

## MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 01 FEBRUARY 2011

### Present:

Councillor Ms P.A. Broom (Chairman)

### Councillors:

Miss E.M. Bell

Mrs C.E. Nichols

Mrs M.W. Rough

K. Chouhan

L.E. Nichols

G. F. Trussler

A.P. Hirst

**Apologies:** Councillor S. J. Rough (Vice Chairman) and Councillors Miss M.M. Bain, S.E.W. Budd, H. R. Jaffer, D.L. McShane, Mrs I. Napper and Jack D. Pinkerton

**Cabinet Members in attendance:** The Chairman had invited the following Cabinet Members to attend the meeting and take part in the discussions on those items relevant to their Portfolio

Councillor J.D. Packman took part in the proceedings of the confidential minute number 30/11 and Councillor Mrs D. Grant took part in the proceedings of minute number 25/11

### 16/11 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

None reported.

### 17/11 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on the following dates were approved as a correct record:

Special Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 20 October 2010

Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 2 November 2010

Crime and Disorder Committee - 2 November 2010

### 18/11 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

At the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 2 November 2010 consideration was given to the review being undertaken by the County Safer, Stronger Board on community safety services across the county. It was indicated that the findings of the review would be circulated to all committee members in December 2010 (or as soon as completed). The Chairman of the Committee reported that this had not been possible as the review was taking longer than anticipated. The findings would now not be available until February/March 2011. The Chairman agreed that the matter would be considered by the Committee at the next meeting on 5 April 2011.

### **19/11 BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Committee received the briefing paper providing an update on the Council's Business transformation programme which had been included on the agenda for information. The Chairman reminded the committee that members had the opportunity to submit specific questions direct to the Lead Officer for scrutiny.

### **20/11 ORDINARY WATER COURSES UPDATE**

The Committee discussed with Sandy Muirhead, the Head of Sustainability and Leisure the briefing paper on the management and maintenance responsibilities for watercourses within the Borough. The Committee noted that clearance work to the highest priority ditches had been undertaken and that further ditch clearance work was planned for 2011/2012.

The Chairman reminded the officers of the importance of keeping Ward councillors up to date with watercourse management issues and in particular the situation with Sweep Ditch.

The Officer reported on future works being undertaken in line with the council's policy on watercourse management to enforce riparian ownership responsibilities and associated issues.

**RESOLVED** that the briefing paper from the Head of Sustainability and Leisure be received and the action being taken noted.

### **21/11 CALL IN CABINET DECISIONS**

No decisions had been called in for review.

### **22/11 2010 – 2011 REVENUE MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee discussed with Adrian Flynn, Senior Accountant, the Revenue monitoring report outlining the current spending and income figures for the period April to December 2010, which revealed that £8,909m had been spent against the full year budget of £13,851m. The Committee noted that the interest earned for this period was £313k with a full year earnings forecast of £391k.

During the discussion the Officers responded to numerous questions raised by members of the committee and agreed to provide additional information in relation to temporary car parking staff and the agency agreement for on street parking with the new agreement commencing in April 2011. The officers further agreed to investigate the feasibility of Green Johannes being made available for residents.

**RESOLVED** that the report of the Chief Finance Officer outlining the current revenue spend and projected outturn position for the period April to December 2010 be noted.

### **23/11 2010 – 2011 CAPITAL MONITORING AND PROJECTED OUTTURN REPORT**

The Committee discussed with Adrian Flynn, the Senior Accountant, the Capital monitoring report which covered the period April to December 2010.

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 01 February 2011 -  
Continued

He reported that £1,305k had been spent to date against an original budget of £2,004k and a revised budget of £2767k.

During the discussion the officers responded to numerous questions raised by members of the Committee and agreed to provide additional information in relation to improvement projects and the Sea Cadets relocation to the Lammas.

The Chairman on behalf of the Committee expressed her concerns and disappointment that some Heads of Service had not provided progress comments on the capital projects under their responsibility. The Chairman agreed to email all concerned to highlight the importance of providing such information.

**RESOLVED** that the report of the Chief Finance Officer outlining the Capital monitoring position for the period April to December 2010 be noted.

#### **24/11 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Chairman of the Committee invited Lucy McSherry, Sustainability and Waste Officer to give Members of the Committee a short presentation. The presentation provided details of achievements in reducing waste and energy and had informed Members of current energy saving projects.

A copy of the presentation is **attached**.

A general discussion took place on the progress with the action plans which covered 8 main areas of: (1) Energy and Climate Change, (2) Water, (3) Biodiversity and Green Spaces, (4) Transport, (5) Waste, (6) Sustainable Procurement, (7) Planning and (8) Awareness raising. The Committee indicated that it would be helpful if further information could be included in the action plans such as dates of actions, whether a function is statutory or discretionary function, and then within priority order.

The committee noted the success of the Tothill car park project which had produced significant savings and it was anticipated that similar savings could be made at other car parks.

The committee in acknowledging the limited resources available discussed the success of the continued and increased work with schools to develop their knowledge and understanding of sustainable development matters. The committee felt that perhaps it was time to move this focus away from schools to the adult section of the local community as well as working more closely with the super markets.

The Chairman asked that the Officers look at this aspect and report back to the committee with suggestions of how they feel this could be best taken forward.

