

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 23rd July, 2013

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor David Bush (Chair), Councillor Gay Hopkins (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Andrew Brazier, Pattie Hill, Roger Hill, Alan Mason, Yvonne Smith and Pat Witherspoon

Also Present:

Councillor Juliet Brunner

Officers:

H Broughton, J Godwin and J Staniland

Committee Services Officer:

J Bayley and M Craggs

22. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Chalk, Fry, and Gandy. Councillor Roger Hill was confirmed as a substitute for Councillor Chalk, while Councillor Pattie Hill was confirmed as a substitute for Councillor Fry.

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest nor of any Party Whip.

24. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 2nd July 2013 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

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Chair

25. LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP - MONITORING UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received its six monthly update on the work of the Redditch Local Strategic Partnership in accordance with the four priority areas of the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).

Members heard that the two functioning theme groups of the Partnership, the Health and Wellbeing sub-group and the Children's Local Partnership, had merged to form one cross cutting group in the expectation that a wider range of partners could come together to discuss important health issues in a collaborative manner. As the newly formed group's action plan had yet to be finalised, it was proposed that information about this should form part of the next six monthly update. Alternatively, the Committee could choose to invite individual partners to explain what they were doing.

Members expressed concern regarding the change in location for sexual health clinics as it was thought that important services could be moved from areas of highest need, including Woodrow. Members requested further information about the extent to which the clinics met the needs of teenage/young women as Members were keen to ensure that these facilities helped to address teenage pregnancy levels. The Committee was advised that the issue of teenage pregnancy levels could form part of emerging local health priorities. Officers were requested to feedback Members' concerns to the Partnership Board.

There was also some concern that Members had not been sufficiently involved in the Church Hill Big Local Scheme that was to give residents control of a £1million budget to improve the area during the next ten years. Officers explained that the initial emphasis was on a bottom up approach that would give local residents the opportunity to state how the monies should be spent without any outside influence. It was the intention that Councillors and other partners would then become involved in the process.

Members queried whether the needs of adults and the elderly would be met through the SCS, especially around health. Officers acknowledged that previous actions had been focused on meeting the needs of young people. However, they were fully conscious of the needs of adults and the elderly and these would be taken into account as the new action plan was developed.

Officers acknowledged that the Partnership had focused least on its third priority to provide a more diverse range of employment within

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the Borough. However, other mechanisms and groups already existed to ensure that Redditch's economic needs were being met, including the North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit.

Members were very keen that more activities should be provided for adult and elderly people in the town's parks and open spaces, including Morton Stanley Park. It was suggested that county Councillors could submit a joint bid for new adult exercise equipment to be installed in Morton Stanley Park or funding could be obtained from public health sources. The Committee was advised that it was likely this equipment would cost approximately £60,000.

RECOMMENDED that

the Council identify suitable sources of funding, including from external partner organisations such as Worcestershire County Council, that could be used to fund the installation of adult exercise equipment in Morton Stanley Park.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

26. PROMOTING SPORTING PARTICIPATION - MONITORING UPDATE REPORT

Officers provided a written update on what had been done to implement the recommendations of the Promoting Sporting Participation Task Review which had been approved by the Executive Committee in June 2012.

Recommendation One

Members were advised that this was being implemented in two stages. The first stage involved improving the relevant section of the existing Council website. It was reported that as a consequence the relevant web pages attracting many more hits. This had been boosted by improved manipulation of internet search engines to prioritise information about sporting activities in Redditch. However, Officers were not yet ready to export these pages across to an independent site which represented the second stage of the process.

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Recommendation Two

A decision had been taken by the group leaders that no separate team logos would be created for Redditch and Bromsgrove.

Recommendation Three

Excellent progress had been made regarding the introduction of more informal games areas and additional equipment in Redditch's parks and open spaces. It was reported that disc golf and orienteering were especially proving popular. Members encouraged Officers to promote these activities more widely to ensure that these areas and equipment were fully utilised. It was also suggested that new signage should be erected to advertise the new informal games areas and suggest how they could best be used.

Officers agreed to provide further information regarding these plans which would be focused on encouraging 'play' rather than necessarily 'sport'.

Members also requested information regarding how participation in the informal games areas would be monitored ahead of the Committee's next meeting.

Recommendations Four and Five

Officers reported that much had already been done in implementing these recommendations, especially around developing closer links with North East Worcestershire (NEW) College to enable its students to support the new sporting events through the Bromsgrove and Redditch Active Volunteering Opportunities (BRAVO) programme. Members also heard that the Park Run programme in Arrow Valley was proving very successful with high levels of participation.

