



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING : Monday, 31st October 2016

PRESENT : Cllrs. Coole (Chair), Ryall (Vice-Chair), Pearsall (Spokesperson), Morgan, Wilson, Haigh, Dee, Hampson, Finnegan, Hawthorne, Melvin and Smith

Others in Attendance

Cllr. David Norman, Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources

Emily Jones, Lead Officer on Safe and Attractive Streets Policy

David Pritchett, Neighbourhood Manager

Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director for Gloucester City Council

Tanya Davies, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager

Rhys Howell, Democratic and Electoral Services Officer

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Hilton, Lewis, Cook and H. Norman

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

37. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

38. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

There were no questions from members of the public

39. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

There were no petitions or deputations.

40. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

Members examined the latest version of the Cabinet Forward Plan and the latest version of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme.

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The Chair raised interest in looking at the proposed establishment of a Council managed Housing Development Company, what was due to be considered by Cabinet on 7 December 2016. As such, the Chair suggested removing the monitoring of Aspire's Annual Performance from the 28 November agenda and scrutinising the Housing Development Company in its place.

Councillor Wilson expressed the view that due to the importance of the Aspire contract it was important that performance was monitored by the Committee. Councillor Haigh suggested that the performance report be circulated to the Committee and then discussed at Committee if appropriate at a later date.

The Chair agreed to move the matter of monitoring Aspire's performance to a future agenda, following further discussion with the Lead Members of the committee.

RESOLVED –

- 1. That the Cabinet Forward Plan be noted**
- 2. That the Scrutiny Committee Work Programme be finalised by the Lead Members of the Committee.**

41. GLOUCESTER PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY - DELIVERY UPDATE

The Chair welcomed Councillor David Norman MBE, Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, who was attending on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Environment and David Pritchett, Neighbourhood Manager to the meeting.

Members were presented with a report which set out the key issues relating to the Gloucester Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). Councillor Norman outlined the background and details of the report and opened up the matter to Members for debate.

Members discussed the following matters:-

1. Councillor Haigh queried that the people impact assessment (PIA) in the report did not make clear how to make pitches accessible to disabled users. David Pritchett responded that through working with Active Gloucestershire, there was an aim to open school facilities up to the community and that those facilities would be of easier access for disabled users. Councillor Haigh welcomed the plan to work alongside schools, but questioned the quality of disabled access at school facilities. She also wished to raise the matter of access to single sex schools facilities.
2. Councillor Haigh questioned the demand and necessity for new pitches, based on usage of current pitches. David Pritchett stated they expected high competition from clubs for any new pitches, but that sites would not be adapted to pitches if there was uncertainty regarding their future use.
3. Councillor Haigh asked about existing pitches, some of which required improvement, and enquired whether they would be easier to upgrade and improve, as community consultation pointed towards improvements not only

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new pitches. David Pritchett said he would take this back to the delivery group, but that there had been consultation with all clubs and all were given the chance to comment on plans, however there was a small take up of this. He stated that both the FA and RFU had funding available for pitch improvements and this would be highlighted to clubs.

4. Councillor Ryall asked how poor quality pitches were defined. David Pritchett explained that an assessment was made by an independent expert looking at a number of factors. He reiterated that overplay meant that new facilities were needed and made Multi Use Games areas (MUGA) desirable. In response to a follow up question he confirmed that the quality of the pitches could be improved solely through a reduction in use..
5. Members discussed the benefits of artificial pitches and the need to explore that option and the potential funding available to improve provision in the City. Councillor Dee highlighted the importance of investing in environmental protection to ensure that artificial pitches were viable.
6. Councillor Hampson asked whether the MUGA at Linden Primary School could be added to the strategy as it had been built for community use but had never been used for this and was rarely used at all. David Pritchett stated he was already working with Active Gloucester to open up the use of this MUGA to a wider section of the community.
7. Councillor Hampson asked for details of the stakeholder workshop. David Pritchett said it was planned for 30 November 2016 and invitations would go out shortly. He stated that officers would work with Active Gloucestershire to show stakeholders that the event was an opportunity for them to network and be made aware of funding possibilities. David Pritchett asked Members to pass on any relevant contact details.
8. Councillor Wilson asked for clarification on the involvement of partner organisations with the strategy and the commitments they had made. David Pritchett stated that the RFU and FA have committed to sharing contacts and had shown an interest in key sites, but had not made a financial commitment. They had arranged local pitch improvement events, which had resulted in some success.
9. Councillor Ryall commented on the proposal to install outdoor fitness equipment at Plock Court as she wished to know if there was any evidence of the benefits of such equipment. David Pritchett stated that there was no direct evidence, but that Trim Trails elsewhere had been well received and that there was evidence of use, however there was currently no method of measuring the health impact of the equipment.
10. Councillor Melvin wished to clarify the criteria for listing in the PPS, as the bowling green by Greyfriars was not listed. David Pritchett clarified that as it was an unused site, it had not been included.

