

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10 December 2013 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs Blacklock (Chairman); Councillors; Boad, Mrs Bromley, Copping, Ms Dean, Mrs Gallagher, Gill, Illingworth, Mrs Knight and Wreford-Bush.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors; Coker (Portfolio Holder for Health & Community Protection), Cross (Portfolio Holder for Culture) and Mobbs (Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance).

## 71. **SUBSTITUTES**

Councillor Wreford-Bush substituted for Councillor Gifford; and Councillor Gill substituted for Councillor Edwards.

## 72. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Minute Number 80 Executive Agenda (Non Confidential Items and Reports) – Wednesday 11 December 2013

Councillor Mrs Bromley declared a personal interest in Executive item 10, CCTV & Lighting in St Nicholas Park, because she was a member of the Friends of St Nicholas Park Group.

Minute Number 82 Executive Agenda (Confidential Items and Reports) – Wednesday 11 December 2013

Councillor Mrs Blacklock declared a personal interest in Executive item 16, Kenilworth Public Service Centre, because she was part of the working party involved in this project.

Councillor Illingworth declared a personal interest in Executive item 16 Kenilworth Public Service Centre, because he was a member of Kenilworth Town Council.

(Councillor Boad was provided advice that he did not need to declare an interest in Executive Item 4, because the company where he was a non Executive director, had only been quoted as an example and not as business the Council would be working on. In addition it was not a matter the Committee were taking a decision on.)

## 73. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2013 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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

### **74. UPDATE FROM THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CULTURE**

The Committee received an update from the Portfolio Holder of Culture, Councillor Stephen Cross.

In response to questions from the Committee, Councillor Cross explained that:

- There were ongoing discussions between officers, Legal Services and Kudos catering regarding the provision of the catering contract. Kudos were struggling and were looking to deliver events at the Pump Rooms via a third party;
- It would be possible for the Council to terminate the contract with Kudos, however this would then cost the Council money to retender the contract and could lead to the buildings not being used for a period of time;
- Overall the problem that Kudos appear to have had is getting and then retaining staff at the venues in Royal Leamington Spa;
- The rewire of the Town Hall would be completed by Christmas. Rooms 18 and 21 would be decorated early in 2014 and the new curtains for the Council Chamber would also arrive at this time;
- There had been good performance with both Gym and Swimming doing very well. This had been improved by a new income monitoring scheme being in place to help respond to changes more swiftly;
- Gym membership base had been retained and had grown slightly and swimming lessons have been restructured to provide a better service. This had corresponded with an increase in demand for swimming lessons;
- Staffing had also been improved by moving staff to annual hours, which had reduced overtime and the need for casual staff by providing a more flexible work force;
- The delivery of the Cinema was dominated by the technology being used to project the shows. The ability to download films had increased the range available, but reduced the scope for showing Hollywood blockbusters;
- The attendance at the Cinema was improving and once the new technology was bedded in the new year there would be the opportunity to try a selection of initiatives, including improved marketing, the potential for a film club and showing classic films;
- He had not directly been involved in exploring options for different uses of the pump rooms or the Town Hall but had been advised by officers on this and was assured that if moved, services would continue at the same level;
- There was confidence in the Bowls England Project and that would be delivered successfully. There had been recent issues where the utility providers information to the Council had been incorrect. However the contractor's project manager on site was very good;
- Sky Blues in the Community was a first class organisation and the prices of the activities being delivered were reasonable; and
- Assurance was provided that while the Events Management Team was delivering excellent events, any feedback to them would be welcomed to help improve events and the suggestion of involving Ward Councillors in events would be taken on board.

### **75. UPDATE FROM THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HEALTH AND COMMUNITY PROTECTION**

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

The Committee received an update from the Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Protection, Councillor Michael Coker

In response to questions from the Committee, Councillor Coker explained that:

- He was not personally aware of the increasing trend of self harm and cannabis use in young teenagers and he would take this forward with the Community Safety Partnership;
- He explained that the Community Safety Partnership would be looking at joint initiatives, building on the success of "your town your choice" to help improve well-being and reduce crime;
- The Health Scrutiny was a significant opportunity for this Council in looking at health issues and ensuring that as a Council we considered the wider health implications in every decision that was taken;
- There was ongoing work to look at designing crime out of new developments coming forward as part of the Local Plan;
- Mr R Chapleo had been appointed as the Health and Wellbeing Officer.

