

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 26 October 2010 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Gifford (Chair) Councillors Barrott, Mrs Blacklock, Boad, Mrs Bromley, Copping, Crowther, Davies, Ms De-Lara-Bond, Dhillon, Gill, Mrs Higgins and Wilkinson.

Councillor Barrott substituted for Councillor Ms Weed.

48. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs Bromley declared a personal interest in any matters relating to Friends of St Nicholas Park, however, no matters relating to this group or to St Nicholas Park were specifically discussed at the meeting.

Minute Number 53 – Discretionary Travel Scheme

Councillor Copping declared a personal interest because he was a Trustee of Older People in Action.

Minute Number 55 – Executive Agenda (Non – Confidential items and reports)

Councillors Gifford, Copping, Gill and Wilkinson declared personal and prejudicial interests in agenda item number 6, Christchurch Gardens Improvements, because they were members of Royal Leamington Spa Town Council and left the room whilst this item was discussed.

49. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2010 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

50. **COMMENTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE**

The Committee considered a report from Members' Services which detailed the responses the Executive gave to the Committees' comments on the reports submitted to the Executive on 29 September 2010.

The report was produced to create a dialogue between the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and it ensured that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were formally made aware of the Executive's responses.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

51. **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan which had been published for October 2010 to January 2011.

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The Committee had concerns that there was still not enough information provided for the items included in the dates to be confirmed section, or reasons why these items were late.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) Councillor Wilkinson be nominated to speak to the Head of Development Services regarding the Economic Development Strategy and the Potential Regeneration projects in Old Town items and to report back, to the Committee, on their progress and any issues requiring scrutiny input at the next meeting; and
- (3) a themes and directions report in relation to the Forward Plan listings for the Housing Strategy and the Private Sector Empty Homes Strategy was requested for the next meeting.

52. REVIEW OF THE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a report from Members' Services on the Committees' work programme for 2010/11.

At the Committees' meeting on 28 September 2010, it was agreed that the reports as listed in appendix one of the report would be submitted to the meeting in October 2010.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) a report regarding Scrutiny of Partnerships be submitted to the Committee in November;
- (3) the report on Maintenance of Tree's be deferred until further notice with only verbal feedback on progress from members of the Group to be made to the November meeting ;
- (4) the Creation of Volunteering Policy report be deferred until the December meeting;
- (5) reports be brought to the November Committee which set out the theme and direction papers of those items in the forward plan that the Committee felt were most important. These would include:
 - (a) Private Sector Empty Homes Strategy
 - (b) Housing Strategy; and
- (6) Councillor Wilkinson be nominated to speak to

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the Head of Development Services regarding the Economic Development Strategy and the Potential Regeneration projects in Old Town items and to report back, to the Committee, on their progress and any issues requiring scrutiny input at the next meeting.

53. DISCRETIONARY TRAVEL SCHEMES

The Committee considered a report from the Discretionary Travel Scheme Task and Finish Group, following the approval of the scoping document on 2 February 2010.

The report was presented by the Chairman of the Task and Finish Group, Councillor Barrott, who answered questions from the Committee.

The Committee felt that further work was needed including further information in relation to the funding required for each recommendation.

RESOLVED that the Task and Finish Group reconsider their report, taking into consideration the requests of the Committee.

54. CALL- IN – EXECUTIVE – 29 SEPTEMBER 2010

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 19, of the Council's Constitution, the Executive decision on the changes to the proposed Free Swimming Programmes was called-in to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by Councillors Barrott, Edwards and Mrs Knight.

The Head of Cultural Services, Rose Winship, attended the meeting and answered questions from members. The Committee had concerns that if this was agreed it could have a big impact on those children using the amenities and learning to swim.

After a debate about the proposed scheme, it was agreed that the Committee did support recommendations 2.1 and 2.2 in the report but not recommendation 2.3. The Committee asked that the decision with regard to 2.3 be referred to Executive for discussion on 24 November 2010 and that their recommendation to look into an alternative approach of free swimming lessons also be taken into consideration to replace recommendation 2.3 in the report.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) with regard to recommendations 2.1 and 2.2 no further action be taken; and
- (2) the decision on recommendation 2.3 in the report be referred to Executive on 24 November 2010 pending a wider examination of discretionary payments as part of the 2011/12 budget setting process, with specific consideration given to investigation of an alternative approach of funding free swimming

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lessons to non-swimmers aged 11 years or over and under 16 years of age.

55. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON- CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 27 OCTOBER 2010

Item 4 – Fees and Charges

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report and, in particular noted and supported the approach outlined in paragraph 3.3. They felt the emphasis on increasing the volume of take up of services rather than the price was the correct approach.

The Committee also had concerns regarding the different fees for burials and cremations for residents and non residents of our District and sought clarification of whether the surcharge should be applied to former residents.

Item 5 – Plans to Celebrate London 2012 in Warwick District

The Committee congratulated the officers on the revised report. They were delighted that officers had also included a large number of taster sessions to encourage people to get involved in sport and activities in the District including those that some people were not aware of.

Item 6 – Christchurch Gardens Improvements

Councillors Copping, Gifford, Gill and Wilkinson all left the room whilst this item was discussed and Councillor Boad was appointed as Chairman for this item.

The Committee were of the opinion that our Executive should respond positively to Leamington Town Council as set out in recommendation 2.2 and should proceed to negotiations as soon as possible as set out in recommendation 2.3. They supported the principle of areas being transferred to town or parish councils or community based organisations but also felt that those who took over the gardens should be aware that they will need to maintain the area.

Item 8 – Gypsy and Traveller Site Update

The Committee welcomed the report and felt that looking for a temporary site was a matter of urgency. However, they did not want the search for a permanent site to be delayed and that if a site was to come forward this should be considered.

56. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 27 OCTOBER 2010

There were no confidential items on the Executive agenda, therefore no items were brought forward for discussion.

(The meeting finished at 8.40pm)