

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 28 March 2012

Present:

Councillor J Hale (Chair)

Councillors	D McCubbin	A Sykes
	KJ Williams	J Walsh
	R Wilkins	S Whittingham
	P Hackett	S Williams
	C Jones	

74 MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they had personal or prejudicial interests in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

Members were reminded that they should also declare, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, whether they were subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

Councillor S Whittingham declared his personal interest in agenda item 8 – 2011/2012 Third Quarter Performance Monitoring Report (see minute 81 post), by virtue of his involvement with Woodchurch Community Centre.

Councillor P Hackett declared his personal interest in agenda item 6 – Libraries Strategy (see minute 79 post), by virtue of his place of work being adjacent to a building referred to in the report.

75 MINUTES

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2012 be approved.

76 CORPORATE GOAL UPDATE - PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

The Director of Technical Services presented an update on progress in delivering the Parks Modernisation Project that supported the delivery of the Corporate Goal to “Provide and Maintain High Quality Parks & Open Spaces in Partnership with Local Communities”. He commented that it was a complex multi-disciplinary project with the purpose of establishing a modern, cost effective and efficient service comparable to that offered by the private sector by Spring 2013. An Outline Delivery Plan had been endorsed by the Cabinet (minute 205 (24 November 2011) refers) and the Director highlighted progress that had been made under four key workstreams, which all reported to a Project Board –

- Policy, Processes and Performance
- Human Resources
- Assets
- Communication and Engagement

In addition, there had been an urgent short-term project for the integration into the Council of the Highways Grounds Maintenance Service, which had now been completed.

The Director reported that each of the tasks in the Delivery Plan had been assigned a 'RAG' status as follows:

- GREEN – Task on target for completion within project timescale
- AMBER – Some non-critical milestones have slipped but Task still on target for completion within project timescale
- RED – Critical milestones have slipped and Task will no longer be completed within project timescale

In the Plan there were 35 Tasks as follows: 5 Complete, 21 Green, 8 Amber and 1 Red. He commented that overall, good progress was being made in the delivery of the Plan at this stage. However there were a number of Amber Tasks where resource pressures had been identified and mitigating management action was being taken. There was one Task classed as Red, which related to the development of a new Ten Year Strategic Plan, as the work was being reprogrammed for completion after the conclusion of the Modernisation Project in Spring 2013.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

**77 PARKS AND COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES PROCUREMENT EXERCISE (PACSPE)
- INTERNAL/EXTERNAL BID COMPARISON**

Further to minute 73 (30 January 2012), the Director of Technical Services provided a detailed internal/external bid comparison in relation to the Parks and Countryside Services Procurement Exercise (PACSPE), following the decision of the Cabinet (minutes 117 (22 September 2011) and 173 (3 November 2011) refer) to retain the services in-house, to be delivered directly by the Council. The Director commented that some of the information was of commercial value and could be used to the advantage or detriment of the tenderers involved in the PACSPE process. As such, it had been classed as Exempt Information and was included in an exempt appendix to his report (see minute 88 post).

He referred to the Outline Business Case assumptions and provided a summary in relation to the quantitative and qualitative assessments that had been undertaken of the tenders received.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

78 CORPORATE GOAL UPDATE - LEISURE AND CULTURE FACILITIES

The Director of Technical Services presented an update on the current position of the Technical Services Delivery Plan that supported the Corporate Goal to 'Provide and Maintain High Quality, Value for Money Leisure and Cultural Facilities for Wirral Residents', for which the key activity within the Departmental Plan was to 'Promote the Council's Leisure Facilities to Encourage Greater Take-Up of Services'. A marketing plan for the promotion of the Council's leisure facilities had resulted in the development and implementation of a 'Sport and Recreation' Marketing Strategy and the Director commented upon progress of projects and developments in its four key areas –

- The promotion and development of the Invigor8 product
- The promotion of a targeted piece of work in partnership with the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) to increase adult participation
- Building on the euphoria generated by the London 2012 Olympic Games
- Promotion and development of Community Sports initiatives

Resolved – That the report be noted.

79 LIBRARIES STRATEGY

Further to minute 68 (30 January 2012), the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Finance reported upon the initial feedback from the recent Library Strategy “Wirral Libraries – A New Chapter” consultation and highlighted how the responses would be taken into account in the Strategy. The consultation process ran from 26 January to 29 February 2012 and the Director indicated that 385 people engaged in the face to face library survey sessions, 30 people attended the library consultation evening and 1,465 consultation forms had been completed and returned by 29 February 2012. Although the total number of surveys continued to increase, preliminary analysis indicated that respondents –

- were overwhelmingly supportive of the value of a written strategy for the library service;
- considered that the strategy fitted Wirral’s needs;
- were in favour of the initiative to bring together library and One Stop Shop provision.

The most significant response to the consultation in terms of public comment related to proposed changes in opening hours, although responses varied from location to location. He indicated that the main feature in the draft proposal to redistribute hours was a plan to extend the opening hours of all libraries to six days a week. He referred to the changes in opening hours that were required to facilitate the proposal and commented that analysis of feedback suggested that more people asked for libraries to retain an evening opening than actually used them. The view was that although some respondents did not use the evening opening themselves, they felt that it should be there for those that wished to do so.

The Director set out a number of options that had presented themselves for further consideration and he assured Members that the Strategy would be reviewed in the light of the consultation outcomes, particularly in relation to opening hours.