Having received the update, Members felt that the Boules pitch at the Redditch Rugby Ground could be more widely utilised and requested that Officers investigate the matter further.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

27. TASK GROUP REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

Councillor Bush presented a draft scoping document regarding the Abbey Stadium for the Committee's consideration on behalf of Councillor Derek Taylor who had proposed the review. It was

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thought that the revamped stadium was already operating at full capacity only a year after being reopened. It was therefore suggested that the proposed review could focus on the final business case for the revamped Abbey Stadium against current operation, and also investigate possible options for expanding the sporting facilities and activities to meet demand.

Members heard that the success of the Abbey Stadium revamp had exceeded Officers' expectation. In particular, this had led to big pressure on available space during peak periods. It was felt that this could be looked at as part of the proposed review, as well as exploring any potential opportunities to increase the use of other areas of the stadium such as the athletics track.

Some concern was raised that there would be insufficient finance to support further changes to the stadium's facilities. Officers explained that this would form an integral part of the review and that any new work would require a very strong business case. However, previous changes to the stadium were said to have been financially self-sustaining.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Abbey Stadium Task Group be launched; and**
- 2) the Chair of the review group be appointed at the Committee's next meeting on 13th August 2013.**

28. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME

Members noted the outcome of the Executive Committee's consideration of the Housing Density Target's Task Review Final Report at its most recent meeting on 9th July 2013 when it had been agreed that the matter would be referred to the Council's Planning Advisory Panel. It had not yet been confirmed when Officers would present the amended Policy 5 of the emerging Draft Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4 for the consideration of the Panel, although it was expected that this would take place in August.

In terms of the Executive Committee Work Programme, Members expressed an interest in potentially looking at the County Air Quality Action Plan as a post-decision scrutiny exercise; and the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Programme 2014/15.

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RESOLVED that

the minutes of the Executive Committee held on 9th July 2013 and the latest edition of the Executive Committee's Work Programme be noted.

29. WORK PROGRAMME

As requested at the previous meeting, Members were advised that Officers were due to deliver presentations on the following subjects at forthcoming meetings of the Committee:

- Section 106 Agreements - 13th August 2013; and
- outcomes of current discussions between Redditch Borough Council and Worcestershire County Council to clarify land ownership and maintenance arrangements - 10th September 2013.

Elsewhere, Councillor Hopkins confirmed that she would present a draft scoping document on the subject of landscaping at the following Committee meeting.

Councillor Witherspoon advised Members that she would be submitting a scoping document on the subject of the Voluntary Sector for Members' consideration in due course. She was particularly keen to investigate how Voluntary Sector organisations utilised funding provided by the Council.

Councillor Mason proposed that Members should review Council expenditure on 'peripheral matters', such as stationary, meeting refreshments, and ink cartridges. It was subsequently suggested that Officers should be invited to a forthcoming meeting to deliver a presentation on the subject of the Council's procurement process and the implications for miscellaneous Council resources.

RESOLVED that

- 1) Officers deliver a presentation at a forthcoming meeting of the Committee on the Council's procurement of miscellaneous peripheral items;**
- 2) a draft scoping document on landscaping be presented for the Committee's consideration at its next meeting on 13th August 2013;**

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- 3) a draft scoping document on the subject of Voluntary Sector organisations' use of Council funding be presented for Members consideration at a forthcoming meeting of the Committee; and
- 4) Committee's Work Programme be noted.

30. TASK GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

The Committee was advised that the first meeting of the Joint Worcestershire Regulatory Services Scrutiny Task Group had yet to take place as not all of the participating local authorities had confirmed their appointments onto the review.

RESOLVED that

the update report be noted.

31. HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillor Witherspoon, the Committee's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), informed the Committee that HOSC's latest meeting had taken place earlier on 23rd July 2013.

Members heard that the HOSC had received a briefing on end of life care from representatives from Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, Worcestershire Health and Care Trust and the South Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group. However, having received a generally positive report about the quality of palliative care in the county, the HOSC received a personal account from a local Councillor whose family member had recently received this form of care. The personal account included a number of deep grievances with the quality of care received and served to undermine the positive report received from the health professionals.

The HOSC also discussed the future of the Shrubbery Avenue, a seven bed community inpatient ward in Worcester that provided recovery interventions, assessment, and self-management for male adults of working age with complex mental health difficulties.

In terms of the local updates, the main focus in Redditch concerned the future of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust. News was expected to be released on 31st July 2013.

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RESOLVED that
the report be noted.