

Executive Committee

12th November 2013

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Bill Hartnett (Chair), Councillor Greg Chance (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juliet Brunner, Brandon Clayton, John Fisher, Phil Mould, Mark Shurmer and Debbie Taylor

Officers:

E Baker, C Flanagan, S Hanley, Lynn Jones, D Riley and A de Warr

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

71. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

72. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

73. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader advised that an additional meeting of the Executive Committee was to be convened on the evening of Tuesday, 26th November 2013 at 7.00pm for the purpose of discussing the future of the Town's Football Club.

74. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 15th October 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

75. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

The Committee considered a report which presented proposals for an amendment to the Council's existing Council Tax Support

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Chair

Scheme as there was a requirement upon the Council to review the Scheme on an annual basis. The report contained the responses to an initial period of consultation and Members were asked to agree proposals for a further period of public consultation. Additional information was circulated to Members at the meeting detailing the impact on individuals within the Borough of the various options under consideration.

It was noted that there was variation across the county in what was being proposed with Councils consulting on entitlement to Council Tax support being capped at 80%, 90% and 100% of Council Tax liability. Discussions had taken place with the County Council over the proposals and there was an expectation that it would provide a hardship fund should the Borough Council make provision to meet the projected shortfall in full. The impact on the County Council and other public authorities, most particularly the Police and Fire and Rescue Services, was highlighted as a reason for taking the difficult decision to reduce entitlement to Council Tax Support. Members were also reminded that a further report on Council Tax Exemptions would be presented to the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the outcome of the initial statutory consultation on options for changes to the Local Council Tax Scheme be noted;**
- 2) for the purposes of the further statutory consultation that is required, the current Scheme be amended, namely that entitlement to Council Tax support should be capped at 80% of Council Tax liability so that all working age claimants will pay a minimum of 20% towards their Council Tax Liability, and that the amended version shall become the proposed draft Scheme 2014/15;**
- 3) the Executive Director of Finance and Resources be authorised to consult on this draft Scheme;**
- 4) a report on the outcome of the further consultation be brought back to the Committee in due course for a decision on its recommendation to Council on the Scheme to be adopted from April 2014; and**
- 5) Officers be instructed to explore and report back options for a hardship fund, as well as further technical changes to Council Tax Exemptions.**

76. NOMINATION OF AN ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE

Members considered a request to list the REDI Centre as an Asset of Community Value. The nomination had been received from Redditch Youth and Community Enterprise (RYCE) who had made the request to allow for it to remain as a community asset in the future. The Committee was reminded that it was for the Head of Planning and Regeneration, following consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, to make the final decision to list the building as an Asset of Community Value. Officers also confirmed the timescales involved in the process, with there being a six-week period within which community groups might confirm expressions of interest, to be followed by a four and a half month period to prepare a bid.

Members were happy to support the nomination presenting, as it did, the opportunity to provide a community asset in this part of the Borough and to bring a disused building back to use with the added benefit of the costs associated with retaining an empty building being removed. It was also suggested that Officers explore opportunities for use of the building in the meantime of any potential asset sale moratorium as a result of the nomination.

RESOLVED that

the listing of the REDI Centre as an Asset of Community Value be supported.

77. IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Members received a report which sought their approval to the Council becoming a public body member of the Improvement and Efficiency Social Enterprise (iESE) and associated measures. iESE had originally operated as one of the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships until removal of central government funding caused it to continue its work under the umbrella of an independent company with the same aims and objectives. It was made clear that the only financial implication for the Council was entering into a guarantee for the sum of £1.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the principle of Redditch Borough Council becoming a member of iESE Limited be agreed;**
- 2) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive following consultation with the Leader of the Council to approve and execute any documentation necessary to give effect to Recommendation 1) above; and**

- 3) **the proposal in relation to the nomination of a Redditch Borough Councillor as Voting Delegate be endorsed.**

78. REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO THE GREATER BIRMINGHAM AND SOLIHULL LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP SPATIAL PLAN FOR RECOVERY AND GROWTH CONSULTATION DRAFT (SEPTEMBER 2013)

A report was considered which set out a proposed response from the Council to the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Spatial Plan for Recovery and Growth Consultation Draft. The opportunity had been taken to respond to this high level plan under the duty to co-operate and in the light of the Council operating within this LEP.

It was noted that the Spatial Plan had been considered by the Planning Advisory Panel prior to it being submitted to the Executive Committee. There was cross-party support for a cautiously positive response given that the scale of growth required for Birmingham was still not known in full at the present time.

RECOMMENDED that

the Redditch Borough Council response to the GBSLEP Spatial Plan for Recovery and Growth Consultation Draft (September 2013) (Appendix 1 to the report) be approved.

79. MAKING EXPERIENCES COUNT - CUSTOMER SERVICES 2ND QUARTER MONITORING REPORT

A report which provided details of customer feedback data for the second quarter of 2013/14, along with transactional data relating to the Customer Service Centre was received by the Committee.

It was reported that numbers of complaints for this quarter had been almost double those recorded for the first quarter and this was attributed to the teams undertaking transformation work being much better at capturing customer contact than had previously been the case. The Committee was also informed that data for face to face demand at the Customer Service Centre prior to January 2013 were not considered to be as robust as might be wished.

RESOLVED that

the contents of the report be noted.

80. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8th October 2013.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8th October 2013 be received and noted.

81. MINUTES / REFERRALS - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, EXECUTIVE PANELS ETC.

There were no minutes or referrals under this item.

82. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

The update on the activity of the Council's Advisory Panels and similar bodies was considered by the Committee. The Chair of the Economic Advisory Panel highlighted that a Group was being drawn together to investigate the means by which economic development might be levered into North Worcestershire.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

83. ACTION MONITORING

The Committee's Action Monitoring report was considered by Members. It was noted that both actions had been completed and, furthermore, it was reported that urgency procedures had been used to gain Council approval for the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Programme in order to adhere to the timeline for the disbursement of grants.

RESOLVED that

the Action Monitoring report be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 7.45 pm

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Chair