

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 2 September 2015 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Boad (Chairman); Councillors Bromley, Mrs Cain, D'Arcy, Davison, Edgington, Miss Grainger, Margrave, Naimo, Parkins and Mrs Redford.

Also Present: Councillors Gallagher and Grainger.

There were no apologies.

14. **Substitutes**

There were no substitutes.

15. **Declarations of Interest**

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Councillor Bromley declared an interest because a member of his family played at the football club. Councillor Bromley was also a member of the working party.

16. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2015 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

17. **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 at the end of July.

Resolved that the report be noted.

18. **Portfolio Holder Update – Development Services**

The Portfolio Holder for Development Services, Councillor Cross, gave an update on Development Services. In response to questions, he informed the Committee that:

- The Leamington Spa Action Plan was in early stages and there had been some engagement and discussion with the Town Council. It was possible that the end product might not be an Action Plan but it would be something that would carry weight. The Town Council had met to discuss the consultation stage of its Neighbourhood Plan.
- A record of Planning Appeals was kept when the Planning Committee made a decision contrary to the Planning Officer's recommendation. This would only raise concern when the number of appeals lost went

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above 30-35%. Appeal decisions were reported to the Planning Committee every six months to ensure that lessons could be learnt. In particular, it had been noted that it proved difficult to defend appeals when the Planning Committee ruled against advice from technical officers.

- A consultant had been engaged for just under 100 days working one or two days a week to source grant funding streams for the whole of the Council for various projects. This engagement had already proven beneficial after just one month but needed to source more than £50,000 to justify this initiative.
- It was noted that whilst the intention of Building Control was to be cost neutral, it was running at a profit, and this profit went into Council Reserves. Development Services was investigating other income generating initiatives such as fire risk assessments.
- Councillor Cross was confident that agreement would be reached over the Local Plan and the Council would meet the Inspector's requirements.
- The Service Area would be introducing free "drop-in" sessions on Wednesday afternoons to offer advice to householders with their planning applications. If this proved popular, then the initiative might have to be increased.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Cross for answering the questions.

19. Review of the Work Programme & Forward Plan

The Committee considered its work programme for 2015/16 and the latest published version of the Forward Plan.

Work Programme 2015/2016

Health Strategy Progress

The Committee considered a report (Appendix 3) from the Health & Wellbeing Lead. He informed Members that the aim was to submit the Health & Wellbeing Action Plan by the end of the year. He was asked to explain how the number of GPs in the District was decided and informed Members that a Health Impact Assessment had been carried out on this Council's Local Plan by Public Health to ensure that there was sufficient GP and NHS service provision. This Council liaised with the County Council's Health & Wellbeing Board over GP numbers and Public Health had an input into our Local Plan in respect of GP numbers.

He also explained that, in respect of ongoing projects, he liaised with Health Champions in various departments and people trained as "dementia friends" carried work in helping with this area into relevant Council departments.

Health Scrutiny – the way forward

The Head of Health and Community Protection and the Health & Wellbeing Lead explained to Members the Council's role in health scrutiny and how all the various health bodies, including this Council, fed into the County Council's umbrella responsibility for health scrutiny.

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They then explained to new Members what the Council had done previously in respect of health scrutiny which had been covered by a former Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee which fell under the responsibility of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

The Chairman explained that as there was no longer a sub-committee to cover health scrutiny, as it had been set up on a temporary basis, Members now had to decide how they wished to proceed to handle health scrutiny work. He set out a couple of viable options:

- health scrutiny could yet again be dealt with by a sub-committee of this Committee; or
- the Overview & Scrutiny Committee could absorb health scrutiny into its work programme.

Resolved that

- (1) health scrutiny be handled by a sub-committee of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee;
- (2) the membership of the sub-committee would not be political party proportionate;
- (3) the Terms of Reference the previous sub-committee operated by would be examined at the next meeting at the end of September as a basis to determine the new sub-committee's terms of reference;
- (4) any costs be reported back at the next meeting; and
- (5) the Committee would scrutinise the output of the sub-committee.

Leisure Options

The Head of Cultural Services, Programme Manager and the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Gallagher, explained the process that had been undertaken to evaluate the District's leisure options needs and the work done subsequently and still to be done to work out how this could be achieved to ensure that the right mix of leisure facilities in the right places would be provided and how this could be future proofed. This briefing to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee was in anticipation of a report going to the Executive in November.

Task and Finish Group – The Impact of For Sale & Letting Boards

At the previous Committee meeting, the Committee had requested that various amendments be made to the Scoping Document for a possible Task & Finish Group to be formed to look at the Impact of For Sale and Letting Boards. This document was then to be circulated to non-Executive councillors asking for volunteers to join the Group.

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The Committee Services Officer reported that only two Councillors had volunteered; Councillors Naimo and Thompson. The Committee considered that the situation concerning the proliferation of For Sale and Letting board notices had improved following work carried out by the Council's Enforcement team and a voluntary code adopted by estate agents. It was therefore

Resolved that the Task and Finish Group on the Impact of For Sale and Letting Boards need not proceed.

Overview of St Mary's Lands – Work Programme - 29 September 2015

The Committee, having read the report going to the Executive the following evening, concerning St Mary's Lands, determined that it had enough information and would not require a further report in late September. It was therefore

Resolved to remove this item from the Work Programme.

Outside appointments Report – Annual statement of the work undertaken by the Body – Work Programme – 3 November 2015

In view of the fact that some Councillors would not have had time to attend any or many meetings of outside bodies, it was decided that the content of the reports this year would be what the outside body did and what had been discussed at any meetings they may have attended since May 2015.

Forward Plan September 2015 to December 2015

Resolved that the report be noted.

20. **Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Thursday 3 September 2015**

The Committee considered the following non-confidential items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Thursday 3 September 2015.

Item number 3 – St Mary's Lands, Warwick

The Committee noted the report.

Item number 6 – Sustainable Community Strategy & Fit for the Future Updates and Service Area Plans 2015/16

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee wished to know how the Executive would assess the feasibility/business case; financial or community impact. Which would have priority?

Additionally, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had a concern that the programme was over-ambitious.

(The meeting finished at 9.25 pm)