Members commented that evening opening hours were essential for schoolchildren to do homework and, particularly in deprived areas, to have access to a computer. In addition, for some working people, evenings could be their only opportunity to visit their local library.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted.**
- (2) That a further report be presented to a future meeting following a review of the Strategy in the light of consultation outcomes in relation to opening hours.**

80 **PROGRESS ON THE CONTROL OF ILLICIT SALES TO YOUNG PEOPLE**

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management reported that the local authority had a statutory responsibility to enforce provisions prohibiting the sale of age restricted products and provisions requiring legible warnings on tobacco products. He set out the legislation which placed restrictions on the age at which certain products may be sold and referred also to national policy documents that had been issued by the Government in recognition of the need to reduce the potential harm that the use of alcohol and tobacco could cause to young people.

He reported upon steps taken to control illicit sales to young people, including under age sales and the sale of illicit tobacco and alcohol and fireworks and, in response to a question from a Member, referred to work undertaken with other agencies. A Member referred also to the 'Citizen Card' initiative and expressed concern, having regard to its cost, that the card was not recognised by some licensed premises. In response, the Director proposed to circulate details of the campaign, which had the support of Merseyside Police, and to make contact with those premises where the card was not being accepted.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

81 **2011/2012 THIRD QUARTER PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT**

The Director of Technical Services and the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management presented an update of performance in the third quarter 2011/2012 (October to December 2011) of the Council's Corporate Plan 2011-2014, in relation to sustainable communities. The report provided Members with an overview of performance, resource and risk monitoring, together with detail of corrective action for performance issues.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

82 **DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS - DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES**

The Director of Technical Services reported, in accordance with the Approved Scheme of Delegation, of the acceptance of tenders under delegated powers for the supply of the pantomime at the Floral Pavilion between December 2010 and January 2013; and for the supply and maintenance of fitness equipment for Wirral's Leisure Centres from February 2012 for a period of 5 years.

Both procurement exercises were undertaken in collaboration with Corporate Procurement and the successful contractors were appointed on the highest aggregate score based upon price and quality. The reporting of the decision for the pantomime at the Floral Pavilion followed advice given by Internal Audit in October 2011.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

83 **DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS - DIRECTOR OF LAW HR AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management reported, in accordance with the Approved Scheme of Delegation, of those instances where delegated authority has been used with respect to the appointment of Contractors pursuant to Contract Procedure Rule 14.1. Since the last meeting of the Committee, tenders had been accepted for works to –

- Hoylake Community Centre and Sanderling Unit Window Frame Replacement
- Fire Alarms and Emergency Lighting Maintenance
- Leasowe Recreation Centre Pool Filtration and Ultraviolet Sterilisation Installation

Resolved – That the report be noted.

84 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management reported that the Forward Plan for the period April to July 2012 was published on the Council's intranet/website. Members had been invited to review the Plan prior to the meeting in order for the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider, having regard to the work programme, whether scrutiny should take place of any items contained within the Plan and, if so, how it could be done within relevant timescales and resources.

Resolved – That the Forward Plan be noted.

85 **REVIEW OF SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received an update in relation to its work programme, which indicated that there were no items which remained outstanding.

Resolved – That the completed programme be noted.

86 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR (PART 1) - HIGHWAYS AND REPRESENTATION PANEL - MINUTES**

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management presented the minutes of the meeting of the Highways and Representation Panel held on 21 March 2012, which the Chair had agreed to be considered as an item of urgent business, so as for schemes to be approved within the current municipal year.

The Panel had considered –

- Review of Experimental Traffic Regulation Order - Oldfield Drive Heswall
- Objection to Local safety Scheme – Townfield Lane, Oxton
- Petition for Traffic Calming Measures in Naseby Close, Upton
- Objection to Revocation of No Waiting Restriction - Dial Road, Tranmere

With regard to Panel minute 5 (Review of Experimental Traffic Regulation Order for Oldfield Drive, Heswall), the Chair commented that the Panel had taken into consideration every representation that had been made. In addition, although there had not been a qualifying petition, he had exercised his discretion and allowed local residents who were in attendance to address the Panel, prior to a decision being made.

Resolved –

- (1) That the minutes of the Panel be received.**
- (2) That the Committee recommend to the Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Transport Services that the following schemes be approved –**
 - (a) That the existing Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) for Oldfield Drive, Heswall, be made permanent (Option A in Section 7 of the Panel report of the Director of Technical Services)**
 - (b) That the proposed Local Safety Scheme at Townfield Lane, Oxtun, consisting of a NWAAT TRO as shown on drawing number TS 0395B0, attached to the Panel report of the Director of Technical Services be approved and implemented.**
 - (c) That the proposal to revoke the length of No Waiting 8am – 6pm, at Dial Road, Tranmere, as shown on drawing DTS/1, attached to the Panel report of the Director of Technical Services, be approved and implemented.**
- (3) That no further action be taken in relation to the petition for Traffic Calming Measures in Naseby Close, Upton, but the situation continue to be monitored.**

87 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved – That in accordance with section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The public interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

88 EXEMPT APPENDIX

The Committee considered the appendix to the report of the Director of Technical Services 'Parks and Countryside Services Procurement Exercise (PACSPE) - Internal/External Bid Comparison' (see minute 77 ante) which was exempt due to it containing commercially sensitive information.

Resolved – That the information set out in the appendix be noted.