

Overview and Scrutiny

Committee

9th October 2012

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Juliet Brunner (Chair), and Councillors Andrew Brazier, David Bush, John Fisher, Andrew Fry, Pattie Hill, Roger Hill (substituting for Councillor Simon Chalk), Gay Hopkins and Pat Witherspoon

Also Present:

Councillors Greg Chance and Michael Chalk

Officers:

R Bamford, C Felton, R Griffin, J Willis, R Bamford, C Felton, S Morgan, p.smith and J Staniland, and J Willis

Committee Services Officer:

J Bayley and M Craggs

75. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Simon Chalk. Councillor Roger Hill was confirmed as his substitute.

76. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

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

77. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 11th September 2012 be approved as a true and correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

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Chair

78. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNUAL REPORT - PLANNING, REGENERATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORT - COUNCILLOR GREG CHANCE

Further to consideration of the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development and Transport's written report at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11th September 2012 Councillor chance provided a response to Members' questions as detailed in Appendix 1. Additional information was also provided in relation to the following subjects:

a) Business expansion in Council properties

Members were advised that the potential for local businesses to expand their premises on Council owned land was altogether dependent on the merits of the individual planning application. The importance of increased employment was fully appreciated, however important environmental considerations needed to be taken into account. Members heard that the co-existence of planning and economic development within the remit of a single portfolio ensured that both matters could be considered alongside one another as part of the application process.

b) New business start-ups in the town

The action being taken by the Council to attract high-class restaurants to the town centre was also discussed. Officers explained that the role of the Local Plan was to make the land and infrastructure available to make Redditch an attractive proposition for all business. Ultimately, however, it was a commercial decision for any restaurant chain or business regarding whether to open new premises in Redditch.

c) Redditch Town Centre - TikTap

The Committee was advised that Redditch residents and shoppers would soon be able to benefit from discounts and special offers from town centre shops and businesses through 'TikTap' which was being introduced by the Redditch Town Centre Partnership. Redditch would be one of the first locations in the UK to launch this service. Additional information was requested by Members regarding the operation of this new service.

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c) Choose How You Move 2

There was a mixed response from Members in terms of their experience of the Choose How You Move 2 project. Whilst the project was delivered by Worcestershire County Council Members suggested that Councillors and Officers at the Council needed to develop a clearer understanding of how to utilise the project effectively to ensure that sufficient value for money was obtained.

d) Economic Advisory Panel (ECAP)

Members noted that the Council's Economic Advisory Panel (ECAP) had the potential to assume a key role co-ordinating the Council's response to economic development issues, in a similar manner to the role of the Planning Advisory Panel in developing Planning policy. However, concerns were expressed that the panel was meeting infrequently and the remit of the body was currently restricted in scope.

Following the presentation, Members suggested that more needed to be done to ensure that the Council's Economic Advisory Panel (ECAP) meetings were better attended and were more effective in general.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Councillor Chance for his comprehensive report.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **Redditch Borough Councillors and Officers develop a clear understanding of the most effective uses of *Choose How You Move 2* monies in Redditch Borough;**
- 2) **the Economic Advisory Panel (ECAP) should meet more frequently, the scope of the Panel should be expanded and more active participation of elected Members at meetings of the Panel should be promoted; and**

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

79. INCREASING RATES OF RECYCLING - MONITORING UPDATE REPORT

As no relevant Officer from Environmental Services was in attendance to present the report, Members agreed to defer the item until the following meeting to ensure that any related questions could be adequately addressed.

RESOLVED that

consideration of the item be deferred to the following Committee meeting on 9th November 2012.

80. DIAL A RIDE EXTENDED SERVICE - FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Committee considered a feasibility report for extending the Dial a Ride service to include transporting young people to local events and festivals, and making the vehicles available for hire out of hours to other groups with transport needs. Officers explained that the potential for the service to be extended to transporting young people had originally been proposed in the Youth Services Provision Task Group's final report. The Executive Committee had expressed interest in the proposal when the item was presented in April 2012 but had suggested that further information was required from Officers regarding the feasibility of the proposal and had requested that a report on the subject be produced for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Concerns were raised regarding the cost implications for this extended service. Officers acknowledged that any permanent driver working more than 37.5 hours a week would need to be paid at an overtime rate. However, in this instance, Members heard that it could be cheaper for the Council to employ extra drivers on a temporary basis to meet increased demand. Officers further clarified that the extended service would only be made available to community groups that met the Council's eligibility criteria.

It was suggested that the Committee receive a monitoring report twelve months after the introduction of the extended service to enable Members to review its effectiveness and to propose any necessary amendments in the event of the extended scheme being approved.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the Dial-a-Ride scheme operated under a permit issued under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985, be extended to include making the Dial-a Ride vehicles available to those community organisations registered with the Council for use during evenings and weekends;
- 2) that the charging schedule as set out in Appendix 1 be adopted; and
- 3) that the scheme is based on the examples presented in appendix 2;
- 4) subject to the extended Dial a Ride scheme being approved, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive a monitoring update report on the subject 12 months after the scheme's introduction.