The committee noted that strategies were being produced on open spaces and allotment and asked that a briefing paper on the allotment strategy be submitted to the next meeting of the committee. The briefing paper should include the current number and usage of allotment plots.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) The progress report of the Assistant Chief Executive outlining progress made on the Sustainable Development Action Plans be received;
- (2) The Cabinet be advised that the updates be accepted as an accurate record of progress against the Sustainable Development Strategy and that a further update be provided in six months;
- (3) The information on the action plans be enhanced as indicated at the meeting including identifying statutory and discretionary functions and indicating which are high, medium and low priorities for the Council; and
- (4) A briefing paper on allotments be submitted to the next meeting of this committee.

### **25/11 PARKS AND OPEN SPACES STRATEGY 2010/202**

The Cabinet Member responsible for Young People and Culture, Councillor Mrs D. Grant, was in attendance at the meeting and took part in the discussion.

The Chairman of the committee invited Sandy Muirhead, the Head of Sustainability and Leisure, to give a short presentation on the current plans for parks and open spaces within the Borough. During the presentation specific details were provided covering funding, community engagement and the current project to upgrade and refurbish Laleham Park.

A copy of the presentation is **attached**

The Committee agreed that to maximise the use of park facilities there must be more involvement with Borough residents, children and Councillors. The Committee also identified the need for footpaths to be improved and linked in with parks to encourage residents to use parks and open spaces more.

The Committee raised concern that there was a need to consult councillors more fully about the upgrading and refurbishing of open spaces to ensure that tree planting and other environmental improvements were undertaken in the appropriate areas of the Borough.

Discussion took place on the location of public open spaces and park facilities within the Borough. Concern was raised at the lack of playground facilities in the Sunbury East Ward for which there was a demand by local residents. The Committee requested that Environment Services undertake research into areas of the Borough which are deficient of parks and open spaces for future consideration.

A discussion had also taken place about the allocation of funding and resources for parks and open spaces. The committee were pleased to note the previous successes the Council had of obtaining external funding via Liveability and Playbuilder. The latest application for Heritage Lottery funding needed to be submitted by 28 February 2011 and if successful would be used to refurbish Laleham Park. It was identified that ward councillors including the Chairman of the committee should be involved in the work for the funding bid and if successful with the consultation that would be undertaken

Councillor Packman the Leader of the Council agreed to investigate the feasibility of re introducing a right of way at Kempton Park which under the legal agreement for the nature reserve had been lost.

During the discussion on the general aims of the strategy and to help the committee scrutinise the document in the future it was felt that there was a need to identify the Council's main priorities within the action plan.

**RESOLVED** to receive the report of the Assistant Chief Executive on the implementation of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and associated action plan.

#### **26/11 PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

The Committee noted that the report outlining the progress of the playing pitch strategy action plan had been included on the agenda for information only. The Chairman reminded the committee that members had the opportunity to submit specific questions direct to the Lead Officer for scrutiny.

#### **27/11 CABINET FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee received the Cabinet forward plan.

#### **28/11 WORK PROGRAMME 2010/2011**

The Committee noted that the Chairman would continue to review the work programme and identify issues for the committee to look at.

During the course of the meeting various topics were identified for inclusion in the work programme including a discussion paper on allotments for consideration at the next meeting in April 2011, a further report on sustainable development covering ideas on how to work more closely with the adult section of the community and supermarkets, and the outcome of the review being undertaken by the County Safer, Stronger Board on community safety services across the county.

In addition the Chairman reminded the committee that if they have any topics they wish to be considered for inclusion in the work programme details should be sent to the Chairman and Brian Harris, Assistant Chief Executive.

**RESOLVED** that the work programme be received and the action being taken by the Chairman be noted.

#### **29/11 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of Paragraph 3 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government Access to Information Act 1985 and by the Local Government Access to Information Variation Order 2006.

#### **30/11 STANWELL NEW START PROJECT – UPDATE ON DECISIONS AND NEGOTIATIONS (PARAGRAPH 3)**

The Chairman invited the Deputy Chief Executive, Nigel Lynn, to give members of the Committee a short presentation on the project. The Deputy Chief Executive provided details of the individual phases of the housing development and the additional community facilities, including open spaces

and play areas to assist in the regeneration of the housing situation in the Stanwell area.

Councillor Packman had commented that the work undertaken by A2 Dominion had been a success and that the project would lead to excellent modern facilities which would be much appreciated by the Stanwell community. The Committee discussed with Nigel Lynn the financial consequences of the project on the Council including the profitability of the land site. Nigel Lynn commented that consultations had taken place with A2 Dominion, who are part funding the development, to consider alternative options and ensure that the best value and use of the site could be achieved with the temporary transfer of council land.

In reference to the report submitted to Cabinet, the committee considered the issue of transferring the land site at "undervalue". Nigel Lynn informed the Committee that the Cabinet had to decide on the permissibility of this under the General Disposal Consent and the application of section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Committee discussed at length the risks involved under the revised heads and terms of the agreement, in particular assessing the financial position of A2 Dominion to complete the entire phases of the development without detriment to the Council.

**RESOLVED** that the confidential report of the Deputy Chief Executive outlining the current position of negotiations, the risks involved and the steps taken to mitigate those risks be received.

### **31/11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No notification of further business was received.