

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 7 March 2017 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Boad (Chairman); Councillors Bromley, Mrs Cain, Davison, Edgington, Gallagher, Gill, Margrave, Naimo, Parkins and Mrs Redford.

Also Present: Councillors Butler, Grainger, Mobbs, Phillips and Quinney.

76. **Apologies and Substitutes**

- (a) There were no apologies; and
- (b) Councillor Gallagher substituted for Councillor Miss Grainger, and Councillor Gill substituted for Councillor D'Arcy.

77. **Declarations of Interest**

Minute 79 – Update on Priority Families Programme

Councillor Parkins declared an interest because she was employed by North Leamington School.

Minute 81 - Executive Agenda (Non-Confidential Items & Reports – Wednesday 8 March 2017) – Item 8 – Community Forums and Voluntary and Community Sector Spending Review

The Chairman declared an interest because he was a Director and Trustee of Crown Routes (Chain).

Councillor Naimo declared an interest because she was a Director of ARC CIC.

78. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2017 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

79. **Update on Priority Families Programme**

The Committee considered a report from Mr Basra, Priority Families Coordinator, Children and Families Unit, People Group at Warwickshire County Council. The report provided an update on Phase 2 of the Priority Families Programme.

Phase 1 of the national Troubled Families Programme (also known as the Priority Families Programme) commenced on 1 April 2012 and concluded on 31 March 2015. The first phase involved working with 805 families across three national criteria. A total of £4,000 was available per family through a combination of an upfront attachment fee and subsequent payment by results where significant and sustained progress could be demonstrated.

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As a result of the success, Government indicated that there would be a second phase of the programme which would run from April 2015 to March 2020.

The report explained how Phase 1 differed to Phase 2, but a main difference was that the £4,000 fund per family had been reduced to £1,800. Of this £1,800, £1,000 was payable upfront via an attachment fee and the remainder was on a "payment by results" basis, where significant and sustained progress could be demonstrated.

The report also explained the criteria by which families could be considered for the scheme.

In response to questions from Members, the Priority Families Coordinator responded that:

- To cope with reduced staffing levels and financial resources, coupled with an increase in the number of families requiring attention, the Unit had to work with other agencies. Through a process of "data matching", the Unit identified which agency would be best placed to work with each family.
- Funding had been reduced two years ago. So far, the shortfall had been covered by dipping into reserves that had been built up during Phase 1. However, it was likely that these reserves would be empty by 2018, so discussions were ongoing on how to manage up to 2020. The concern was that lessons learnt did not get lost.
- The success criteria for "payment by results" had been set by the DCLG.
- Data matching between agencies had been used in 2012/13 to identify families eligible for help. Currently, the system used referrals from other partner agencies, such as schools and the Police. These families were then sorted by reviewing each case against a set of six criteria, and to be eligible for funding each family must be marked positive for all six criteria.

The Chairman thanked the Priority Families Coordinator for explaining the process. Mr Basra offered to send a further briefing note when a Bill went through Parliament in the spring, and was willing to attend a further meeting if the Committee so wished.

80. Shakespeare's England

The Committee considered a briefing note from Shakespeare's England which provided an overview of the work by this organisation for the period 1 November 2016 to 7 March 2017.

In response to questions from Members, the Portfolio Holder for Business, and the Business Manager, Policy and Development replied that:

- More than 15,000 people were expected to attend the Women's Cycle Tour on 9 June 2017. The finish line was on the Parade in Royal Leamington Spa. The media coverage would be phenomenal and activities were being planned for primary schools.
- It was intended to launch a Visitor Pass for tourists which would allow entry to many tourist attractions in the area. It was hoped

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that this would be ready for July and passes could then be purchased online and at tourist offices, or anywhere that was appropriate to sell them.

- The potential to develop tourist trails for people to explore virtually or in real-time via a "Gamemaster" programme was being examined. The Business Manager would send details of which trails were being developed to Councillors.
- The District Council contributed annual funds to Shakespeare's England of £75,000.

