

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 25 July 2017 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Mrs Falp (Chairman); Councillors Ashford, Mrs Cain, D'Arcy, Mrs Knight, Naimo, Parkins and Shilton.

**Also Present:** Councillors Gill, Grainger, Mobbs, and Phillips.

## 21. Apologies and Substitutes

- (a) An apology for absence was received from Councillor Davison.
- (b) Councillor Ashford substituted for Councillor Miss Grainger, and Councillor D'Arcy substituted for Councillor Bromley.

## 22. Declarations of Interest

Minute 25 Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports – Wednesday 26 July 2017) – Item 4 – Fire Safety in High-Rise Buildings

Councillor Shilton declared an interest when this item was introduced, because he was a Member of Warwickshire County Council and a retired member of the Fire Service.

Minute 27 Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports – Wednesday 26 July 2017) – Item 7 – Environmental Enforcement Service Delivery Options

Councillors Mrs Falp declared an interest when this item was introduced because her son worked in Neighbourhood Services at the District Council.

Minute 26 – Royal Leamington Spa Car Parking Displacement Plan

Councillors Mrs Falp and Shilton declared an interest when this item was introduced because they were both Members of Warwickshire County Council.

## 23. Minutes

- (a) The minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2017 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.
- (b) The draft minutes of the Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee were noted.

## 24. 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 June 2017.

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

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

### **25. Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 26 July 2017**

The Committee considered the following item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 26 July 2017.

#### Item 4 – Fire Safety in High Rise Buildings

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report and praised the actions taken so far. The Committee looked forward to the next report and seeing the timescales.

### **26. HomeChoice Allocation Scheme**

Members had requested a briefing about the HomeChoice Allocation Scheme so that they would know what the scheme was and how it operated prior to a report going to the Executive in November. This would facilitate better scrutiny of the report in November.

Ahead of the briefing, the Housing Strategy & Development Manager had supplied the Members with the Council's booklet "Warwick District Council HomeChoice Allocation Scheme". This booklet explained the scheme.

Councillor Davison had asked for some statistical information about the number of households on the waiting list, and this information had been provided to all Members ahead of the meeting, and was included in an addendum report, loaded onto the Council's website.

In response to questions asked at the meeting, the Housing Strategy & Development Manager responded that:

- There were several factors taken into account when determining where people fell within bandings. People moved up and down on the lists depending on who else joined the list and what their needs assessments were. New applicants joined the list on a daily basis.
- Parish Councils were consulted about housing needs in rural areas.
- There was an annual review of the lists to see if there were any applications that were no longer current.
- If applicants notified the Council of a change in circumstances, then their banding was reviewed.

The Chairman thanked the Housing Strategy & Development Manager for the information session.

(Councillor Phillips left the meeting.)

### **27. Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 26 July 2017**

The Committee considered the following item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 26 July 2017.

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

### Item 7 – Environment Enforcement Service Delivery Options

The Committee supported Option 2 in the report recommendations.

The Committee strongly recommended that enforcement through the Courts should be looked at, something that would be welcomed by residents. It also stressed that enforcement should not focus solely on South Leamington, but was required across the whole District.

### **28. Royal Leamington Spa Car Parking Displacement Plan**

The Committee considered a verbal report from Neighbourhood Services on the progress made on the redevelopment of Covent Garden Car Park and Leamington displacement plan to provide extra parking spaces arising from the loss of the car park. In addition, at the request of the Chairman, the Project Manager – Car Parks, had supplied a short briefing note emailed to Members ahead of the meeting, the contents of which were also loaded onto the Council's website as an addendum.

In response to questions from Members, the Project Manager – Car Parks and the Head of Neighbourhood Services, informed Members that:

- The Council would consider whether to approach Stagecoach about pricing and increasing capacity.
- Any loss of parking for the disabled would be replaced.
- Planning Permission for Campion Hill would be sought once the detailed designs had been completed.
- 440 vehicles would be displaced during the working week and 570 at the weekend.
- There was some spare capacity in other car parks and on-street parking.

The Chairman thanked the officers for their report.

### **29. Leisure Centre Management Contract Update**

The Committee considered a briefing note from Cultural Services that gave an update on progress since Sports and Leisure Management, operating as Everyone Active (EA), had been awarded the contract to run four Council owned facilities plus the dual use facilities at Kenilworth School and Myton School from 1 June 2017.

At the meeting, the Sports & Leisure Contract Manager and the Programme Manager, gave Members a presentation showing a time-lapse film of the building works at St Nicholas' Fields and Castle Farm Leisure Centres.

In response to questions from Members, the officers responded that:

- Following the new contracts, 50 to 60 people had requested refunds of their remaining memberships.
- It was not possible to give categorical reasons why people might have decided to end their memberships because some had simply cancelled their direct debit payments.

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

- The problems encountered with pricing at Kenilworth facilities had been resolved subsequent to staff receiving training.
- Direct Debit was considered a flexible and preferred payment method by many customers because it allowed membership to be spread over the year, instead of lump sum payments for each set of training sessions.
- Currently swimming training sessions were not fully booked so there was opportunity for people to stop sessions, and then re-join a later programme.
- There had not been a wave of complaints following the transfer of responsibility, but any concerns were dealt with straight away by EA. If this did not resolve the issue, then concerns could be directed to the Client Team.
- Figures on facility usage would form part of the Portfolio Holder's annual report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Usage figures were provided to the Council on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis.
- When the leisure centres had closed, any direct debit payments for membership had been frozen; these customers would be contacted and prices would be held until March 2018.

The Deputy Chief Executive (AJ) would supply Members with the specification in respect of Children Safeguarding training.

The Chairman thanked the officers for the progress report.

### **30. Review of the Work Programme & Forward Plan**

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

Members' attention was drawn to an email sent by Councillor Butler in which he explained that 30 August might be too early to undertake pre-scrutiny work on a report listed on the Forward Plan "Planned review of Event Services". He gave timescales of stages before the report would be published and provided a Terms of Reference document for Members to examine. He also advised when might be the best time to undertake the pre-scrutiny work. Members felt that it was important that pre-scrutiny work still be done on 30 August, given the time the report had been planned, and requested that they be provided with a briefing note and a verbal report. This could, in part, focus on the Terms of Reference document that had been provided.

Attention was drawn to the fact that feedback from the Executive on the Task & Finish Group's - Off-street Car Parking Charges Review report was missing from the "Comments from the Executive" report. The Deputy Chief Executive (AJ) and the Committee Services Officer would address this issue and provide the information to Members.

Councillor Naimo reported that she had not received much feedback in response to her request to Members to comment on lessons they felt should be learnt from both recent Task & Finish Groups. It was decided to postpone delivery of this report until September, and Councillor Naimo would make a second request to Members for information.

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

Members asked for a "Mystery Shopper" item to be put on the Work Programme to scrutinise the Council's customer service. The last "Mystery Shopper" exercise had been conducted over ten years ago.

### **Resolved** that

- (1) a briefing note and verbal report on "Planned review of Event Services" is to be delivered on 30 August 2017;
- (2) the Deputy Chief Executive (AJ) and the Committee Services Officer will provide feedback from the Executive meeting held in June on the report produced by the Task 7 Finish Group – Off-street Car Parking Charges Review;
- (3) the Learning Points from the Task & Finish Groups item on the Work Programme will be moved back to September 2017, and Councillor Naimo will approach Members again for information; and
- (4) a "Mystery Shopper" item will be added to the Work Programme, a date to be decided.

(The meeting finished at 8.40 pm)