

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 17th November 2015 at Pippbrook, Dorking from 7.00pm to 8.43pm

Present: Councillors Chris Townsend (Chairman), David Draper (Vice-Chairman), Stephen Cooksey, Rosemary Dickson (substitute for Claire Curran), Mary Huggins, Duncan Irvine, Malcolm Ladell, Jatin Patel and Paul Potter

Also present: Councillors Howard Jones, Vivienne Michael, Philippa Shimmin, Michelle Watson and Charles Yarwood.

46. Minutes

The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5th November 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

47. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Claire Curran and Paula Hancock.

48. Ride London

The Committee received a presentation on the cycle event partially staged in Mole Valley earlier this year from Kevin Nash, the Route Director for RideLondon. The Council's Strategic Leadership Manager, Lucy O'Connell, who was the Council's liaison for the event was also in attendance. During the course of the presentation the following points were noted:-

- This year's event took place on 2nd August 2015 and followed the same route as used in 2014, which included a significant part of Mole Valley. Next year's event would continue to follow the same route and use the same timings as this year's event and would take place on 31st July 2016. This year's event target is to raise £12m for charity.
- The biggest complaint arising from this year's event related to the removal of signs after the event had finished, with some remaining in place for a number of weeks. The organisers of Ride London would be speaking to the contractors responsible for sign removal to address these issues and would be monitoring the situation to ensure there were improvements following the next event in 2016.
- Another area that Ride London hoped to improve for the next event was the local knowledge of their helpdesk facility and the volunteers stewarding the event. To achieve this Ride London were looking into the possibility of offering a financial incentive to those local community groups who provided volunteers.
- Ride London would continue to keep local residents informed about the details of the event through a number of different mechanisms including the internet and direct mailing. Members suggested that any letters being sent to residents to inform them of road closures should be sent at least a month in advance to allow sufficient time for people to make alternative plans should they need to travel on the day.

It was advised by Mr Nash that 27,000 people had taken part in this year's event, which was considered to be maximum capacity. A Member raised a concern about this on the grounds of participant and spectator safety, with a view given that a slight lower capacity of 25,000 participants would help to address these concerns.

A number of Members commented that the feedback they had received from residents was largely positive about the organisation of the event and that residents were appreciative of how they were kept informed. The Chairman thanked Mr Nash for his attendance at the meeting and invited him to return at a later date before the next event.

49. Anti-Social Behaviour Powers – Policy Framework

The Committee received an Executive report setting out new Anti Social Behaviour Powers that are available for local authorities. Members were asked for their observations or recommendations

which would be reported to the Executive during its consideration of the item on 1st December 2015.

During the discussion of the report there were a number of items that the Committee felt should be included within the document to add clarity to the information provided, including additional details on the new Closure Powers to confirm on what types of premises these powers could be applied. It was confirmed that the Closure Powers could be applied to any premises causing a nuisance including residential properties as well as licensed and non-licensed premise.

The report also made reference to a set of minimum standards for dealing with antisocial behaviour, which it was suggested should either include confirmation of these standards or detail where they could be located on the Council website.

Although it was accepted that there was a wide range of support that could be offered to victims of anti social behaviour, it was suggested that it would be helpful if the Support for Victims section of the report could also be expanded upon to set out examples of the type of support that could be offered.

As the Community trigger power had been in place since the legislation was introduced in October 2014, it was questioned whether this power had been used in Mole Valley to date. It was confirmed that there had been none so far, but there had been very few cases across Surrey.

It was confirmed that there were avenues within the new policy to deal with businesses who were acting in an anti-social manner such as creating noise at unsociable hours. These included a noise abatement notice that could be issued by the Environment Health team should it be judged that the noise being generated by the business in question was unreasonable. There was also a Community Protection Notice which was a two stage process; the first was to approach the business and issue a warning if this was not corrective then a CPN could be issued by the Council which if not complied with can be a criminal offence, enforceable by the Courts. .

In response to a question about how under 16's would be dealt with under the new powers it was advised that the Council and its partner organisations would in most circumstances look for positive resolutions through correcting behaviour in the first instance. However if this was unsuccessful then there were enforcement options available, but these would only be used as a last resort.

There was general agreement amongst the Committee that the powers needed more promotion to highlight to local communities the options available to them to tackle anti social behaviour. As well as promoting the powers through the Council's website and social media, thought also needed to be given to how the information would be disseminated to those residents who did not have regular access to a computer.

