

Executive Committee

Monday, 8 September 2014

MINUTES

Present:

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

Also Present:

Councillors David Bush and Pat Witherspoon

Officers:

Clare Flanagan, Sue Hanley, Jayne Pickering and Judith Willis

Committee Services Officer:

Sheena Jones

28. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

30. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader announced that an additional meeting of the Executive Committee would be held on Tuesday 3rd February 2015 to consider the Medium Term Financial Plan.

31. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 29th July 2014 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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Chair

32. FOOTBALL PROVISION TASK GROUP - FINAL REPORT

Councillor David Bush presented the final report of the Football Provision Task Group, which he had chaired. He reminded members that the Task Group had reported on its recommendations relating to proposals for relocation by Redditch United football club in April 2014.

The Group had been delayed by the local elections in pursuing its outstanding terms of reference relating to community football. When it resumed its work, the Group was made aware that the Leisure department was discussing future support for football with a stakeholder group. This was informing the action plan which was part of the playing pitch strategy.

The Task Group members considered that if it pursued its review it would be duplicating work being carried out by officers. On this basis it had recommended to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that it cease its work and this had been endorsed by the Committee at its meeting on 2nd September.

There was one recommendation to the Executive arising from the Task Group's work, which was that the Executive ensure the playing pitch strategy identified clear links to the emerging local plan requirements for playing pitch provision. The Leader suggested the recommendation was unnecessary, since the emerging local plan made appropriate provision for playing pitches being developed under its open space policies. The Council would be able to negotiate the development of pitches using evidence provided by Leisure. However, Councillor Bush clarified that the Task Group had learned about changes in the size of pitches for mini and junior football required by the Football Association, which it considered should be taken into account in future improvements and development. This was endorsed by Councillor Pat Witherspoon, who had been a member of the Task Group.

The Leader suggested that the recommendation be altered to note the specific issue raised by the Task Group and to inform future action relating to the provision and improvement of football pitches in the Borough and this was agreed.

On behalf of the Executive Committee the Leader thanked the members of the Task Group for the work they had carried out on this review.

RESOLVED that

The evidence considered by the Football Task Group relating to the requirement for specific pitch arrangements for mini and

junior football be taken into account during the period of the emerging local plan when opportunities arise for the improvement or development of pitches.

33. FINANCE MONITORING REPORT 2014/15 - APRIL - JUNE 2014 (QUARTER 1)

The Committee considered the report which set out the Council's financial position for the period April to June 2014.

It was noted that as at the end of June no significant concerns had been raised by Heads of Service relating to the revenue budget and that they would meet the savings predicted when the budget was set for 2014-15. The underspend from the last financial year had been put into balances which now stood at £1.1m.

Members of the Committee asked questions on a number of aspects of the report as follows:

- Environmental Services – use of agency staff – officers reported that the use of agency staff was limited as far as possible but they were being used in the short term to maintain flexibility in service provision as the department reviewed the way it worked and implemented changes;
- The apparent low level of demand for Disabled Facilities Grants and any action being taken to increase awareness of these – officers reported that work was being done to improve the capture of demand for this service. However, this remained been difficult to predict. Officers agreed to seek more detail from the Head of Service about the work done to encourage applications and report back;
- Officers undertook to find details for the following questions and to report back to all members of the Committee:
 - The number of voluntary bodies using Council accommodation and where they were;
 - Whether any posts were being deleted to make the anticipated savings in the Legal and Democratic Services Department;
 - The split between the swimming pool and gym in the projected overspend (shortfall in income) for the Abbey stadium.

RESOLVED that

- 1) The current financial position on Revenue and Capital be noted as detailed in the report;**

and **RECOMMENDED** that

- 2) **The 2014/15 capital programme is increased by £48k to include a section 106 funded project to extend the car park at Old Forge/Pathways Playing Fields in Matchborough;**
- 3) **£50k of capital allocation in 2014/15 be vired from Home Repairs Assistance to Homes Multiple Occupation Grants, due to increased demand for Homes in Multiple Occupation accommodation following the introduction of the Local Housing Allowance system.**

34. VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR GRANTS PROGRAMME 2015/16

The Committee considered a report which recommended the funding split and themes for voluntary and community sector grants process 2015/16. The theme titles had been updated to reflect the Council's strategic purposes.

It was noted that the proposals took account of recommendations of the Voluntary Sector task group. Further to queries from members arising from this, officers reported that they were looking at ways of funding the proposed apprentice post without needing to make a budget bid.

In approving the recommendations, members of the Committee commended the work undertaken by the many volunteers in the Borough and their contribution to the community.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **The themes and percentages of funding be allocated for the 2015/16 voluntary and community sector grants process as set out in appendix 1 to the report; and**
- 2) **The scoring matrix be updated as set out in appendix 2 of the report.**

35. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 22nd July. It was noted that at minute no.19 the Committee had proposed an amended recommendation relating to the Abbey Stadium Task Group. This was to replace a previous recommendation which the Executive Committee had considered was not appropriate in terms of the suggested process.

The Leader reported that he was happy to endorse the revised wording.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 22nd July 2014 be received and noted;**
- 2) **That the recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as follows be approved:**

that when exploring the option for Council Leisure facilities to be managed by a Trust the potential for the following facilities to be introduced at the Abbey Stadium should be investigated further, in both cases taking into account whether these options would be economically viable:

- a) **Therapeutic services**
- b) **A sauna/steam room.**

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

There were no outstanding referrals to consider.

37. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

With reference to the Economic Advisory Panel, further to the report at the last meeting, the Leader announced that he and the portfolio holder had made progress with the proposal to involve representatives of the business community in a theme group on economic development to support the Local Strategic Partnership. This would effectively replace the Panel, but would involve the same Councillors.

In response to a query, Councillor Chance agreed to include headline updates of economic development activity in the Councillors' newsletter.

The Committee also noted that the Independent Remuneration Panel had met on 27th August.

RESOLVED that

The report be noted.

38. ACTION MONITORING

RESOLVED that

The report be noted.

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Chair

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 7.40 pm