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11. Members expressed concerns that housing developments on and near sites in the PPS would reduce the availability of greens spaces and playing pitches. David Pritchett stated that the strategy was an important factor in development and that the Council would work with developers to ensure appropriate provision of pitches and other green space as required.
12. Councillor Morgan raised the issue of equipment for older children to use, in order to remain active and healthy and asked that Copeland Park be included in the strategy.
13. Councillor Dee raised the issue of dogs fouling on pitches and suggested fences may be needed to prevent it occurring. David Pritchett advised that it was a significant challenge and that education, signage and bins were key elements to tackling it.

David Pritchett undertook to report the issues raised to the Delivery Group.

The Chair thanked Councillor David Norman and David Pritchett for their presentation.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

42. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The Chair welcomed Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director to the meeting.

Members were presented with an update on the Council's approach to Performance Management. He explained that a Performance Management system would be purchased that was capable of capturing relevant performance data from within services and presented the information so that it would be of more value to both Members and Officers. He also explained that a new Corporate Plan was being developed, which would inform the Together Gloucester project and that a Talent Matrix would be developed, to identify staff who wished to grow and develop and provide ease of relocating human resources to necessary areas of the Council as required.

Jonathan Lund then opened up the topic to Members for debate.

Members discussed the following matters:-

1. Councillor Haigh stated that the committee had been critical of the previous approach as it had offered lots of data but little analysis. She stated that a new system should enable the Council to be able to see what it is good at, what it is bad at, the health of the organisation and to benchmark it against similar Councils. It would also need to provide context to any information given, so it could be meaningfully interpreted. Jonathan Lund advised that the intention was to provide valuable information that was not resource intensive and he agreed that data needed context.
2. Councillor Wilson raised the matter of a system which could report on individual projects in cabinet portfolios. Jonathan Lund stated that such systems were

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available and allowed for the nesting of data, which could be drilled down through different levels of an organisation. If the system was web based, then it may be possible to give councillors anytime real-time access to the data.

3. Councillor Melvin stated that she had been impressed with the drive and commitment of the Together Gloucester team when they met with the Committee.

The Chair thanked Jonathan Lund for his presentation.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

Note: Councillor Melvin left the meeting to attend to other Council business.

43. PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER: PRE-CONSULTATION DISCUSSION

The Chair welcomed Emily Jones, Lead Officer on the Safe and Attractive Streets Policy, to the meeting.

Emily Jones explained that a Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) could be placed on any piece of land and related to any behaviour which had been shown to be detrimental to the community. The sanctions for breaching a PSPO could be a fine or it could be taken to magistrate's court depending on the PSPO details. Currently there was a DPPO (Designated Public Place Order) in place in the city centre regarding street drinking as well as gating orders and dog control orders in parts of the City. She explained that the 2014 Police and Crime Act superseded those orders and from September 2017 they would be replaced with PSPOs. As such it will be necessary to evaluate them prior to that date and carry out consultation. Emily Jones made the Committee aware there had been suggestions that a PSPO could also tackle the issue of begging in the City centre.

Emily Jones then opened up the matter to the Committee for debate.

Member discussed the following matters:-

1. The Chair raised concerns that a PSPO could negatively impact young people's interactions with the police, if the PSPO related to unusual or undesirable activity that was not actually causing a nuisance. Emily Jones stated this was unlikely, as to implement an PSPO it was necessary to evidence a detrimental impact on the community and that a PSPO would focus on behaviour rather than a specific demographic.
2. Councillor Morgan raised the matter of motorbikes, mini-motos and mopeds being driven around parks in the area, particularly Randwick Park and asked how the consultation would be undertaken. Other Members agreed that use of motorised vehicles in parks was of concern. Emily Jones stated that a 12 week consultation was required, and that it was necessary to engage with those who would be affected by a potential. It would be necessary to prove it is more than reasonable to put a PSPO in place and there would also be a need to evaluate the feasibility of enforcement. She stated that it was unlikely that a PSPO relating to the use of motorised vehicles in parks would be able to be enforced

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and that PSPOs would be of most use in City centre, as the City Centre policing team could enforce the order. Councillor Finnegan added to the comments regarding motorised bike users that some residents were intimidated into not commenting on this due to fear of reprisals. Emily Jones stated there was a case open regarding this with “Project Solace”, a multi-agency team working to deal with Anti-Social Behaviour and asked Councillor Finnegan to email her with further details.