Resolved: That the comments of the Scrutiny Committee be relayed to the Executive during its consideration of the report on 1st December 2015.

50. Recommendation to Accept the Offer from the Principal Contractor for the Refurbishment of the Pippbrook Civic Offices, Dorking

The Committee received an Executive report setting out the offer from the principal contractor for the refurbishment of the Pippbrook Civic Offices. Members were asked for their observations or recommendations which would be reported to the Executive during its consideration of the item on 1st December 2015.

It was confirmed that within the £4.5m budget there was a contingency fund of £200,000. Having had the building surveyed by a number of contractors, the Executive were confident that this was adequate to cover any foreseen risks that may occur.

It was also confirmed that the work would begin in January 2016 and it had been timetabled to be completed by November 2016. As it had been planned that the work would be completed within a year, this gave a few weeks contingency should any issues arise.

Although it was not included within the original plans, it was anticipated that an upgrade to lift would be included within the refurbishment. It was not envisioned that a full passenger lift would be installed, but the current goods lift would be upgraded to enable it to take a wheelchair user and another person between the different floors at Pippbrook.

Resolved: That the comments of the Scrutiny Committee be relayed to the Executive during its consideration of the report on 1st December 2015.

51. Transform Leatherhead – Consultation

The Committee received an Executive report setting out the results of the Transform Leatherhead Consultation. Members were asked for their observations or recommendations which would be reported to the Executive during its consideration of the item on 1st December 2015.

During the Committee's discussion there was disappointment expressed by a Member that the report did not address the lack of youth provision in Leatherhead and felt that more could be done to provide support for young people living in the area. It was also highlighted that the fifth objective for the town centre did not include the theatre as part of its aim to enhance the leisure, entertainment and cultural offer in Leatherhead town centre.

The fact that Members had highlighted items that were not included in the document was taken to be positive given some of the radical proposals for Leatherhead town centre that had been included. It was also recognised that should the aims of the project be fully realised it would lead to significant change in Leatherhead and although not all of these changes would be welcomed by everybody, getting people engaged with the project should be seen as a positive.

Overall the Committee felt that the extensive work undertaken by Officers and Members to ensure that there was a wide range of responses to the initial consultation deserved to be recognised, as it had been a sizable achievement to get the public engaged with the Council's plans for Leatherhead.

Resolved: That the comments of the Scrutiny Committee be relayed to the Executive during its consideration of the report on 1st December 2015.

52. Community Infrastructure Levy: Draft Charging Schedule

The Committee received an Executive report setting out the results of the consultation on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and the next steps in the process. Members were asked for their observations or recommendations which would be reported to the Executive during its consideration of the item on 1st December 2015.

The report had previously been discussed by the Committee earlier in the year prior to being put out for consultation. Since the consultation the main changes to the document had been to remove the proposed charge for new hotel developments and also to revise the charging for small residential developments. Both of these changes had been introduced as there was concern that the previously suggested charging would impact the viability of these types of schemes. It was also confirmed that the Government was considering introducing exception to CIL for self builds and starter homes.

There was a concern noted about the Infrastructure Delivery Scheme included within the report, as it was felt that Members should have been directly consulted about the content. It was also suggested that the projects set out in the scheme should be prioritised. In response it was advised that the Infrastructure Delivery Scheme was needed as part of the CIL process to demonstrate that there were infrastructure projects in Mole Valley and that there was a short fall in funds to deliver these projects. Without providing this evidence the Council would not be able to request contributions from developers. Furthermore, at this stage prioritisation was not needed and could be debated further down the line once CIL was in place and the Council was receiving contributions.

At present approximately half of the local authorities in Surrey had CIL schemes in place and the others, including Mole Valley, were undertaking the process. The charges in the proposed scheme for Mole Valley were slightly higher than for those authorities who already had CIL in place, but it needed to be recognised that these existing schemes had been set at the bottom of the recession.

Apart from the aforementioned concern about the Infrastructure Delivery Scheme section of the report, Members welcomed the report as it was seen as crucial for the Council to get CIL in place as soon as possible. The Committee also recognised the significant amount of work undertaken by officers to prepare the report and congratulated them on the quality of the document.

Resolved: That the comments of the Scrutiny Committee be relayed to the Executive during its

consideration of the report on 1st December 2015.

53. Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2015/2016

The Committee received a copy of its work programme and the Executive Forward Plan for it information.

Resolved: That the Scrutiny Committee work programme and the Executive forward plan are noted.