

EXECUTIVE

Committee

15th December 2015

MINUTES

Present:

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

Officers:

Jayne Bough, John Godwin, Sue Hanley, Jayne Pickering and Guy Revans

Committee Officer:

Debbie Parker-Jones

54. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

55. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

56. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Withdrawn report – Leisure Services Options Short, Sharp Review

The Leader advised that this report had been withdrawn from the agenda as the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had decided at their meeting on 8th December 2015 that they wanted to defer making a decision on the Review group's recommendations until Officers had completed their work. Scrutiny Members felt that it would be useful to consider all of the information together before any recommendations were made to the Executive Committee about the future delivery of leisure services.

Additional Papers

One set of Additional Papers had been circulated which contained the minutes of the special meeting of the Executive Committee held on 7th December 2015, together with extracts of the minutes of the

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Chair

Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8th December 2015 in relation to:

- Leisure Intervention Update (agenda item 6);
- Bereavement Services – Review of Cremation Fees and Charges and Proposed Capital Works (agenda item 8); and
- Fees and Charges Review 2016/17 (agenda item 9).

Work Programme

The following reports which were due to be considered at the meeting, or possibly considered at the meeting, had been moved to a later date:

- Purchase of Crossgates House;
- Housing Revenue Account, Rent and Capital 2016/17;
- Housing Business Case;
- Review of Pay Enhancements for Leisure Assistants;
- Matchborough Centre – Consultation; and
- Reorganisation and Change Policy.

57. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the special Executive Committee held on 7th December 2015 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

58. THE LEISURE SERVICES OPTIONS SHORT SHARP REVIEW FINAL REPORT

As stated under Leader's Announcements, it was noted that this report had, at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's request, been withdrawn from the agenda.

RESOLVED that

the position be noted.

59. LEISURE INTERVENTION UPDATE

Members received a report which presented feedback on work undertaken by Officers to further explore how the Leisure offer within the Borough met the Strategic Purpose of 'Providing good things to see, do and visit'. This included feedback from the intervention at the Abbey Stadium and Arrow Vale and Kingsley dual use sites. Members also considered with the report the minute

extract of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's meeting on 8th December 2015, which had been circulated as Additional Papers, in relation to the pre-scrutiny of the Leisure Intervention Update report and which had endorsed all of the report recommendations.

Officers had undertaken a great deal of work in assessing customer demand and had evidenced a significant number of benefits across the Borough as detailed in the report. A significant proportion of service users had stated that their social inclusion and general health and wellbeing benefitted from use of the services. It was noted that whilst cost analysis formed part of the information provided, this was only one element of the overall picture to be considered.

The detailed service schedules appended to the report highlighted a number of opportunities to meet customer demands and for further income generation. Officers advised that additional work was required to fully explore these areas. It was evident that the Council supported a variety of other stakeholders in the delivery of their objectives within the community, with the financial benefits to those stakeholders also requiring further investigation. Notably, the Postural Support Instruction sessions currently provided in the Community Centres represented a potential saving of £550k to the NHS by 2020. Officers stated that they wished to hold discussions with the NHS on potential up-front funding for the Authority in this regard. The additional financial implications detailed in the report were also noted.

In response to a Member question as to when Officers would have sufficient information to begin discussions on the possible options for a leisure trust to manage some or all of the Council's facilities, including the Abbey Stadium, Officers stated that whilst they would be looking to bring back a further update report to Executive in approximately March/April 2016, this would not be looking at leisure trust options. The report would instead provide further details in relation to issues such as customer demand, health and well-being and any discussions which had taken place with the Council's partners/stakeholders. Any discussion of the Leisure Services Options Short, Sharp Review group's recommendations would take place as and when the group wished to present their report to the Executive for consideration.

Members welcomed the report and thanked Officers for the detailed work which had gone into producing this. It was agreed that Officers should continue to build on this work and present a further update report to the Executive Committee in approximately March/April 2016. Only when all of the required data, measures and evidence had been obtained could Members make an informed

decision on how current provision met the Council's strategic purposes and how leisure services in the Borough should be delivered in the future.

RESOLVED that

Officers:

- 1) undertake further work on identifying the health and well-being impact on the community of the provision of the Leisure offer;**
- 2) report back on the opportunities for improvements as identified in the detailed schedules;**
- 3) undertake a review of revenue received and any opportunities to increase revenue by assessing alternative pricing models; and**
- 4) discuss with the Academies how the provision in the dual use sites can be better provided to support the wider community.**

60. PROVISION OF DISABLED CAR PARKING SPACES - COUNCIL-OWNED PARKING AREAS

Members received a report which sought approval of a new Disabled Car Parking Space (DCPS) Policy, together with a review to be undertaken by Officers of the current disabled parking scheme and associated temporary resource for completion of the review.