3. Councillor Haigh raised concerns that a PSPO would drive anti-social behaviour to other areas rather than eliminating the behaviour and highlighted the importance of working in partnership with the Police. Emily Jones advised that the Police had indicated that they would support a PSPO as it would give more weight to their work. She explained that multi-agency work had been undertaken to tackle street begging and that the PSPO be an additional tool.
4. Councillor Wilson raised concerns as to how would people be made aware that a PSPO was in place and Councillor Hawthorne raised concerns that whilst areas under a PSPO would be clearly defined in the terms of the order, it may not be apparent to a member of the public they had left or entered such an area. Emily Jones stated that the Home Office guidelines regarding publicity were very prescriptive about publicity and would ensure that the public had knowledge of the PSPO implementation and scope.
5. Councillor Wilson and Councillor Hampson raised concerns that PSPOs may criminalise desperate and vulnerable people. Councillor Hampson asked evidence of impact of PSPOs on the aforementioned people. Emily Jones explained that multi-agency work enabled the Council to identify vulnerable people and that street beggars in the City centre were known to the Council; she agreed that street begging should not be a life choice, but that some individuals repeatedly refused support. She stated that the impact of known individuals on the community needed to be weighed, alongside their individual needs and highlighted that any consultation regarding PSPOs would be clear about the nature of a PSPO and would also examine other options open to the Council.
6. Councillor Hawthorne raised concerns regarding evidence of the effectiveness of PSPOs to achieve their aims. Emily Jones clarified that much of the existing evidence was anecdotal as different areas had different factors influencing PSPOs success, but that it was possible to do more research on the matter.
7. Councillor Haigh raised concerns that the current DPPO in the City centre was ineffective and asked how a PSPO would be enforced. Emily Jones stated that consideration would need to be given to how to enforce any new PSPOs as the current DPPO was not enforced effectively, but that a variety of options were available. She stated there would be a need to link in enforcement with other agencies and that it was expected that additional resources would be required to enforce new PSPOs.
8. The Chair enquired as to the status of the public consultation on PSPOs. Emily Jones said that pre consultation was expected before Christmas, the public consultation of 12 weeks to take place in the New Year and as such April was seen to be the earliest possible implementation date of any new PSPO.

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The Chair thanked Emily Jones for her presentation.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

44. TASK AND FINISH GROUP TOPICS

The Chair raised the topic of future Task and Finish Groups (TFGs) to be overseen by the committee, following a public consultation. He expressed that public responses had not been high and that a number of issues were related to highways, over which the Council held no jurisdiction. The Chair expressed a preference for looking at Hate Crime and Homelessness as potential focuses for TFGs.

Councillor Haigh expressed an interest in convening a TFG to look at Homelessness. Due to the interest from the committee, Councillor Haigh suggested that two Members from each political group be invited to sit on the TFG.

Councillor Hawthorne raised the issue of the lack of responses to the consultation and how widely it had been publicised. The Chair informed the Committee that it had been published in the local press and agreed with Councillor Hawthorne's concerns.

Councillor Haigh stated that she saw merit in approaching the County Council about highways issue to explore the possibility of some joint scrutiny. Councillor Hampson agreed with this, as scrutiny of highways matters was well overdue. The Chair advised that he and the Lead Members of the Committee would discuss the potential of joint scrutiny and look into the possibility of arranging this.

RESOLVED –

- 1. That alongside the preliminary scoping of the Task and Finish Group to investigate the sale of high strength alcohol a six Member Task and Finish Group be convened to look into homelessness and the lack of overnight shelters in the City.**
- 2. That Councillors Smith, Hampson and Finnegan sit on the TFG and the Leaders of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Groups be asked to nominate one and two Members respectively.**

45. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 28 November 2016 at 18.30 hours.

Time of commencement: 6.30 pm hours

Time of conclusion: 8.15 pm hours

Chair