

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8th December 2010

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillors Mrs. Hood and Mrs. Plenderleith.

Labour Group

Councillors Bambrick and Mead

OS/19. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

In the absence of both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, it was agreed that Councillor Mrs. Plenderleith be appointed Chairman for the Meeting.

OS/20. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillor Jones (Chairman), Councillor Mrs. Farrington (Vice-Chairman) and Councillor Atkin (Conservative Group).

OS/21. **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th October 2010 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

OS/22. **CULTURAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES – UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE**

Etwall Leisure Centre

The Committee received a number of presentations from Stuart Batchelor and Kate Allies. The first presentation gave an update on the Etwall Leisure Centre, reporting the monthly usage, public usage of the pool, sports hall and fitness centre and the split between public and educational use. Next, a breakdown was provided on usage of the sports hall, it being noted that badminton was the main use. A similar breakdown was provided on usage of the swimming pool and it was questioned whether the statistics on swimming lessons included school lessons. Details were provided of achievements at the Centre, the events held and those planned for the future. The presentation concluded with details of the clubs and groups that were using the Centre. Supplementary information was provided on the Centre's financial position. It was noted that a joint management contract was being considered and would be reported to Members shortly.

A number of questions were submitted. These concerned car parking difficulties at certain times of the day, perceptions about pool usage levels during the daytime and whether the schedule could accommodate additional group use and the previously reported concerns about changing facilities. Other issues discussed were membership levels at the Centre and the impact of the Government's decision to cease funding for "free swimming" for certain sectors of the community.

Rosliston Forestry Centre

Members were reminded of the original scope of the scrutiny review of the Rosliston Forestry Centre. A report was circulated which gave day visitor numbers for each month over the period 2006/7 to 2010/11. The report also gave statistics for cabin occupancy rates, retail figures and wedding bookings. Information was provided on marketing, recent health and safety audits/inspections and a successful funding application to Community Spaces, resulting in the award of just under £42,000 for the Herbie Project, a sensory garden.

Environmental Education Project

Kate Allies gave a presentation to Members, which confirmed the partners involved in this project, its aims and objectives, together with examples of work undertaken. Financial information was provided on the main sources of income and the financial planning that took place. The presentation highlighted some of the key outcomes and outputs from the project and explained how environmental education contributed to a number of the Corporate Plan objectives. The presentation concluded with slides on future plans and how it was planned to extend the project's outputs. Officers explained the social media used to further promote the Rosliston Forestry Centre, including "You Tube". In response to a Member's question, there was discussion about how the Centre worked with the Derby University and Burton-on-Trent College.

Get Active in the Forest

Stuart Batchelor gave the final presentation on the 'Get Active in the Forest' initiative. This was a partnership project between the District Council, The National Forest Company and NHS Derbyshire County. The presentation covered the aim of the project, the wide range of activities provided and a funding breakdown of income and expenditure for 2009/10. Key statistics were provided on the number of participations and walks for health each month, together with the key achievements of this project to date. There was a discussion about publicity of this project. Social media was used, but word of mouth was still the main source of encouraging new participants.

The Committee was asked about the way forward with this review area and a view was expressed that a future monitoring report would be useful. The implementation of the new joint leisure management contract might be a further area for consideration and in terms of timing, a report could be submitted to the Committee in October 2011. Officers were thanked for the presentations.

It was agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers implementation of the leisure management contract around October 2011.

OS/23. **NEW ETWALL LEISURE CENTRE – ASSESSMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL: REPORT OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT MANAGER**

Under Minute No. AS/13, the Audit Sub-Committee received a report on Assessment of Internal Control of the new Etwall Leisure Centre. The Sub-Committee was mindful of this Committee's ongoing scrutiny review and requested that the report be provided to scrutiny Members. The report had also been considered by the Etwall Leisure Centre Joint Management Committee. In summary, it was noted that all of the recommendations from this audit had either been implemented or were in the course of being implemented.

The Committee noted the report of the Internal Audit Manager as part of its review of the Etwall Leisure Centre.

OS/24. **WORK PROGRAMME**

It was reported that the Committee agreed an annual work programme, which was reviewed at each Meeting. An update was provided on health scrutiny, following the request for further discussions about the services delivered from the new Health Centre in Civic Way, Swadlincote. Provisional arrangements had been made to hold a Special Meeting the Committee at 5.00 p.m. on 19th January 2011. Details were given of the likely contributors from the health sector. Members were invited to submit questions in advance, in order that these could be circulated to the contributors ahead of the Meeting.

It was reported that an approach had been made on behalf of the Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO) for this Council to run a workshop on fourth option scrutiny at the Organisation's annual conference. The planned Government changes to local government structures would enable many authorities to revert to a committee system and it was considered that a workshop on fourth option scrutiny would be timely and well received. Following discussions with ADSO, the workshop included Derbyshire Dales, the other fourth option council in the County to give a comparison on how the councils fulfilled their scrutiny role. The workshop took place on the afternoon of Monday, 15th November 2010 and was well attended, attracting nearly half of the delegates at the conference. The session was well received and was considered worthwhile, as it had promoted the good work of this Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

An update was also provided on crime and disorder scrutiny. It was expected that the requirement to undertake such scrutiny at least annually, was likely to be revoked in the near future. However, the requirement remained in place presently and it was proposed to undertake some crime and disorder scrutiny work at the Meeting in March 2011. The relevant officers had been asked to suggest a suitable area for review and Members were also requested to give some thought and to submit ideas.

With regard to the Swadlincote Woodlands Review, a Member asked what had happened to the exit strategy produced for the project approximately 5 years ago. It was noted that this review area was due to be considered again at the Committee's February Meeting and suggested that this aspect could be included.

The Committee noted the report submitted and agreed the proposals set out above.

MRS. A. PLENDERLEITH

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting terminated at 7.00 p.m.