

17 SEPTEMBER 2019

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY & LEISURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Minutes of a meeting of the Community & Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Panel held in The Bradbury Room, Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Tuesday, 17 September 2019

- * Cllr Geoffrey Blunden (Chairman)
- * Cllr Neville Penman (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

- * Steve Clarke
- * Keith Craze
- * Arthur Davis
- Barry Dunning

Councillors:

- * David Hawkins
- * Caroline Rackham
- David Russell
- * Alex Wade

*Present

In attendance:

Councillors:

Diane Andrews, Community Affairs Portfolio Holder
Mark Steele, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder
Alan O'Sullivan

Officers Attending:

Manjit Sandhu, Nikki Swift, Sarah Jennings, Gary Jarvis, Sheryl Parry and Andy Rogers

Apologies

Cllr Dunning

16 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 18 June and 25 July be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest in the Agenda Items.

18 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no issues raised during the public participation period.

19 PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' REPORTS

Cllr Andrews reported that the deadline for Community Grants Application was the 30 September with a £35,000 limit on Revenue Grants and £100,000 on Capital Grants.

Recommendations would be made to Council in February, following a Task and Finish Group meetings in November.

The Customer Services Task and Finish Group was in the process of overseeing the project to upgrade the website including involvement with prospective providers.

The Portfolio Holder also proposed a new Task and Finish Group on collaboration between Towns and Parish Councils. There were no firm parameters as yet on the scope of the Task and Finish Group but it could include discussions on grass cutting, CCTV, and other collaborative working.

The Portfolio Holder also reported on the Safer New Forest Training Workshops. The training workshops had been successful and the officers involved were thanked for their input. These were discussed in more detail later in the meeting.

The Leisure Wellbeing Portfolio Holder reported that the Expression of Interest Document on the Leisure Centres had been submitted and supported by the Cabinet on the 4 September. It was hoped that any new partner would introduce new ideas and service improvements. A Bidder Day was fixed for the 3 October.

The Panel were pleased to note that Totton Health and Leisure Centre had won the Local Authority Gym of the Year Award.

20 HEALTH AND LEISURE REVIEW

The Committee received an update on progress with the Health and Leisure Review.

The Task and Finish Group was meeting regularly and periodic meetings were being held with the Employee Side Liaison Panel, as well as with Trade Unions. The Expression of Interest Document was published on 16 September 2019. Tenders would be evaluated by an Officer led Panel. The outcome would be shared with a Stakeholder Panel which would include members of the Task and Finish Group, the Portfolio Holder and Union Representatives. Monthly Customer Focus Groups were held, as well as regular meetings with leisure staff. Regular meetings had been held with Trade Unions regarding the Employment Contracts.

The expected timeline for the tender process was broadly as follows:-

- 18 October – EOI Period closure
- 4 November – Evaluation Panel
- 10 January – Tender Packs Return
- 21 January – Community Panel Update
- Late January/early February – Evaluation
- March – ‘Best or Final Offers’
- June 2020 – Preferred Bidder reported to Panel.

The Task and Finish Group will go through a rigorous and robust process with a preference for well thought out submissions, and more of an emphasis on the best service for the community, rather than simply financial savings.

Pension rights for leisure staff after the transition had yet to be finalised.

As of 17 September, nine contractors had looked at the EOI through the Procurement Portal. Early signs were positive that there would be a good number of prospective bids.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

21 COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Panel received a presentation from the Community Safety Team on the 2019 Public Consultation regarding crime and disorder issues within the New Forest.

The Safer New Forest Partnership was required to undertake an annual consultation regarding crime and disorder. The information gathered formed part of the Annual Strategic Assessment to inform future priorities. A series of community engagement events had been held in a number of locations throughout the district over July, August and October. There were also plans to undertake surveys among Parish/Town Councils, and among younger people. Partner Agencies were invited to participate and the event was well received.

Of the 105 surveys completed, 98% were either satisfied or very satisfied with their local areas. 8 residents had reported a crime within the last six months with 75% being happy with the Police response. The Panel also noted various statistics on experience of crime, demographics and comments from the public.

The Panel noted how the media appeared to be increasing the perceived fear of crime.

The Panel discuss the perceived link between crime and HCC street lighting switch off times in some areas between 1am and 4am. Police representatives had offered to approach HCC with any evidence of crime related activity during these times. It was confirmed that CCTV did operate in darkness.

The Panel noted the surveys statistics and discussed the need to reach out to 17 to 19 year olds. Whilst this group had appeared to have opted not to engage, work would be done at colleges to develop this for future years. It was important that such surveys covered all age groups.

The survey results would be brought to the Panel on completion. The Chairman thanked the Officers for their very interesting presentation and work undertaken.

22 HAMPSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Cllr Clarke, the NFDC Representative on the Hampshire Police Crime Panel, gave an update on recent activities of the Panel.

He reported on the 101 Police Non-Emergency Number, and that reporting antisocial behaviour online was now easier.

A commitment had been made to increase policing numbers in Hampshire by more than 200. This required clarification as to whether this was an increase in 'Establishment' figures or 'Strength' figures. It was hoped there would be more

front line posts, and it was anticipated there would be a small number of extra staff in the Forest.

He also reported on SafetyNet, and the Early Intervention Fund.

Cllr Clarke invited all members to forward questions to him that he would happily raise at the next Hampshire Police Crime Panel in November.

23 WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel reviewed its work programme.

It was requested that a progress report on CCTV be brought to the January Panel meeting following an open day invite preferably before Christmas.

The Panel supported the creation of a Task and Finish Group to foster greater collaboration on District/Town/Parish Working, the details of which had yet to be finalised.

24 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED:

That the following dates be agreed for future Panel meeting:-

(All Tuesdays at 6.00 p.m.)

- 16 June 2020
- 15 September 2020
- 19 January 2021
- 16 March 2021

CHAIRMAN