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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

Monday, 24th June, 2013

Present:-	Councillor Robin Studd – in the Chair
Councillors	Councillor Reginald Bailey, Councillor George Cairns, Councillor Colin Eastwood, Councillor David Loades, Councillor Ian Matthews, Councillor Miss Marion Reddish, Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Shenton, Councillor David Stringer and Councillor Mrs Gillian Williams
Officers	Mark Bailey (Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships) Martin Stevens (Democratic Services Officer)

1. **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Heesom.

The Chairman reported that Cllr Reddish had replaced Cllr Walklate on the Committee.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday, 25 March 2013 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. **CO-OPERATIVE STRATEGY 2013-2015**

The Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships stated that the Co-operative Strategy 2013-2015 had been discussed at the previous meeting of the Committee. The strategy had been agreed at Cabinet in February 2013. The note updated Members on developments since then and also set out a series of proposals for further work around the concept. The strategy provided a framework for the Borough Council to develop, in conjunction with others, a Co-operative Council in Newcastle-under-Lyme. This was one of the key priorities as set out in the current Council Plan. The strategy incorporated five key concepts which were, encouraging collaborative working, enhancing citizen / customer experiences, engagement with others, establishing change and empowering stakeholders.

The Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships stated that in addition to developing the Strategy, the values of the Council had also been amended to reflect the Co-operative Council approach. The Council had also become part of the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network. The network was made up of Councils who subscribed to the principle of co-operative working and delivery. The network would be formally launched at the LGA Conference on the 3 July 2013. A number of actions had also arisen from the LGA Peer Challenge process and from discussions at the previous meeting of the scrutiny committee. These action points were

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contained in page seven of the report circulated with the agenda. A report on the Co-operative strategy would be presented to Cabinet on 17 July 2013.

A Member stated that it was important to include the correct stakeholders in the consultation process. In response the Head of Business and Improvement and Partnerships stated that a list could be provided in due course.

A Member stated that it was important to fully understand that LAPs were not political and he believed the issue of a Co-operative Council to be a political issue. In response the Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships stated that as an Officer he was not putting the issue forward as a political one. He didn't believe the notion of a Co-operative Council to be political on its own, but understood that each LAP would have to form their own view. A Member stated that it was important not to draw the LAPs into a political arena.

A Member stated that the relationship with some of the Parish Councils and the LAPs needed to be improved, if they were to be working in partnership in the future. The Head of Business and Improvement and Partnerships cited the example of Audley Parish Council as having a positive working relationship with the LAP. He hoped that this could be replicated with other Parish and Town Councils and the LAPs.

A Member stated that some LAPs were forming their own constitutions and bank accounts. The Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships confirmed that this was not a compulsory requirement but was an option which some were pursuing. There was a discussion about the different relationships some of the local Parish Councils had with the LAPs.

The Chairman requested that reports should be written jargon free and should be easily understandable by the public.

5. COMMUNITY CENTRES REVIEW - VERBAL UPDATE FROM CLLR ELIZABETH SHENTON

Cllr Shenton gave a verbal update on the review taking place of the Community Centres in the Borough. She stated that the Community Centres Review Task and Finish Group shadowed the Office group. It had recently, over two days, visited all 15 Community Centres within the Borough. She had composed a working data sheet on each of the centres as there wasn't a definitive document on each of the centres. She was currently awaiting some further information to complete each of the data sheets. She had identified several distinct areas, Governance, Health and Safety, Finance Management and Marketing. A number of action points had been determined at the last meeting of the Task and Finish Group. These included obtaining asset values for each centre, a breakdown of all expenditure over £10,000 for the last two years and for all expected future expenditure over the next few years. She believed that re-charges by the centres from other departments within the Council should be included as part of the financial information. She also wanted employees to be added to the Community Centre data sheets and details of any commercial leases in operation at any of the centres.

Cllr Stenton stated that an Open Forum meeting at Newcastle Museum was going to be held on the 18 July at 6.30pm with representatives from each of the Community centres invited. The next Task and Finish Group meeting had been arranged for the 23 July 2013. She emphasised the importance of keeping a tight timetable.

A Member stated that a self-assessment form which had been sent out recently to the Community Centres had been incredibly difficult to understand. Cllr Shenton in response stated that she had not seen the form before it had been sent out which was unfortunate.

A Member stated that the Borough Council might have to offer more financial support in the future if the Community Centres were to continue in their current form. The Business Management needed to be addressed at some of the community centres.

