

Overview and Scrutiny Committee



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Wednesday 13 January 2016** at **4.00 pm** at the **Conference Chamber, West Suffolk House, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU**

Present: **Councillors**

Chairman Diane Hind
Vice Chairman Jeremy Farthing

Simon Brown
Terry Buckle
Susan Glossop
Paul Hopfensperger
Angela Rushen

Andrew Speed
Clive Springett
Jim Thorndyke
Frank Warby
John Burns

Substitutes attending:
Patricia Warby

By Invitation:
Paula Fox

Remembrance

The Committee observed a one minute silence in remembrance of the late Councillor Tim Marks, a former Member of the Borough Council and Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

54. **Substitutes**

The following substitution was declared:

Councillor Patricia Warby for Councillor Wayne Hailstone.

55. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Wayne Hailstone and Richard Rout.

56. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

57. **Public Participation**

There were no questions/statements from members of the public.

58. **Presentation by the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Cultural Services**

As set out in the Council's Constitution, at every ordinary Overview and Scrutiny meeting at least one Cabinet Member would be invited to attend to give an account of his or her portfolio and answer questions from the Committee. Therefore, to carry out this constitutional requirement, members were asked to consider the responsibilities of the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Cultural Services, who had been invited to the meeting.

Report No: OAS/SE/16/001, set out the overall responsibilities of the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Cultural Services, which were:

- Heritage and tourism
- Parks and open spaces (including trees)
- Sport
- Public halls.

Councillor Joanna Rayner, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Cultural Services opened her presentation by thanking the Committee for the invitation. She then set out the areas of responsibility; structure; key facts; and current major projects. Owing to its diverse nature Operational Services is split into two portfolios:

- Leisure and Cultural Services (Councillor Jo Rayner)
- Property, Waste and Street Scene (Councillor Peter Stevens)

There are four key areas of responsibility within the leisure and cultural portfolio these being; parks and services; sports; halls and events; tourism and heritage service.

A breakdown of operational costs was provided for the leisure and cultural services in St Edmundsbury; Forest Heath and West Suffolk.

A number of key facts and major projects covering St Edmundsbury were included, such as:

- Play area refurbishment / renewal programme;
- A need for future burial provision in Haverhil;
- Works to improve the Abbey Gardens and Crankles;
- Creating walk and run routes;
- Sports facilities and playing pitch assessment for current and future needs;
- Closer working arrangements between the Apex and the Theatre Royal.

Members discussed the presentation in detail and asked a number of questions of the Cabinet Member and officers to which comprehensive responses were provided. In particular discussions were held on the following:

- (1) Proms in Park – Officers agreed to look into ways of overcoming a number of barriers such as the control of noise; security of event area boundaries and funding.
- (2) Play equipment – Officers agreed to circulate the list of Council owned play sites and the current projected schedule of renewals.
- (3) Bury swimming pool – The Council had commissioned an assessment of all indoor and playing pitch facilities and the findings of this assessment would be considered at the West Suffolk Growth Steering Group on 8 February 2016.
- (4) The Apex – It was acknowledged this was a popular venue and was gaining momentum. Officers confirmed that the subsidy was being reduced year on year.
- (5) Queen’s Birthday – The Council was looking at a number of events, which were in their early stages, to celebrate the Queen’s 90th birthday in 2016, which the Committee supported.
- (6) Haverhill Arts Centre – Officers advised that there were no plans from the Borough Council to create a museum in Haverhill, but the heritage service would work with any local organisations as appropriate.
- (7) Bury Festival – The festival would be held from 20 – 29 May 2016.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Cultural Services for her informative presentation.

There being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the presentation by the Cabinet member for Leisure and Cultural Services.

59. **Skyliner Way, Bury St Edmunds - Verbal Update**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Principal Planning Officer (Major Projects) and the Western Area Highways Manager (Suffolk County Council), which advised Members on the unsuccessful bid application to the Highway Authorities On-Street Parking Account for £25,000 to implement verge parking in Skyliner Way, Bury St Edmunds.

The Western Area Highways Manager informed the Committee that Suffolk County Council (SCC) had acknowledged the parking situation, but did not feel that at the present time there was a significant enough issue in Skyliner Way to implement verge parking. SCC felt there were no access issues at the present time, so this was not regarded as a high priority. However, moving forward SCC would review the issue along with the eastern relief road.

The Committee was disappointed that the bid application had not been successful, having been led to believe it was a formality and were also very disappointed that the results had been presented verbally to members rather than a written pre-circulated report.

Members scrutinised the verbal update in detail and felt this needed to be looked at again and queried whether the application could be re-submitted. The eastern relief road would become a major route into Bury St Edmunds and the Committee felt SCC needed to do something now rather than in the future.

With the vote being unanimous, it was:

RECOMMENDED

That the Head of Planning and Growth be asked to write a report on how the bid process worked; when the next bid process was open; and what alternative options were available to be presented to the Committee at its April 2016 meeting.

60. Directed Surveillance Authorised Applications (Quarter 3)

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order 2010 required that Members should scrutinise the authority's use of its surveillance powers on a quarterly basis.

The Monitoring Officer had advised that in Quarter 3, no such surveillance had been authorised. There being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act, Quarter 3 update.

61. Work Programme Update

The Committee received Report No: OAS/SE/16/002, which updated Members on the current status of its rolling work programme of items for scrutiny during 2016 (Appendix 1).

The Chairman advised the Committee that the Police and Crime Commissioner had been invited to its March meeting to give a presentation on the Suffolk Local Policing Review and to answer any questions. An invitation would also be sent to all members inviting them to the Committee meeting on 9 March 2016.

The Scrutiny Officer advised Members of the following amendments to the Committee's meeting on 9 March 2016:

- Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership Annual Update to be deferred to 20 April 2016; and
- West Suffolk Housing Strategy Progress Report against Action Points to be included for 9 March 2016.

Following the sudden passing of Councillor Tim Marks who had been the Borough Council's representative on the Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee, the Chairman sought nominations for the outside appointment in light of the next Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee taking place on 21 January 2016. The Scrutiny Officer advised that nominations to the Health Scrutiny Committee were done on an annual basis following full Council in May and the Committee at its meeting in June

2016, might also wish to consider nominating a substitute member to the Health Scrutiny Committee.

Members considered the report and the nomination to the Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Paul Hopfensperger informed the Committee that he would be interested in the role. This was duly proposed by Councillor Frank Warby and seconded by Councillor Andrew Speed.

There being no further nominations the Committee nominated Councillor Paul Hopfensperger as the Borough Council's nominated representative on the Suffolk Health Scrutiny Committee.

With the vote being unanimous, it was:

RECOMMENDED

That full Council be asked to confirm the appointment of Councillor Paul Hopfensperger as the Borough Council's nominated representative on the Suffolk Health Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of 2015-2016.

The Meeting concluded at 5.10 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
