

MINUTES of a meeting of the POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 27 JUNE 2018

Present: Councillor M Specht (Chairman)

Councillors R Ashman, T Eynon, G Hoult, V Richichi, A C Saffell, S Sheahan and N Smith

In Attendance: Councillors J Legrys

Officers: Mrs T Bingham, Mr J Knight, Mrs M Long, McHendry, Mr M Murphy, Mr P Sanders, Mrs B Smith and Mrs R Wallace

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Purver and N Clarke.

2. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2018.

It was moved by Councillor N Smith, seconded by Councillor T Eynon and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2018 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

None.

5. NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

The Leisure Services Team Manager presented the report and introduced Mr D McHendry, Consultant from KKP Ltd.

Councillor V Richichi asked who would be targeted with the strategy. Mr D McHendry explained that there were key groups of people including those who were unhealthy, not active, and had no access to facilities. The information on these groups had been compiled by Sport England over the last ten years and was still ongoing.

Councillor S Sheahan commented that when attempting to target groups it was important to consider the two main barriers which was motivation and convenience. It was also important to consider the different levels of social interaction required by individuals. Mr D McHendry reported that previous consultation raised the issue of isolation as a key challenge for people to be active. Councillor S Sheahan added that social interaction was important but a leisure centre setting could be intimidating for some. The Leisure Services Team Manager felt that it was important to take a holistic approach when deciding on what to offer, both in the leisure centre and the community.

Councillor N Smith raised the importance of holding activity classes for cardiac patients, as in his experience there was nothing available within the District. He felt it was

Chairman's initials

important to include this group of people and to involve GP surgeries so that information was available to all.

Councillor T Eynon commented that activities such as dog walking was not included on the list, it was generally sporting activities only. Mr D McHendry confirmed that activities such as dog walking were included but for the purpose of the report only the top activities were listed. Councillor T Eynon felt that it would be hard to motivate some people as they may not want to go to a leisure centre. She also hoped that all forms of activities including community groups, Zumba, dancing, walking and gardening would be mapped during the process. She felt it was very important to include less expensive forms of activity and to make the community aware of them.

Councillor T Eynon asked if employers would also be targeted to encourage an active workforce. The Leisure Services Team Manager felt that work place health was very important and it would form part of the strategy.

Councillor A C Saffell felt that more education on food choices should also be included as many people lived on junk food. He also felt that the Council should be clamping down on the number of fast food establishments being opened as they had an impact.

The Chairman raised the point that there was specific reference to smoking within the presentation but no mention of alcohol consumption. He was aware of the impact alcohol had on people's physical and mental health and believed it should be included.

The Leisure Services Team Manager invited Members to engage in the wider consultation in due course.

It was moved by Councillor N Smith, seconded by Councillor T Eynon and

RESOLVED THAT:

- a) The process and timelines to develop a North West Leicestershire Health and Wellbeing Strategy be noted.
- b) The engagement of the consultation process be noted.

6. PROVISION OF SCRUTINY TRAINING

The Democratic Services Team Manager presented the report to Members.

It was moved by Councillor M Specht, seconded by Councillor T Eynon and

RESOLVED THAT:

The proposed scope of scrutiny training be received and noted as set out in the report.

7. LEISURE VAT IMPLICATIONS

The Head of Finance presented the report to Members.

Councillor S Sheahan felt that the subject matter was hard to understand as there were no figures included for comparison. The Head of Finance stated that it would take approximately one to two weeks to collate the information requested and agreed to provide the figures for each case as detailed in table 1 of the report. Councillor S Sheahan felt that it was important for Cabinet to also have the information before making its decision.

Chairman's initials

As several Members sought clarification on the subject matter, the Head of Finance provided further explanation on the review of the outsourcing business case, the “test of significance” relating to the VAT level and the “peppercorn lease” arrangement as detailed within the report.

Members had a brief discussion on the possible disadvantages of the outsourcing business case and were concerned that the Council could incur more costs if that option was taken. The Head of Finance assured Members that a lot of work had been undertaken on the matter and due to the total number of advantages, on balance, outsourcing was more favourable.

