

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

Monday, 28th November, 2011

Present:- M R Clarke – in the Chair

Councillors I Wilkes, E Boden, Miss Cooper, I Gilmore, Mrs Hailstones,
Mrs Heames and M Olszewski

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Williams, Cllr Snell, Cllr Becket and Cllr Shenton.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee considered item number 4. of the minutes relating to the Call-in of the proposals for the disposal of Knutton Recreation Centre. The Committee considered that it would have been beneficial if discussions could have taken place in the first instance regarding a SLA between the Council and the College regarding the use of sporting facilities. Members did however query whether there had been discussions between the County Council and the College regarding usage and that the outcomes of these discussions would be worth investigation. The Committee considered that pressure should still be put on the Cabinet to try and ensure some agreement with the College regarding ad hoc bookings but it was recognised that block bookings were common place and required from a business perspective.

The Committee questioned what was happening regarding grants awarded to the New Vic Theatre and requested that feedback on this topic be provided.

- Resolved:**
- (a) That the Committees comments regarding the usage of the College sports facilities be fed back to Cabinet.
 - (b) That information regarding any agreement between the County Council and the College be sought.
 - (c) That information regarding funding of the New Vic Theatre be provided to the next meeting.
 - (d) That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed.

4. UPDATE REGARDING SCRUTINY BRIEFS CURRENTLY BEING CONSIDERED

The Committee received a report updating it on the work being undertaken or planned by the various Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Health Scrutiny Committee. The following verbal updates were received:

Active and Cohesive Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

A working group had now been established to scrutinise the third sector commissioning contracts and was due to meet on 13th December.

Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee - 28/11/11

The Committee discussed the scrutiny brief relating to Bateswood Local Nature Reserve and the consultation project. It was stated that leaflets had been distributed to a set number of individuals in the vicinity of the reserve and that the Audley LAP and Chesterton LAP had both been consulted. Members requested whether a map of the area was available and it has since been confirmed that here is a map available on the internet. The Committee agreed that the methods of consultation were acceptable.

Cleaner, Greener and Safer Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Members discussed the Scrutiny Brief regarding volunteers staffing CCTV control rooms. Concerns were raised regarding whether the volunteers would be expected to give evidence in court and the level of training that the volunteers would receive. Members also questioned whether the volunteers would be expected to undergo a CRB check.

The Vice Chair of the Cleaner, Greener, and Safer Communities Committee confirmed that the Committee would be focusing its attention on scrutiny of the Crime and Disorder Partnership and the development of a Safer and Stronger Communities Strategy for Newcastle under Lyme.

Members considered the Scrutiny Brief relating to the development of a Safer and Stronger Communities Strategy for the Borough and requested that the author of the brief be congratulated on its format and content and suggested that it be used as a benchmark for future scrutiny briefs.

Economic Development and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

The Chair of the Economic Development and Enterprise Committee confirmed that two working groups had now been set up to consider broadband provision in the Borough and the High Speed 2 initiative. Both groups had now met and a representative from BT had been invited to the next meeting of the Broadband Working Group to provide information on the future provision of Broadband in the Borough. The HS2 Working Group would meet again in the New Year following clarification from Government as to the actual proposals.

Transformation and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

A working group had been established and had commenced scrutiny of the performance management review.

The Transformation and Resources Committee would be considering the Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2012/13 at its next meeting along with the Treasury Management Strategy, the Capital Strategy and the Finance and Performance Management Monitoring Report.

The Committee raised concerns regarding the scrutiny brief relating to the co-location in partners in the Civic Offices and especially with regards to the police moving into the building. The issue of risk assessments was discussed and the Committee queried whether a risk assessment was already in place for all front line staff.

Health Scrutiny Committee:

The Health Scrutiny Committee had submitted a response to the County Council regarding Mental Health Consultation.

At its previous meeting the Health Scrutiny Committee had questioned representatives from the PCT regarding the closure of the High Street Practice in Newcastle and had determined to keep a close eye on the process of redistributing residents to alternative practices.

The Chair of the Health Scrutiny Committee had expressed concern regarding access to phlebotomy services and it was considered that issues regarding the service were due to publicity and that this would need to be addressed immediately.

Members from the Health Scrutiny Committee would be visiting the new accident and emergency department in January 2012.

The Health Scrutiny Committee had received a request from Staffordshire County Council to carry out a scrutiny project in relation to infant mortality in the Borough.

Members of this Committee requested whether information was available regarding the location of defibrillator machines in the Borough.

Resolved: That the report be received and the actions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees be noted.

5. FORWARD PLAN NOVEMBER TO FEBRUARY 2011

The Committee considered the item in the forward plan relating to proposals for the refurbishment and re-use of the former St Giles and St Georges school building. A scrutiny brief was requested to be brought to the next meeting including information relating to proposals for the former Maxims building and Pound Stretcher. Care would however be taken to ensure that there was no duplication with the Conservation advisory Group regarding these projects.

The Committee also stated that it would welcome an opportunity to scrutinise the issue of car park provision in the Borough, a report on this was being submitted to Cabinet on 30th November.

Clarification was sought regarding Waste Transfer Tenders as it was thought that these were under the remit of the County Council.

A request was made that the Committee consider a scrutiny project regarding First Bus. The Committee considered that this was probably more of a County Council issue but that a representative from the Borough should be on the County Forum responsible for public transport and this person needed to be identified.

Resolved:

- (a) That a Scrutiny Brief regarding proposals for the form St Giles and St Georges School Building be provided for the next meeting of this Committee.
- (b) That clarification be sought regarding waste transfer tenders
- (c) That the Borough Councils representative on the County Forum for public transport be identified.

M R CLARKE
Chair