



TOWN AREA COMMITTEE

PARKSIDE, STATION APPROACH, BURTON STREET, MELTON MOWBRAY

18 SEPTEMBER 2017

PRESENT:-

Councillors T Beaken, J Douglas, P Faulkner, J Illingworth,
S Lumley, A Pearson, P Posnett, J Wyatt

Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive
Head of Strategic Planning & Regulatory Services
Corporate Services Manager
Administrative Assistant Communications & Member Support

T17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cumbers, Glancy (Chair), Freer-Jones and Greenow. Councillors Bains, Blase and Hurrell were also not present.

[In the absence of Councillor Glancy, it was agreed that Councillor Lumley would Chair the meeting.]

T18. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2017 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chair.

The Minutes of the Consultation meeting held on 24 July 2017 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chair.

The Minutes of the Consultation meeting held on 21 August were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chair subject to the following amendment:-

Minute T13 – Apologies for Absence

Councillor Faulkner advised that he had submitted his apologies for this meeting.

T19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Pearson and Posnett each declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the County Council due to their roles as County Councillors.

T20.RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations from other Committees.

The Chair suggested that in order to receive and send recommendations appropriately between Committees, it would be wise to review the timetable of Committee meetings and the order in which they occurred, with any changes to commence following the next Annual General Meeting on 15 May 2018.

Members agreed this was a good idea and officers confirmed this would be considered.

T21.PRIORITY NEIGHBOURHOODS - ADDRESSING KEY TOWN ISSUES THROUGH NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT

The Deputy Chief Executive

- (a) delivered a presentation outlining the priority neighbourhood approach in identifying and addressing issues in the Town;
- (b) advised that the presentation, originally delivered in 2007 was relevant in addressing current issues faced by this Council, particularly in relation to emerging concerns over crime and the environment. Member comments would feed into an upcoming Review;
- (c) highlighted
 - the apparent increase in crime figures locally had been a rise from an initially low base
 - co-ordination and the joining up of services was key to achieving better value for money
 - there had been four priority neighbourhoods in the Borough and these were the only areas targeted with this focused, joined-up approach
 - the 'Working Model Agreed with our LSP Partners' would need to be re-drafted to reflect current Council partnerships. The Model would be considered as part of the upcoming Review (it was noted there were staff in post who could take responsibility for some issues). Attention would be given to how Town Area Committee and Melton Matters would operate within the Model.

Members expressed concerns about the number of complaints they received from residents, regarding unkempt areas within the Town e.g. long grass and bins left in the street by other residents, as well as 'a whole range of other issues'.

A Member further commented that low level crime did not receive adequate attention from the Police. Members were advised that the Chair and Vice Chair intended to start meeting regularly with Police to discuss issues affecting the Town

and the Member who had made the above comment advised they too would like to be involved.

A Member suggested implementing a team of staff, responsible for patrolling and enforcement within the Town. Another Member cautioned against this, commenting that it was important to work not in isolation but with the support and partnership of the Police. The focus should be on prevention rather than enforcement (providing good practice, education and targeting appropriately).

The Deputy Chief Executive agreed that there were some concerning crime related issues. He commented that the prison population had more than doubled in the past twenty years and this resulted in Police Forces having to tackle crime and justice differently. A positive approach would be engagement with repeat offenders and if some of these were tenants of this Council, there were certain powers to cause them to engage.

The Chief Executive commented that focussing on particular areas would be beneficial and increase the likelihood of achieving successful results. There were also a number of options to consider on how best to resource this. Collective efforts such as working with Police would be more effective.

A Member commented that this was the right time to focus on this, especially with the appointment of a new Chief Executive, who had a lot of experience and a passion for resolving these issues.

A Member agreed and commented that clarity would be needed, concerning what this Council would be responsible for enforcing and what would be dealt with by the Police.

Another Member highlighted the importance of ensuring that initially, this Council agreed a 'working position' before involving Partner organisations.

It was suggested that the Deputy Chief Executive provide an update on addressing key Town issues through neighbourhood management at Town Area Committee meeting on 20 November 2017.

There being no further comments or questions from Members it was

RESOLVED that

- (1) the priority neighbourhood approach in identifying and addressing issues in the Town, as detailed in the presentation be noted;
- (2) the Deputy Chief Executive provide an update to this Committee on 20 November 2017 on addressing key Town issues through neighbourhood management.

T22.BUDGET MONITORING APRIL TO JUNE 2017

On behalf of the Corporate Director, the Corporate Services Manager

(a) submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which provided information on actual expenditure and income incurred on this Committee's services compared to the latest approved budget for the period 1 April to 30 June 2017;

(b) gave a brief overview of the report, highlighting

- the recommendation at 2.1 of the report
- copies of the budget holder's returns were available for further information
- a summary of the income and expenditure for this Committee's services was detailed within Appendix A of the report
- the summary of the income and expenditure for this Committee's services, compared to the approved budget at June 2017, at 3.3 of the report, showing a predicted underspend of £2,955.

Members commented that it would be sensible for this Committee to have responsibility for the Town car parking service and budget, stating that Town area issues should be dealt with by Town Area Committee.

The Chief Executive advised that there was an opportunity to consider this as part of the upcoming Peer Review. He highlighted that currently, the constitution required the Town car parks information be submitted to the Rural, Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee but this could be adapted as per the will of Council.

A Member advised that they would like a breakdown of income generated by the car parks per hour, per day etc.

The Corporate Services Manager advised that these figures had been provided to the Rural Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee, as part of the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Car Parking Strategy review which was undertaken last year.

Members requested that the car parking budget information provided to the Rural, Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee also be submitted to this Committee. The Chief Executive advised that he would confirm if this was workable and highlighted the aim for cohesion and avoiding duplication.