RESOVED that

the report be noted

81. QUARTERLY FINANCE MONITORING REPORT - QUARTER 1 - APRIL - JUNE 2012

Officers presented an overview of the quarterly budget monitoring report for the period from April up to and including June 2012.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

82. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNUAL REPORT - WRITTEN REPORT - LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

The Committee proposed the following list of questions for the consideration of the Portfolio Holder for Local Environment and Health, Councillor Debbie Taylor, ahead of her appearance before the Committee on 6th November 2012.

- 1) Please could you outline what you consider to be:
 - a) The successes within the remit of your Portfolio?
 - b) Areas of concern within the remit of your Portfolio?(Within your answer please could you refer to the impact of recent budget cuts on resurfacing of footpaths in the Borough).

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- 2) Why has there been an under spend on the budget for the Solar PV project?
 - a) What will the surplus funds remaining be spent on?
- 3) The written report for your portfolio stated that “progress has been made on the transfer of assets under Section 106 agreement at Brockhill. The initial transfer of two areas that contain the majority of POS and drainage features will lead to the ‘unlocking’ of other transfer funds”. How long will it take to transfer these assets?
- 4) What progress has been made on transformation of the services within your remit and what impact are you anticipating transformation will have on those services?
- 5) How many trees is Redditch Borough Council due to plant in the next twelve months – two years?
- 6) As Redditch Borough Council’s representative on the Health and Wellbeing Board how do you report back to Council?
- 7) Which organisations have been identified to deliver healthy eating and cookery sessions?
- 8) LED lighting was introduced at the Palace Theatre relatively recently. What plans, if any, are there to extend the provision of LED lighting to other Council properties in order to reduce the Council’s carbon footprint?

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

83. ACTIONS LIST

The Committee heard that an email that contained the requested information on action being taken to attract new tenants to Threadneedle House had been circulated to Members since the publication of the agenda.

RESOLVED that

the Committee’s Actions List be noted.

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84. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 18th September 2012 and the Forward Plan be noted.

85. TASK & FINISH REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

There were no draft scoping documents.

86. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

The Committee received the following reports in relation to current reviews:

a) Arts and Cultural Centre – Chair, Councillor Gay Hopkins

It was reported that the group had made a promising start to its review having already held two productive meetings, while a number of future interviews had been booked until early December 2012. The group was also planning to visit a number of art centres as part of the review.

b) Concessionary Rents Short, Sharp Pre-Scrutiny Review – Councillors Andrew Brazier and Juliet Brunner

Members were advised that the review had been completed. The final report was due to be considered by the Committee at its meeting in November.

c) Redditch Market – Chair, Councillor Andrew Brazier

Members were informed that that the group had recently held a mid-review meeting to set out its direction of travel towards the review's completion. Councillor Brazier also informed the Committee that he had recently visited another local market in a personal capacity and would feed back to the group at its next meeting.

d) Sickness Policy Short, Sharp Pre-Scrutiny Review – Councillors John Fisher and Pat Witherspoon

Members were advised that the review had been completed. The final report was due to be considered by the Committee at its meeting in November.

The Chair thanked the participating Councillors on the Short, Sharp reviews for their hard work during a short period of time.

RESOLVED that

the update reports be noted.

87. HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillor Witherspoon, the Committee's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), provided an update on the latest meeting of HOSC which had taken place on Wednesday 12th September 2012.

Members were advised that the outcomes of the Joint Services Review (JSR), as part of NHS Worcestershire's review of four areas of acute healthcare services, had not been available for the HOSC's consideration. It was understood that this would be considered at the following meeting on 10th October 2012. Elsewhere, the HOSC received a very informative presentation on the county's successful Integrated Care Programme which was one of the best performing in the country.

The JSR would continue to be monitored at the following meeting of the HOSC, at which Members were also due to receive a general update on the work of the West Mercia Cluster, and a progress update on planned changes to the West Midlands Ambulance Service.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

88. CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY PANEL - CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair of the Redditch Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Andrew Brazier, delivered an overview of his report from the most recent Panel meeting on 4th October 2012.

Members were advised that the three community safety partnerships for Redditch, Bromsgrove, and Wyre Forest, had recently been merged together to form a North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership. This was officially operating in a shadow form until its terms of reference had been ratified by the Home Office. The Panel would help to ensure that Redditch's own

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crime and disorder issues and priorities were not lost as a result of the merger.

The Panel had received a significant amount of crime data, including detailed breakdowns on criminal damage and hate crimes in Redditch.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

89. REFERRALS

There were no referrals.

90. WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair confirmed that the Committee would receive a briefing on the Council's projected budget position for the following three years on Thursday 29th November 2012. Members would also have the opportunity to look at any initial budget bids and other relevant financial information that was available at that point.

Members entered into a brief discussion about the most appropriate start time for future Committee meetings. It was felt that there needed to be a consistent start time to avoid any confusion being created.

RESOLVED that

the Committee's Work Programme be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 8.05 pm