

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5 March 2019 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Mrs Falp (Chairman); Councillors Boad, Bromley, Mrs Cain, Davison, H Grainger, Naimo, Parkins, Mrs Redford, Shilton and Weed.

**Also Present:** Councillors Butler, Coker and Mobbs.

## 85. **Apologies and Substitutes**

- (a) There were no apologies for absence received.
- (b) Councillor Weed substituted for Councillor D'Arcy.

## 86. **Declarations of Interest**

### Minute Number 88 – Annual Update from Shakespeare's England

Councillors Mrs Falp and Shilton both declared an interest part-way through discussions on this item when the subject of funding from Warwickshire County Council was raised because they were Members of the County Council.

### Minute Number 91 – Culture Portfolio – Service Review

Councillor Naimo declared an interest because she was a director of two organisations in receipt of Arts grants.

## 87. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2019 would be available for approval at the 2 April 2019 meeting.

## 88. **Annual Update from Shakespeare's England**

The Portfolio Holder - Business, Councillor Butler, and the Business Manager - Projects and Economic Development introduced Helen Peters, Chief Executive Officer, Shakespeare's England (SE), and Jo Lloyd, Chair, SE to the meeting to answer questions on the annual update from SE to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. A report had been provided to the Committee giving a review of activity that SE had undertaken on behalf of public and non-public stakeholders since March 2017.

In response to questions from Members, the representatives from SE, Councillor Butler and the Business Manager – Projects and Economic Development explained that:

- As far as promoting Kenilworth was concerned, the Castle was the main focus of promoting the town and SE worked closely with the Castle and local businesses in this respect. A push would be made to promote Kenilworth and the rest of the District during a national

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)**

event "Tourism Week" taking place at the end of March/beginning of April and SE would be encouraging all Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) to showcase the area.

- SE worked very closely with English Heritage but did not have such a close relationship with National Trust.
- SE had not so far done much to use Social Media to engage followers. Currently, SE had about 1,200 to 1,300 followers on Instagram and hoped this would increase to 2,000 by the end of the year.
- No DMO could give figures on how many people would visit areas being promoted if this promotion did not take place, but benchmarking against other DMOs gave the opportunity to see how SE performed against others and whether there was an upward trend.
- SE only promoted its members. Royal Leamington Spa was not being promoted at the moment because SE's members told them where promotion should be concentrated. If there was no feedback that a location should be promoted, none took place.
- Communication between Warwick District Council and SE needed to be improved to push which venues to promote.
- The County Council had reduced its funding this year but might have found some additional funding it could give. However, the main funding came from the District Council and Stratford upon Avon.
- New members from the District were difficult to recruit and the reason for this was unknown. A recruitment event had been held back in November 2018 in Warwick, but only two people attended. The hope was to run more recruiting events in Kenilworth and Royal Leamington Spa.
- SE would be involved in promotion activities for the Commonwealth Games project and had plans for a big destination stand at the Coventry City of Culture event.
- Regular promotion activities were done at RAF bases and other military bases, including American Forces. These were well attended.
- The fee to be a member of SE for small businesses was £12.50 a month. When funding to SE had been cut, the choice was made to hold on to existing members and promote these rather than aiming for new members which SE would be unable to serve properly with only three members of staff.
- Bronze membership level members were more prone to terminating membership or joining and this caused a "wave" effect on membership numbers. SE hoped that member numbers would reach 150 by the end of the year, but because of short-staffing issues, there would be no push to over-promise the service to attract new members.
- The key performance indicators (KPIs) shown in the report were not representative of what Overview & Scrutiny Committee needed in order to be able to scrutinise what value the District was getting for its investment. There was a need to look for a more meaningful way to present data and the Council's Business Manager – Projects and Economic Development would work closely with SE to ensure better, more meaningful data for the District would be available in future reports.
- Members chose which level of membership they required and got the service they paid for. SE could not dictate which level of membership a business should have.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)**

The Chairman thanked the representatives from SE for answering questions and they left the meeting so that the Committee could discuss the Future Funding report for SE that would be considered by the Executive the following evening.

### **89. Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 6 March 2019**

The Committee considered the following non-confidential items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 6 March 2019.

#### **Item 9 – Shakespeare’s England Future Funding**

The Committee recommended that an additional bullet point was added to Recommendation 2.1 to state:

“Agreement of revised objectives and performance indicators in respect of Shakespeare’s England’s activities to promote Warwick District, with authority delegated to the Head of Development Services, in consultation with the Business Portfolio Holder, to conclude the agreement prior to the first payment being made.”

(Councillor Mobbs left the meeting and Councillor Coker arrived.)

#### **Item 7 – Creative Quarter Masterplan and Next Steps**

The Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

(Councillor Butler left the meeting.)

### **90. Work Programme, Forward Plan & Comments from Executive**

The Committee considered its work programme for 2019 and the Forward Plan.

The Committee was informed that the Task & Finish Group – Role of the District Council’s Chairman report would be presented to the Committee in April.

### **91. Culture Portfolio – Service Review**

The Committee considered a report from Cultural Services which brought together details of performance relating to the Culture Portfolio.

In response to questions, the Portfolio Holder - Culture, Councillor Coker, the Arts Manager and the Head of Cultural Services explained that:

- The reason for the fluctuation in the trends in visitor footfall shown in appendix B to the report was explained by:
  - the Spa Centre had been shut last summer for a period of time;
  - good weather had caused a slight decrease in footfall to the Royal Pump Rooms because people preferred to stay outside; and

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)**

- works at the gardens by the Pump Rooms had also caused a slight downturn in visits to the Pump Rooms.
- The figures on page 10 of the report referred to women and girls with no mention of men and boys. This was because officers had been asked to report on specific target groups. Figures for men and boys would be provided in the next report.
- There had been a substantial increase in the number of Everyone Active (EA) cards issued during the last 12 months. At the current point in time, 5,243 cards had been issued and there was another three months to go before the end of year data would be completed.
- it was not allowed to change the timetables of classes and sessions without consulting with the Council first. However, the Council would never refuse permission if there was a good business case with figures to back this up to make the change. The Council would then keep a check to ensure that the change had resulted in the changes expected.
- The Council would liaise with EA to look at making the names of sessions more recognisable.
- Work was in progress to get children and young people more engaged with lawn bowls. Officers were approaching schools to promote junior bowls with the hope to set up a junior league.
- Over the next three years, the Council would increase staffing, including marketing, to maximise the District's profile during the Coventry City of Culture project, including promotion of the District's Arts scene.
- Figures on the uptake of primary schools into school games competitions across the District were not available at the meeting. (Paragraph 3.5 on page 22 of the report). Members did not request that these figures were provided after the meeting.

(The Programme Manager arrived partway through the question and answer session.)

The Chairman thanked Councillor Coker and officers for answering the questions and for the work that they had done.

### **92. Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 6 March 2019**

The Committee considered the following non-confidential item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 6 March 2019.

#### **Item 11 – Newbold Comyn: Shortlisting of Future Options**

The Committee supported recommendations 2.1 to 2.4 and 2.6.

(It did not discuss recommendation 2.5 because this was within the remit of the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee.)

(The meeting ended at 8.52pm)

CHAIRMAN  
2 April 2019