In response to a question from Councillor T Eynon, the Head of Finance confirmed that the peppercorn lease arrangement was a necessary part of the outsourcing agreement. Councillor T Eynon stated that she was uncomfortable with the proposed arrangements, especially as she would have to explain to constituents that a huge amount of money was being spent on a new leisure centre that we would lease to another service provider in the proposed way.

The Chairman asked if the service providers currently involved in the procurement process were happy with the proposal and open to the peppercorn lease arrangement. The Head of Community Services confirmed that they were and it would be covered in a report to Cabinet in due course.

It was moved by Councillor R Ashman, seconded by Councillor A C Saffell and

RESOLVED THAT:

Comments made by the Committee regarding the issue of VAT exemption on sporting services be provided to Cabinet and Council when considering the report.

8. REVIEW OF PENSIONS DISCRETIONS

The Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development presented the report to Members.

In response to a question from Councillor S Sheahan, the Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development explained that the consultation process with the Trade Unions was currently ongoing and therefore an official response was not included within the report. The Chief Executive assured Members that the results of the consultation would be available before a decision was made.

Councillor N Smith asked who would be making the decisions on the individual cases, as the report refers to ‘the Council’ making decisions. The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development confirmed that it would be the Chief Executive as Head of Paid Service and himself, in consultation with other officers on a case by case basis.

Councillor A C Saffell commented that the same approach was used at his previous employer and it worked very well.

Councillor V Richichi raised concerns that some cases may result in the Council incurring further costs, especially if more employees were required to cover a possible gap in the service. The Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development stressed that each case would be considered on an individual basis and if it was not beneficial or cost effective for the authority, then the request would be refused. The Chief Executive agreed and added that the discretions would allow more flexibility when considering each request.

Chairman’s initials

Councillor R Ashman felt that it was important to have a flexible approach as it made the Council a responsible employer balancing the needs of employees and the business.

It was moved by Councillor A C Saffell, seconded by Councillor M Specht and

RESOLVED THAT:

Comments made by the Committee be provided to Council when considering the report.

9. WORKFORCE AND AGENCY COSTS

The Chief Executive informed Members that this report was on the agenda because of a request made at Full Council during the setting of the budget. She also reminded Members that the issue fell under the responsibility of the Chief Executive as the Head of Paid Service and was not a Member decision.

The Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development presented the report to Members.

Councillor V Richichi raised concerns about how services would operate fully if the number of agency staff was reduced and staff were retiring early. The Chief Executive commented that she was aware of the need to run the council in an efficient way and felt it was important to employ permanent members of staff rather than agency staff where possible. She assured Members that it was not the intention to reduce staff numbers unless Members decided they wanted to reduce services.

The Chairman asked if the high spend on agency staff in the Housing Service was due to the manual workers in the maintenance team. The Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development confirmed that it was due to the difficulty in recruiting in that particular area. He reported that investigations had been undertaken on pay levels in the market and several changes had been made. Permanent recruitment for the positions was currently in progress.

Concerns were raised regarding some of the terms used within the report as the meaning was unclear. The Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development took the comments on board and agreed to address this before it was considered elsewhere.

The Chief Executive reported that there would be a change to the proposed recommendation as the report would not be going to Cabinet for consideration as the subject would form part of the People Plan in due course.

Councillor S Sheahan commented that he was disappointed that Members were not being asked to approve any recommendations within the report. Councillor A C Saffell responded that the report had delivered all that he had requested and the purpose of the report was to present information to the committee.

Councillor A C Saffell asked that an update be received on an annual basis.

It was moved by Councillor A C Saffell, seconded by Councillor M Specht and

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be noted.

10. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION IN THE FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

In reference to the Local Heritage Assets report which was requested at the previous meeting, Members were informed that this would be considered at the Local Plan Committee and therefore had been removed from the work programme.

RESOLVED THAT:

- a) The following items be placed on the work programme for the meeting on 19 September:
 - Recycling More
 - The People Plan

- b) The following items be moved from the meeting on 19 September to the meeting on 14 November:
 - Use of Bailiffs Review
 - The Council's Approach to Fly Tipping

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.05 pm