

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 7th April, 2015

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Jane Potter (Chair), and Councillors Carole Gandy, Alan Mason, Paul Swansborough and Pat Witherspoon

Also Present:

Councillor Andrew Brazier

Officers:

K Dicks and S Singleton

Democratic Services Officers:

J Bayley and A Scarce

94. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Andrew Fry.

95. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest nor of any party whip.

96. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd March 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

97. FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF REDDITCH MARKET - PRE-SCRUTINY

The Chair reminded Members that they had agreed to hold this extra meeting at an earlier time in order to pre-scrutinise the Future Management of Redditch Market report. She expressed her disappointment in the content of the report and commented that this was not what the Committee had been expecting. Instead, she

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explained that she had understood that the Committee would be given the opportunity to pre-scrutinise the consultant's report.

Officers explained that at the Portfolio Holders' Briefing it had been agreed that the consultant's report would not be considered until a later date. In the meantime rather than go out with a full procurement exercise Officers had been asked to go for a period of soft market testing. Members were assured that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be given the opportunity to pre-scrutinise the subsequent report on the future of the market, which it was anticipated would contain more specific recommendations including the consultants' report, if Members so wished.

Members of the Committee expressed serious concerns around the decision which had been made, and suggested that this demonstrated that little regard had been shown for the role of the Overview and Scrutiny function in this decision. It was also commented that this would mean further delay to the process. Members noted that the delay was disappointing, particularly given that this meeting of the Committee had been arranged specifically to look at the consultant's report. Whilst the Committee agreed that they had no objection to the soft market testing taking place, Members concurred that it was still important for them to see the consultant's report.

Officers explained that an approach had been made by the Redditch Town Centre Partnership with a view to putting forward a proposal to take over the running of the market. If the procurement exercise, as suggested within the consultant's report, had been followed it might have precluded action in response to the partnership's suggestion. Whilst the Council wished to ensure that all the criteria within the report were met, it was important to ensure that the Council consider all options available.

It was highlighted that the areas raised within the report were those which had been brought forward by the Market Task Group over two years before. Members commented that it was imperative that this matter was brought to a satisfactory and speedy conclusion in order for all those concerned to move forward and the necessary improvements be made to the market as quickly as possible. In particular, concerns were expressed about the continuing impact of delays on existing market stall holders.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be allowed to see a copy of the consultant's report; and**

- 2) the Executive Committee note the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's disappointment with the way in which this report had been handled and the disregard shown to the Committee in failing to permit them access to a copy of the consultant's report.

98. TASK GROUP REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

The Chair explained that this proposal had been brought forward as a starting point for discussion and that it might be more appropriate for the investigation to be carried out by the Committee as part of its Work Programme, with the addition of special meetings in the new municipal year if necessary. The following points were raised during the subsequent discussions:

- It was important that the Committee received details of the background to the choice of consultant and details of the terms of reference which they had been provided with.
- The reasons for the consultation and any conflicts of interest within the Leisure Team.
- Any presentations provided by the Head of Service and Consultants needed to be carried out independently.
- The different options available in respect of a Leisure Trust.
- The areas which had been considered by the Abbey Stadium Task Group.
- Sight of the report which would be considered by the Executive Committee being received in a timely manner. Members were concerned that previously when they had tried to carry out pre-scrutiny work the report had not been made available to them until 24 hours prior to their meeting due to restrictions over the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's access to final reports.
- The importance of the Committee having a clear understanding of the facts in respect of this matter.

Officers explained that in order to pre-scrutinise items on the Executive's Work Programme it was not always necessary for them to receive the actual report. This work could for example be carried out by a number of briefings. However, it was accepted that this was difficult when items were not necessarily included on the Work Programme in a timely manner and therefore this was being addressed by senior management.

Members discussed the potential timescale for the work to be carried out by the Committee and after further discussion it was

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- 1) the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services be invited to the next meeting of the Committee to present the terms of reference and specification in respect of the consultation;
- 2) the consultants be invited to attend a subsequent meeting to present on the subject of its findings; and
- 3) the Committee carry out pre-scrutiny of the final report prior to it being considered by the Executive Committee.

99. TACKLING OBESITY TASK GROUP - FEEDBACK FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Officers explained that the Tackling Obesity Task Group's report had been considered by the Executive Committee and its response was attached as an appendix to the report. The Executive Committee had noted the recommendations and suggested that the report's findings be referred to partner organisations. Officers had provided five options within the body of the report and it was now in the gift of the Committee, as the parent body, to decide what, if any, further action to take. It was highlighted to Members that there were only two recommendations which would be suitable for consideration by partner organisations as the third and fourth recommendations required action from the Council.

The Chair expressed her disappointment at what appeared to be the Executive Committee's lack of commitment to what was a serious issue within the Borough. Members commented on the lack of response received from the Redditch and Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). It was suggested that it might be appropriate for the report to be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board as the CCG was a member. Concerns were expressed that if the report was presented to the Redditch Community Wellbeing Group no further action would be taken. However, it was highlighted that, as detailed in the report, a lot of good work was being carried out and the Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust would be in a good position to disseminate the information to other partners.

Further discussion followed in respect of monitoring the outcomes of the work. Members agreed it was important that the Committee received feedback from the organisations that it referred the report on to for further action.

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- 1) the Tackling Obesity Task Group's final report be presented at meetings of the Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust and the Health and Wellbeing Board; and
- 2) the Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust and the Health and Wellbeing Board be asked to respond to recommendations 1 and 2 of the Tackling Obesity Task Group's final report and to provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with feedback after considering the report.

As this was the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of the municipal year the Chair took the opportunity to thank all Members and Officers for their support. Particular reference was made to thank Councillor Carole Gandy who had confirmed she would be standing down at the local elections in May 2015.

The Meeting commenced at 4.35 pm
and closed at 5.23 pm