### **76. SUMMARY OF COMMENTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE**

The Committee considered a report from Civic and Committee 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.

### **77. FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan which had been published for December 2013 to March 2014.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

### **78. REVIEW OF THE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered a report from Civic and Committee Services on the Committee's work programme.

The Chairman asked the Committee members to consider items to look at from February 2014 onwards and bring these to the next meeting.

The Chairman informed the Committee that Group Leaders would be considering the views of this Committee about outside appointments when they met in January 2014.

The Democratic Services Manager informed the meeting that a draft questionnaire had now been agreed for the SEV Task & Finish Group with the exception of a question. It was hoped that the survey would start in early January, with reports to the Committee in April 2014.

Councillor Illingworth informed the meeting that the Staff Volunteering Task & Finish Group was waiting for approval of a questionnaire to staff.

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

However as no members had chased him for the work since the last meeting he wondered if this was a viable Group. The Chairman asked Councillor Illingworth to discuss this with the Democratic Services Manager after the meeting.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) The portfolio holder statements, as set out on the Executive agenda for 11 December, be considered at the March meeting 2014 to evaluate how these can be scrutinised;
- (2) An update report on the discretionary housing payments be brought to the Committee in May 2014 after the first 12 months of operation; and
- (3) the work programme be noted.

### **79. DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS**

The Committee considered a report from Finance that provided information regarding discretionary housing payments. These payments were predominantly used for those whose housing benefit had reduced as a result of the introduction of the spare room subsidy and therefore further information had been included in respect of those who were affected.

The Discretionary Housing Payments Policy was updated in March 2013 to ensure that it continued to support the sustainable community strategy and the cross cutting themes and in particular narrowing the gaps.

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) The report be noted; and
- (2) An update report on the discretionary housing payments be brought to the Committee in May 2014 after the first 12 months of operation; and

### **80. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2013**

The Committee considered the following non-confidential items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 11 December 2013.

#### **Item 4 - A refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy/ Fit for the Future Programme**

The Committee noted the report but highlighted the need to progress air quality actions plans.

#### **Item 8 - Assets Review**

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

The Committee made the following comments and recommendations to Executive:

"The Royal Pump Rooms is part of the heritage of Royal Leamington Spa and has a museum showing the history and culture of the Town. As a Council we have a responsibility to heritage. Therefore because of this and the significant amount of public money that has been spent on the building the Committee made a recommendation to the Executive as detailed below.

The Committee also emphasised the importance of factoring in relocation costs and continued service provisions to the same current standards to the overall costs of the projects.

Priory Park and Abbey Fields in Kenilworth were not listed as assets and the Committee felt that the Executive should ensure these ruins were included.

The Committee recommends that recommendation 2.2 should be amended to include "maintaining full and free access to the building".

### Item 10 - CCTV & Lighting in St Nicholas Park

The Committee received a presentation from local residents and following this the Committee felt that it needed to make a recommendation to the Executive, detailed below.

The Committee also wished to see a further report back in six months about what had happened and been implemented.

The Committee recommended to the Executive that:

- (1) recommendation 2.5 is amended to read that, as a matter of urgency, officers work with Warwickshire Police to ensure that boy racers are eradicated from the park by taking appropriate action;
- (2) recommendation 2.6 is amended to read "act urgently to work with Ward Councillors, Friends of the park and its users to allocate the remaining funding to those other desirable projects previously identified by the working party whilst looking at resolving the public nuisance issues from boy racers"; and
- (3) the Executive write to the Police Commissioner about the issues with boy racers and encourage police liaison to help tackle the problem early in the summer months when the problem is most acute."

### Item 11 - Review of Security of Open Spaces within Warwick District to prevent Illegal Encampments

The Committee noted the report.

## 81. **PUBLIC & PRESS**

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items, by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local

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

Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as set out below.

Minute No.	Para Nos.	Reason
82	3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

### **82. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2013**

The Committee considered the following confidential item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 11 December 2013.

#### **Item 16 - Kenilworth Public Service Centre Feasibility Study & Business Case**

The Committee made a recommendation to the Executive which will be detailed in the confidential minutes.

(The meeting finished at 9.08 pm)