The Committee agreed that the updates from Shakespeare's England could be reduced to once a year, with the option to request additional updates if necessary.

(Councillor Mobbs left the meeting during the discussion of this item.)

81. Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 8 March 2017

The Committee considered the following non-confidential item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 8 March 2017.

Item 8 – Community Forums and Voluntary and Community Sector Spending Review

The Committee recommended that recommendation 2.6 in the report should be amended to state that the VCS Commissioning and Grants Panel membership should consist of seven interested members, one of which should be the Portfolio Holder. The allocation of seats by party membership should be removed.

82. Portfolio Holder Update – Business

The Portfolio Holder for Business, Councillor Butler, gave an update on his portfolio area. In response to questions, he informed the Committee that:

- The Delivery Model for Enterprise would not be going before Executive for consideration, but an interim report would be produced for Overview & Scrutiny. A new Trading Arm of the Council, which would allow the Council to be more commercial, would require approval.
- Terms of Reference were being developed for review for events being held in the District. This involved consultations with the various stakeholders. It was hoped to bring forward recommendations to the Executive in December.
- It was recognised that the increase in waste collection costs could affect events already in the pipeline. Therefore, the Council would absorb the additional costs for waste collection in this financial year.
- Environmental sustainability was not something that had been considered when promoting business, but would be considered for the future.

(Councillor Quinney arrived at the meeting during discussion of this item.)

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83. Review of the Work Programme & Forward Plan

The Committee considered its work programme for 2017 and the Forward Plan.

Task & Finish Group – Off-street car parking charges review

The Committee considered the draft report produced by the Task & Finish Group (Appendix 3 to the report).

Members felt that more background information was required before any recommendation was made for the report to go forward to Executive. Task & Finish Group Members were asked to consider adding additional information to the report and bring it to the next meeting for consideration.

Members suggested that the Group might consider adding:

- more information on consumers' preferences in terms of car parks, as a further appendix;
- any arguments against the recommendations that the Group had received from officers;
- footfall figures;
- representations/responses received from consultees; and
- more information on the economic impact on towns.

The Chairman of the Group explained that recommendation 2.4 did not mean a blanket increase of 5% on all types of car parking charges. The recommendation was to generate at least an additional 5% of revenue on the overall annual budget, and there was flexibility how this could be raised. He gave as an example that car parking rates for long-stay might be increased by more than 5%, and short-stay might receive a smaller increase to encourage a turnover of shoppers. However, the overall impact would be an additional 5% of revenue on the overall annual budget.

Resolved that

- (1) the Task & Finish Group – Off-Street Car Parking Charges considers amending the report to include more background information and re-present it to the Committee in April; and
- (2) the frequency of reports from Shakespeare's England be reduced to once a year.

84. Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 8 March 2017

The Committee considered the following non-confidential item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 8 March 2017.

Item 3 – Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2017-2020

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee supported the report and, in particular, was pleased to see that the Council recognised that action was required on student accommodation (recommendation 2.2 in the report).

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85. Member Children's Champions: End of Year Report

The Committee considered a report from the Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer which gave an update on the current position with respect to the Council's arrangements for safeguarding children. This report served a dual purpose because it also formed the required end of term report for the municipal year.

The Current Children's Champions were Councillors Grainger and Parkins.

Appendix A to the report gave details of the Children's Safeguarding Improvement Action Plan. Appendix B to the report showed the commitment that Cultural Services made to safeguarding children across the service.

Members were pleased to note that the Council now had a clear remit for Children's Champions.

Resolved that

- (1) it is noted that Councillors Mrs Grainger and Parkins have been appointed as Member Children's Champions by the Group Leaders, and the Committee understands their role;
- (2) the current position of the Children's Safeguarding: Improvement Action Plan (Appendix A to the report) is noted; and
- (3) the areas of work the Children's Champions would like to explore is noted.

86. 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 February 2017.

Resolved that the report be noted.

(The meeting finished at 8.43 pm)