A Member stated that Officers of the Council needed to talk with the Management Committees at each of the centres as some had little knowledge as to what was happening. In response, Cllr Shenton stated that two representatives from each of the management committees were being invited to the open forum meeting on the 18 July, which she hoped would go some way to engaging them.

RESOLVED: That a report on the outcome of the open forum meeting with the community centres on the 18 July and the Task and finish Group on the 25 July be presented to the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee.

6. **DECRIMINALISED CAR PARKING**

The Chair reported that the issue of de-criminalised car parking had been referred by the Cleaner Green and Safer Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It was agreed that a document needed to be drawn up by the Committee detailing exactly the particular areas that they thought should be addressed before considering the approach further.

7. **WORK PLANS FOR THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES AND THE HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Chair reported that the licensing of premises particularly that of Takeaways had been referred by the Active and Cohesive Scrutiny Committee.

A Member stated that the abundance of takeaways in certain areas of the Borough was also a health issue, which was helping to contribute to obesity. It was agreed to set up a Member working group to look at the issue of the licensing of takeaways. The six Members would be, Cllr Eastwood, Cllr Gill Williams, Cllr Loades, Cllr Stringer, Cllr Studd and Cllr Reddish. It was hoped the group could conclude within three months.

The Chair asked Cllr Stringer, the Chair of the Economic Development and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee whether there was anything he wished to report on the work plan for the Committee. In response Cllr Stringer stated that he was hoping to call a meeting of the HS2 Working Group in July. He wanted to hold a second meeting with stakeholders to obtain their views which could then be reported to Cabinet. The membership, since it had been agreed to extend the working group to seven members, was still being finalised. The work plan was going to be updated shortly to remove some of the historical items and to better reflect the items the Committee intended to scrutinise moving forward.

The Chair asked Cllr Shenton, the Chair of the Transformation and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee to give an update on the work plan for the Committee. She reported that an extra meeting of the Committee had been arranged for the 22 July 2013 at 7pm. The key items on the agenda presently included the

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budget, Gatedale Cinema and the financial status of Keele Golf Course. She reported the other items that remained on the work plan as contained within the document circulated with the agenda.

The Chair asked Cllr Cairns, the Chair of the Active and Cohesive Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide an update on the work plan for the Committee. Cllr Cairns stated that the Committee had recently met and had agreed to arrange a meeting between Kidsgrove Sports Centre, the County Council, the local school and the Borough regarding its future. He was pleased to report that the Allotments Review Working Group was progressing well with two meetings held to date. At the last meeting of the Scrutiny Committee he had requested that a report on how young people could be encouraged to take up regular sport and physical exercise. It was agreed that Community Centres could be taken off the work plan for the Committee.

A Member asked about where the risk lay for Kidsgrove Sport Centre. He asked if the Borough Council's Audit Committee was receiving copies of the inspection reports.

The Chair asked Cllr Eastwood, the Chair of the Health Scrutiny Committee to provide an update on the work plan. Cllr Eastwood stated that he wished to add Cardiac rehabilitation to the work plan. Whilst the Committee had considered the Health and Wellbeing strategy at the last meeting, it remained on the work plan as the Committee wanted to scrutinise the action plans. Infant mortality would be considered at every Health Scrutiny Committee rather than the Health and Wellbeing Board. He would be meeting with County Health Officers shortly to help clarify the roles of the Borough and County Council in regards to Health Scrutiny. There was a discussion about the role and remit of the Health Scrutiny Committee. Some comments were made regarding the fact that the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Communities Scrutiny Committee were considering items which linked with health such as the alcohol strategy. Cllr Eastwood stated that the Borough Council had a key role to play in prevention activities and that the Council should not be dependent on the County Council in this area. District Councils had an increasingly important role to play in health. It was agreed that a review needed to take place to ensure the remits for the Committees were up to date and appropriate.

Cllr Williams talked through the work programme for the Cleaner, Greener and Safer Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. There was a discussion about the definition of anti social behaviour and how it could be measured. It was agreed that the increase in homelessness should be added to the work programme.

There was a general discussion about the LGA Peer Review and the feedback that had been received at the Committees to date.

8. FORWARD PLAN

The Chairman reported that an updated forward plan had been circulated.

RESOLVED: That the forward plan be noted.

9. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business within the meaning of section 100 (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

COUNCILLOR ROBIN STUDD
Chair

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