

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 2nd April, 2013

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:

Mr M Hall, (Co-opted Member of the Arts and Culture Centre Task Group and Chair of the Arts in Redditch Network).

Officers:

L Berry, J Pickering and F Scott.

Democratic Services Officers:

J Bayley and M Craggs

APPENDIX A: MINUTE 168

ACCESS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE TASK GROUP - MONITORING UPDATE REPORT

Members received a monitoring report update on action taken to implement recommendations made by the Access for Disabled People Task Group in August 2012.

Members received updates on the following recommendations:

Recommendations 3 and 4: Accessibility of Taxi Services

The Committee was informed that the outcomes of a six week consultation with local taxi drivers and the local Taxi Association on the possibility of offering extend licenses for adapted vehicles to 12 years, rather than 9 years for standard vehicles, were to be reported for the consideration of the Licensing Committee at its meeting on 1st July 2013. Members commented that the Council

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Chair

needed to make it more financial viable for taxi operators to purchase adapted vehicles for their fleet.

The Licensing committee was also proposing that taxi drivers should be offered mandatory disability awareness training. This was similarly subject to the outcomes of consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Recommendation 6: Member Development

Members were advised that an equalities training session had already been held for Councillors. It was reported that this session had been relatively successful, although the subject matter could not be discussed in any great detail, especially around what is meant by 'discrimination', due to the brevity of the session. However, Members in attendance did return positive feedback. Therefore it was proposed that a similar session be included on an annual basis in the Member Development schedule.

Recommendation 10a: Shopmobility Access Ramp

Officers had been asked to investigate the potential for a canopy to be installed over the ramp access to Shopmobility. This review had been completed in time for the meeting and Officers reported that the installation of a canopy would require planning permission as well as permission from the Kingfisher Centre. Plans outlining a possible design for the canopy had been submitted by Officers, though Members were advised that these plans could be amended. The Committee was advised that it would cost the Council £4,857.00 to install a canopy at this location if these plans were adopted, which would require an in-year bid from Council balances.

Members recognised that the Council had to consider this level of expenditure on Council services very carefully. However, the Committee concurred that the idea should still be pursued as the canopy would provide much needed shelter for Shopmobility customers.

Recommendation 10d: Disability Parking spaces - Former Covered Market

Officers proposed that no further action be taken to introduce disabled parking spaces or a Dial a Ride collection and delivery point in the former covered market area. Members were informed that the majority of local stakeholders consulted on the proposal were opposed to the idea. There were health and safety concerns relating to the potential for conflict between vehicles and

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pedestrians. Furthermore, planning permission was unlikely to be obtained for any additional car parking in the location as the area had been designated for retail development.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) a disability awareness session should be delivered on an annual basis as part of the Member Development Programme at Redditch Borough Council; and**
- 2) funding of £4,857 be released from balances in 2013/14 to meet the costs associated with the installation; and**

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.25 pm