Officers explained that the disabled parking scheme was discretionary and that the new policy would help them address what could sometimes be difficult issues given the increased demand for parking spaces in recent years. It was noted that the policy, which applied to all residents of the Borough and not just Council tenants, provided clear guidelines for Officers to work to, whilst still allowing for some flexibility and consideration of all available options under the scheme.

Members felt that there should be an ongoing review of allocated spaces, with a strict requirement for spaces to be handed back to the Council when residents' circumstances were such that they were no longer eligible for these.

It was noted that the Council could only provide spaces within car parking areas that were owned by the Council, and that future discussions would take place with Worcestershire County Council

regarding the provision of spaces where an applicant's property was only served by an adopted highway.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **a review of the existing disabled parking scheme be carried out, to include the administration of this and existing spaces already marked;**
- 2) **a 12-month temporary resource to complete the review be agreed; and**
- 3) **the Disabled Car Parking Space (DCPS) Policy appended to the report be approved.**

61. BEREAVEMENT SERVICES - REVIEW OF CREMATION FEES AND CHARGES AND PROPOSED CAPITAL WORKS

The Committee considered a report, for recommendation to full Council, on Cremation and burial fees and proposed capital works. Members also considered with the report the minute extract of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's meeting on 8th December 2015, which had been circulated as Additional Papers, in relation to the pre-scrutiny of this report and which had endorsed all of the report recommendations.

Officers explained the background to the report and the need for building improvements in order for the crematorium to continue to operate effectively, accommodate increased demand and to be fit for modern day needs and purpose. The most notable impact on customers would be the requirement to close the facility to allow works to take place and Officers would be looking at alternative chapel provision during this time. Members highlighted the need for Officers to fully consult with undertakers, whom they hoped would in turn give feedback on their clients' views, and for any building works to be implemented as smoothly as possible.

Members discussed the proposals for the fees previously applied to 17 year olds to be amended to start at 18 years old, for both residents and non-residents, for cremations and burials. Officers advised that during the period April to September 2015 only 12 non-resident cremations and burials had taken place. An amendment was moved and seconded to recommendation 2.2 of the report, for no charge to apply to under 18 year old residents of the Borough only, and not to non-residents. Following a vote on this the amendment fell and the substantive recommendation was carried.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the cremation fees for 18 years+ are increased as follows:

	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020
Time slots	As per current fees and charges for 17+	18 years+ (FOC for under 18 as per 1.2 of report)	18 years+ (FOC for under 18 as per 1.2 of report)	18 years+ (FOC for under 18 as per 1.2 of report)	18 years+ (FOC for under 18 as per 1.2 of report)
8.30am 9.00am	£410	£440	£480	£520	£560
9.30am 10.15am	£530	£500	£540	£580	£630
11.00am onwards	£540	£580	£630	£680	£730

- 2) the fees previously applied to 17 year olds are amended to start at 18 years old for both residents and non-residents for both cremations and burials;
- 3) facility and heating improvements are approved as per the list at paragraph 4.10 of the report and the report appendices;
- 4) a sum of £200k in capital funding be added to the existing £144k making a total of £344k to enable a programme of capital works to take place in 2016; and
- 5) a proportion of the increased income from amended fees be used towards repayment of the capital borrowing costs.

62. FEES AND CHARGES REVIEW 2016/17

The Committee considered the proposed fees and charges for 2016/17 for the Council's chargeable services. Members also considered with the report the minute extract of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's meeting on 8th December 2015, which had been circulated as Additional Papers, in relation to the pre-scrutiny of this report and which had endorsed the report recommendations. This was the first time the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been able to review the report within the statutory timescale and in an updated format, which the Committee had welcomed.

It was noted that there were two distinct elements to the fees and charges; those involving increases of up to 3%, which following the

meeting of full Council on 7th December the Executive Committee could now resolve on, and those where increases of in excess of 3% were being proposed (as detailed in paragraph 3.5 of the report), which still required full Council approval. Officers provided explanations in relation to those fees and charges that it was proposed be increased at a different rate to that approved by Council, and the justifications behind the additional increases, and responded to Member questions in this regard.

