

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7th April 2015

TACKLING OBESITY TASK GROUP – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE’S RESPONSE

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bill Hartnett, Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership and Partnership (including health and the voluntary sector).
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No, though he did participate in the Executive Committee’s decision about the group’s recommendations.
Relevant Director	Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive.
Ward(s) Affected	No specific ward relevance.
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This report provides an update on the Executive Committee’s response to the Tackling Obesity Task Group’s recommendations. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is also provided with an opportunity to consider the most appropriate action, if any, to take in response to the Executive Committee’s decision on this matter.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that one of the following options be approved:

- a) **arrangements be made for the Tackling Obesity Task Group’s final report to be presented at a meeting of the Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust;**
- b) **arrangements be made for the Tackling Obesity Task Group’s final report to be considered by relevant partner organisations (*to be specified by Members*);**
- c) **the Tackling Obesity Task Group’s final report be referred to a meeting of Council for further consideration;**
- d) **no further action be taken; or**
- e) **alternative action, to be identified and clearly outlined by the Committee during the meeting, be taken.**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

7th April 2015

3. KEY ISSUES

Background

- 3.1 The subject of obesity was first identified as a potential topic for scrutiny during the Overview and Scrutiny training session in June 2014. A Task Group review of the action that could be taken to tackle obesity levels in the Borough was subsequently launched in August 2014. Five Members were appointed to this review including; Councillors Jane Potter (Chair), Joe Baker, Andrew Brazier, Natalie Brookes and Paul Swansborough.
- 3.2 Members of the Tackling Obesity Task Group reported their findings and recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3rd March 2015. All of the group's recommendations were endorsed during the meeting, though support for the recommendations was not unanimous.
- 3.3 The Executive Committee considered the group's report at a meeting on 10th March 2015. At the end of a detailed debate the Committee resolved to note the group's recommendations and asked for the Task Group to consider presenting their findings and recommendations for the consideration of relevant partner organisations. A key concern of the Executive Committee was that a multi-agency approach was required to tackle obesity levels and that the Council could not act alone to implement the group's recommendations. Further information about the Executive Committee's response to the group's recommendations can be viewed in Appendix 1 to the report.
- 3.4 The intention of this report is to provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as the parent Committee of the Task Group, with an opportunity to consider the most appropriate action to take in response to the Executive Committee's proposals. Four potential options have been identified for the Committee's consideration, though Members are also invited in relation to Option E to propose any alternative actions that could be taken.

Option A

- 3.5 The Redditch Partnership is a Local Strategic Partnership comprising representatives from a range of local partner organisations. One of the partnership's local priorities is to tackle health inequalities and therefore health issues, such as tackling obesity, should be of interest to most partner organisations.
- 3.6 The Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust (RCWT) is a subsidiary theme group of the Redditch Local Strategic Partnership. The RCWT is responsible for looking at issues regarding children and young people and health issues. This group also oversees the Redditch Health and Wellbeing Plan. The RCWT might therefore be the most appropriate representative of the Redditch Partnership to present the group's findings.

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

7th April 2015

Option B

- 3.7 There are a range of local partner organisations that may be interested in the outcome of the Task Group investigation. Some of these organisations may prefer to consider the group's findings independently and may not have delegated authority to their representative on the Redditch Partnership to make such decisions on their behalf. To address this situation the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may prefer to refer the Task Group's findings for the consideration of a range of partner organisations.
- 3.8 If Members prefer this option the Committee is asked to specify the organisations that should be approached to consider the group's findings.

Option C

- 3.9 Generally Overview and Scrutiny reports are considered by the Executive Committee where a decision is usually made either to endorse the recommendations or to reject them. The Committee's response to the Tackling Obesity Task Group's recommendations was unusual inasmuch as Members decided to note the recommendations and to suggest further action, which means that the recommendations have neither been fully approved nor rejected.
- 3.10 In the Council's constitution once the Executive Committee has considered a scrutiny report or recommendations "...the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may then request the Chief Executive to place an item on the next available meeting of the Council to enable the Council to consider those proposals..." There is no requirement in the constitution for the Executive Committee to have approved the recommendations for this referral to Council to take place.
- 3.11 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may conclude that this option would be the most appropriate to ensure that a final decision can be made one way or another by the Council in relation to the group's recommendations. This may be of particular interest in relation recommendations three and four from the group, which require action from the Council only.

Option D

- 3.12 The Executive Committee was suggesting that the Task Group take additional action to present their findings for the consideration of relevant local partners. However, the Executive committee recognised that Overview and Scrutiny is an independent, Member-led process and that Task Groups cannot be told what to do or to recommend by the Executive Committee.
- 3.13 In this context it would be legitimate for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to conclude that no further action should be taken.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7th April 2015

Option E

- 3.14 Members may not feel that any of the options detailed in this report would be suitable. Instead, Members may identify an alternative course of action that would be appropriate to take in relation to this report. The Committee is asked to clearly specify any alternative proposals to ensure that the process is fully transparent.

Financial Implications

- 3.15 If the Committee selects the Option A there will be the cost of the Officer time involved in arranging for the Tackling Obesity Task Group's report and recommendations to be considered by the Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust. There will also be additional costs in terms of printing copies of the group's report and in reporting the responses of the partnership back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.16 These costs would be even greater if Members agree to pursue Option B as significant Officer time will be required to arrange for the group's recommendations and report to be considered by a range of partner organisations. All the responses received would need to be collated and reported back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any subsequent decisions reached by the Council would need to be reported back to those relevant partner organisations for consideration.

Legal Implications

- 3.17 There are no legal implications directly relating to this report. However, Members are asked to note that if the Committee chooses either Option a or Option B it would not appropriate to ask partner organisation to comment on the group's third and fourth recommendations as these require action from Redditch borough Council only.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.18 If the Committee chooses to present the group's findings to a number of partner organisations Members need to be aware that Officer time would be taken arranging for partners to consider the group's findings. This would divert officers away from working on other Task Group activities at the start of the new municipal year and therefore could impact on the output of scrutiny in 2015/16.
- 3.19 Members should note that there is no legal requirement for local partner organisations or for the Redditch Partnership to either consider or implement the proposals arising from a scrutiny investigation. The Committee would therefore need to rely on the good will of the partnership or partner organisations to consider their findings.

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

7th April 2015

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.20 The Council has the strategic purpose; help me to live my life independently (including health and activity). By promoting the group's findings the Council would help to demonstrate it is committed to achieving this strategic purpose on behalf of customers and to tackling health inequalities.
- 3.21 No equalities and diversity implications have been identified to this report.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

There is a risk that as the Executive Committee has chosen simply to note the Task Group's report partner organisations and / or the partnership will question the extent to which Redditch Borough Council would be committed to implementing the recommendations. This may in turn influence the willingness of partners to endorse and enact the group's proposals.

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Tackling Obesity Task Group's final report.

6. APPENDICES

Extract from the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday 10th March 2015.

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