
- he was aware of insufficient capacity for some services at the crematorium chapel and officers were working on this to increase capacity to 150;
- car parking at the crematorium was a big issue and the consideration of options delayed the project;
- Officers had looked at coach park but there was not enough space to accommodate this on site, that said work would take place to improve coach access to and from site;
- digital pens for undertaking work and uploading officer notes to a system. This did not work for all officers and the team were now experimenting with a new system using mobile devices;
- the match funding offer from Department for Energy and Climate Change had only just been confirmed and this would be to investigate district heating networks;
- the funding would be used within months to investigate what might work where. This was only a pilot and could be developed within the new local plan developments;

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- SEV policy had progressed and the Group had met Monday 1 December 2014 update. They had considered the legal opinion regarding "what size of an area you could apply a cap to". The report would come back to Executive in January 2015;
- He was not aware of the possible congestion charge by WCC. He was aware that they were looking at reducing traffic overall as more cars on the roads in Warwick and there was no option to build more roads. His personal view was that you would need to reduce vehicle emissions as this was the biggest issue; and
- the standard of dress of taxi drivers could be improved and an important issue; there was a new team in place and this was making a difference.

The Committee thanked Councillor Coker and the Head of Health & Community Protections for the information they had provided.

(Councillors Edwards, Heath and Kinson arrived during this item. Councillor Coker left the meeting after he had finished answering questions.)

71. Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 3 December 2014

The Committee considered the following non-confidential item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 3 December 2014.

Item number 5 - Review of Affordable Rent Policy

The Committee noted the report, there were no adverse comments and the Committee welcomed that any decisions on schemes would have to be approved by Members first.

Item number 7 - Council HQ Relocation Project – Update Report

The Committee welcomed the report and thanked officers for their work on this report.

The Committee noted the correction in paragraph 5.2 of the report that the current cost of Riverside House should be £576,000.

The Committee recommended to the Executive that paragraph 2.3 be amended to remove the words "privately owned" to enable greater flexibility.

Item number 8 - Royal Pump Rooms and Spencer Yard – Proposed Cultural Quarter

The Committee welcomed the report as the next steps forward in this project and look forward to future updates.

Item number 9 - Tachbrook Country Park

The Committee noted the report.

Item 10 - Coventry Local Development Plan Consultation Response

The majority of the Committee welcomed this response to Coventry.

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72. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2014 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

73. Comments from the Executive

The Committee considered a report from Democratic Services which detailed the responses the Executive gave to the comments the Overview and Scrutiny Committee made regarding the reports submitted to the Executive in November.

Resolved that the report be noted.

74. Finance Portfolio Holder Update

The Committee considered a report from the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Cross, giving an update on his portfolio, followed by a Question and Answer Session. Councillor Cross informed the Committee that:

- where possible attempts are made to recover costs of damage to corporate buildings;
- be believed that procurement within the Council and improved;
- there were lots of things being done by Procurement Officers to improve how we operated and believed that this was better than where we were before we had procurement officers; and
- there was a danger of comparing apples and pear when looking at savings from contracts because no contract was ever the same, that said there were savings coming from improved procurement processes.

The Committee thanked Councillor Cross and the Head of Finance for the information they had provided.

(Councillor Cross left the meeting after he had finished answering questions.)

75. Public and Press

Resolved that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as set out below.

The full minutes of Minute 78 would be contained within a confidential minute which would be considered for publication following the implementation of the relevant decisions. However, a summary of the decision was as follows:

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76. Executive Agenda (Confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 3 December 2014

The Committee considered the following confidential item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 3 December 2014.

Item number 15 - Options for HR & Payroll Functions

The Committee noted the report.

77. Review of the Work Programme & Forward Plan

The Committee considered its work programme for 2014/15 and the latest published version of the Forward Plan.

The Deputy Chief Executive (BH) updated the Committee about the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board. He informed them that he was now meeting monthly with the Childrens Champions of the Council. There would be a detailed report on this work brought to the January meeting of the Committee

The Deputy Chief Executive (BH) informed the Committee of an offer from, Mr West, a English Romany Gypsy to come and talk to them about his community and the troubles they face. This was welcomed by the Committee.

Resolved that:

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) Mr West, be invited to address the Committee in February 2015.

78. Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee Minutes & Update

The Committee's attention was drawn to the two sets of Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee minutes for the meetings held on 7 October and 10 November 2014.

The Committee was given a verbal update from the Chairman of the Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee outlining the work of the Committee so far, as set out in the minutes of the meeting/

It was proposed that the report originally intended to be presented to Overview & Scrutiny in March 2015 (see minutes June 2014) on the way forward for Health Scrutiny at the Council, be postponed until October 2015. However this was not accepted by the Committee because they were of the view that the Sub-Committee had clearly identified the need for it to exist and it should now bring forward appropriate proposals to start after the election.

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Resolved that: the Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee minutes dated 7 October and 10 November 2014 be noted.

(The meeting finished at 8.50 pm)