Members noted an error in the text at paragraph 3.2 of the report. This proposed that the fees and charges be increased with effect from 1st January 2016 in the circumstances quoted. However it was noted that for the higher proposed increases full Council would not be meeting until the end of January, meaning the proposed date for implementation of any agreed higher fee increases would be 1st February 2016. Officers apologised for this oversight and agreed to make clear the position when this was reported to Council.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the fees and charges detailed at paragraph 3.5 of the report and included at Appendix 1 to the report, which have a proposed increase for 2016/17 of over 3%, be approved; and**

RESOLVED that

- 2) the fees and charges presented in Appendix 1 to the report that are increased up to 3% for 2016/17 be approved.**

63. UPDATE ON THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2015/16-2017/18

The Committee received an Officer presentation on financial planning for 2016/17 – 2018/19. This included an update on the known implications for the Council of central government's Comprehensive Spending Review and Autumn Statement which had been issued in November.

There would be a 24% reduction in local government funding over the period, with the government's aim being to eliminate the deficit by 2019/20 with a £10b surplus. More details should be forthcoming in the final Local Government Settlement, which it was anticipated would be made known by 17th December 2015.

Subject to the final detail, Officers spoke on the possible impact to the Council on:

- Business Rates;
- Reserves and Assets;
- Capital receipts; and
- New Homes Bonus.

Heads of Service were currently working through the detail of savings, bids and pressures. Balances currently stood at £1.9m and reserves at £2m. Members queried whether any guarantees had been forthcoming at this stage as to whether the New Homes Bonus would continue not to be ringfenced. Officers commented that this appeared to be the case, so far as any guarantee could be obtained at this stage.

Officers stated that they would issue a copy of the presentation slides and a note on the financial position to all Members.

RESOLVED that

the position be noted

64. FINANCE MONITORING QUARTER 2 2015/16

The Committee received a report which detailed the Council's final financial position for both General Fund and Revenue for the period April to September 2015 (Quarter 2 2015/16).

Officers explained that the picture was quite positive, with there currently being a fairly healthy underspend projected for the year end. There were a number of senior officer vacancies within the Housing Enabling Team, which would be looked into as part of the restructure of the service. There had been a loss of Supporting People funding and Officers across the board were currently comparing the 2016/17 budgets against the anticipated 2015/16 budgets.

In response to Member questions regarding staff vacancies that had not been recruited to and how long these posts had been vacant for, Officers explained that where Heads of Service considered vacancies to be business critical such posts were recruited to. Efficiencies were made wherever possible and services were currently in the process of being transformed, with some posts being retained for future redeployment opportunities. A Member requested a briefing note on current vacant posts within each service area and the reasons for any vacancies, which Officers agreed to provide outside of the meeting.

A query was also raised in relation to where in the Borough the Section 106 funded project in the report recommendation was

taking place. Officers agreed to check the position with this outside of the meeting and to report back to Members on this.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the 2015/16 Capital Programme is increased by £25k to include a Section 106 funded project to improve CCTV within the local area/underpass; and**

RESOLVED that

- 2) **the current financial position for General Fund and Revenue as detailed in the report be noted.**

65. NOMINATION OF AN ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE - THE EAGLE PUBLIC HOUSE, EVESHAM ROAD, REDDITCH

The Committee considered a report which sought Member support to list The Eagle Public House, Evesham Road, Redditch as an Asset of Community Value.

Officers explained the listing process, financial implications for the Authority and rights of appeal of any listing decision. It was noted that under the new process introduced in November 2012 the final decision as to whether to list an asset rested with the Head of Planning and Regeneration Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration.

Members noted that Punch Partnerships and the local Ward Councillors had been consulted as part of the listing process for The Eagle Public House, and that no objections had been received in response.

RESOLVED that

the Executive Committee support the listing of The Eagle Public House, Evesham Road, Redditch as an Asset of Community Value.

66. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 6th October 2015.

It was noted that there were no recommendations to consider.

RESOLVED that

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the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 6th October 2015 be received and noted.

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

The Committee received, under Additional Papers, the minute extracts and recommendations of the 8th December 2015 Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Committee's pre-scrutiny of the following reports:

- Leisure Intervention Update (agenda item 6);
- Bereavement Services – Review of Cremation Fees and Charges and Proposed Capital Works (agenda item 8); and
- Fees and Charges Review 2016/17 (agenda item 9).

These were considered along with the relevant agenda items (Minute No.'s 59, 61 and 62 respectively refer).

68. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

Officers advised that the Housing Advisory Panel information detailed in the report was out of date and that a number of meetings of the Panel had taken place since March 2015, with the next Panel meeting planned for January 2016.

RESOLVED that

the report and Officer update be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 9.25 pm

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Chair