There being no further comments or questions forthcoming from Members, it was

RESOLVED that the financial position on each of this Committee's services to 30 June 2017 and year end forecast be noted.

T23. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING APRIL TO JULY 2017

On behalf of the Corporate Director, the Corporate Services Manager

(a) submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) updating the Committee on the progress of the scheme within the Capital Programme to 31 July 2017;

(b) gave a brief overview of the report, highlighting

- the recommendation at 2.1 of the report
- capital expenditure against the budget for the Play Area Equipment Kirby Fields and Honeysuckle Way Scheme (up to 31 July 2017), was detailed within Appendix A of the report
- the summary, at 5.2, showing the overall position for the Scheme.

A Member stated that a resident had raised concerns regarding the replacement of the play equipment. It was reported that in the view of a local resident the equipment which had been removed was still and the resident was very disappointed that her grandchild had been unable to use the play area for a number of months. The Member commented that it was reasonable for dangerous equipment to be removed urgently, with some delay in providing replacements but if functional, work should be completed quicker to avoid residents encountering a lack of facilities.

The Corporate Services Manager confirmed that he would liaise with the Waste and Environmental Maintenance Manager and a response to the resident's concern would be circulated to all Members of this Committee.

RESOLVED that the progress made on the Capital Scheme as detailed in Appendix A of the report be noted.

T24. CORPORATE REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES

On behalf of the Corporate Director, the Corporate Services Manager

(a) submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) providing information on the fees and charges made by this Committee and recommended changes to operate from 1 April 2018;

(b) gave a brief overview of the report, highlighting

- the recommendation at 2.1 of the report
- only new proposed charges or charges that were proposed to be increased above or below inflation were included for Member consideration, as detailed within Appendix A of the report. This Appendix also summarised the financial objective of the current charging policy, the existing charges, the current level of any subsidy and the reason for the recommended charge
- the Medium Term Financial Strategy charging policy should be used as a guide when setting fees and charges
- budget holders were asked to complete a Review of Charges Form for 2018/19 for each distinct charging area, in order to gather background information on the charges being reviewed
- the proposed fee increase for casual football pitch booking resulted from a benchmarking exercise and would bring the charge in line with the lowest of the benchmarks (much take up of these services was not anticipated, due to the Melton Sports Village and other local facilities)
- as part of the 2017/18 fees and charges setting process, Members had approved a three year fixed allotments fee, which remains in place until 2019/20

- charges had not been introduced for Melton Country Park Car Park, as detailed in Appendix B of the report.

A Member suggested implementing a 'pricing structure' for organisations wishing to use Melton Country Park as there had been concerns raised that after events the Council had to incur clean-up costs. However, another Member stated that they were not in favour of this, querying if charities too would be charged.

Members agreed that those holding events at the Country Park should leave it clean and in good order and that this should be enforced. It was suggested that a deposit be taken with each booking and returned only if the Country Park was left in good order following the event. The Corporate Services Manager suggested that he would liaise with the Service Area concerning the 'clean up' issue at the Country Park and if there was a cause for concern.

A Member queried what the £394,090 open spaces cost related to and the Corporate Services Manager clarified that this represented the cost of delivering all open space services. These services generated little income and it may be helpful for Members to consider this in relation to setting charges. .

RESOLVED that the level of charges for 2018/19 for each of the services set out in Appendix A of the report be approved.

T25.DOG FOULING UPDATE AND PROPOSALS

The Head of Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services

- (a) submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) updating Members on activities planned to tackle dog fouling;
- (b) advised that there were some actions to be taken forward via Councillor Pearson as Environmental Champion;
- (c) highlighted
 - each of the steps taken and the progress made to date
 - there would be a further report to the Rural, Environmental and Economic Affairs Committee in November 2017. Members were invited give further opinion and change the scope of enforcement if necessary
 - Dog Control Orders had been extended.

A Member queried how many of the complaints received about dog fouling concerned rural areas and how many concerned the Town and the Head of Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services confirmed that the majority of complains concerned the Town and this was overwhelmingly a Town issue.

A Member commented that a 'zero tolerance' approach to dog fouling was needed and prosecuting irresponsible dog owners would achieve results.

The Chief Executive confirmed that there were currently no Enforcement Officers assigned to patrol of the Town in respect of dog fouling. He commented that Public Space Protection Orders were very effective legislation, which could be used

flexibly and jointly with intelligence from people and other proactive actions such as circulating enforcement notices to signal a 'zero tolerance' approach. He was aware that in other areas of the country, it had been made an offence not to carry a 'dog bag' when walking a dog. It would be good to consider dog fouling, together with other anti-social behaviour, in the context of Priority Neighbourhoods – Addressing Key Town Issues through Neighbourhood Management.

The Chief Executive agreed, commenting that it would be useful to capture 'soft intelligence' to know the extent of the problems which need to be solved.

Further suggestions from Member included paying people to name irresponsible dog owners, using drones to help identify these dog owners and improving knowledge with regards to locations of bind for dog foul. The Chief Executive advised that Central Government had advised that CCTV could not be used in connection with minor offences (such as dog fouling).

RESOLVED that

- (1) the steps taken and progress made as described in the report be noted;
- (2) the intention to submit a further report to REEA Committee in November 2017 in relation to Public Space Protection Orders and options for enforcement, including resource implications be noted;
- (3) this issue would be considered in context of Priority Neighbourhoods.

T26.URGENT BUSINESS

The Thomas Cook Building – Members highlighted that this building had not been adequately maintained for approximately thirty years. It was not known who owned the building.

The Chief Executive commented that this matter had been brought to his attention by colleagues from BID and he would discuss this further with the Head of Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services.

The meeting which commenced at 18:30 p.m., closed at 19:58 p.m.

Chairman