

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 7 JUNE 2018 AT 10.00AM

PRESENT: Councillor Paton (Chairman), Councillors, Crawford, Finlayson, Layden, McDonald (as substitute for Councillor Harid), McNulty (as substitute for Councillor Carrigan), S Sidgwick and J Mallinson.

OFFICERS: Deputy Chief Executive
Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager
Grounds Maintenance and Green Spaces Manager
Policy and Performance Officer
Policy and Communications Manager

HWSP.31/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Harid and Councillor Carrigan.

HWSP.32/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

HWSP.33/18 PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED - It was agreed that the items of business in Part A be dealt with in public and Part B be dealt with in private.

HWSP.34/18 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – To note that Council on 24 April 2018 received and adopted the minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2018.

HWSP.35/18 CALL IN OF DECISIONS

There were no items which had been the subject of call-in.

HWSP.36/18 GREEN SPACES STRATEGY

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager submitted the draft Green Spaces Strategy that had been developed with the assistance of Panel Members.

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager reminded the Panel that a Working Group had been established to assist officers in drafting the new Green Spaces Strategy to be adopted by the Council. The Working Group met twice and the resulting draft Green Spaces Strategy had been attached to the report. He explained that the Strategy set the agenda for the green spaces infrastructure and was a major part of the City Council work. It aided the workforce in determining priorities and ensured everyone worked together on relevant priorities.

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager circulated a coloured and bound copy of the draft strategy which had the same text as the report but included the photographs and formatting of the final document. He asked the Panel to consider the draft Strategy and make any necessary comments or changes before approving it to go out to consultation.

In considering the draft Strategy Members raised the following comments and questions:

- Concerns were raised regarding the toilet provision in Bitts Park. The permanent toilet block had not re-opened following the flood and the temporary toilets were in poor condition.

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager agreed that the toilet facilities in Bitts park were not suitable and agreed to take the Panel's concerns back to the operator and ask for the temporary toilets to be better maintained. He reminded the Panel that the original toilet block within the Park would not be retained and work was being undertaken to redevelop the old Park Keepers Lodge which would generate income to be invested back into the Park.

The Deputy Chief Executive added that the work at the old Park Keepers Lodge would include toilet provision but some work needed to be undertaken on additional provision which was open outside of café hours. He confirmed that the old toilet block situated in Bitts Park would not be reinstated.

- The play area at Carloli Drive, Harraby had not been included in the Strategy, the play area was in poor condition and local residents were dissatisfied with the equipment.

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager had been aware of the play area at Carloli Drive and that it was dated, it would be included in the play area review programme.

- A Member supported aim 3 in the Strategy to enable easy access to the green spaces and to reduce the number of vehicle's on the road. It was important to recognise that many people could not access green spaces due to the difficulty in getting to them safely. It was hoped that the Strategy would be used to encourage better and safer cycle links and transport links to green spaces. Talkin Tarn was used as an example of green spaces which required vehicles to access them and was not on a bus route.

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager commented that a Green Spaces Strategy was the key component of the green infrastructure network in any modern City. The Council did want to build on the green travel network and the Strategy would be used as a catalyst to improving the network. The Council had used some Section 106 monies to add to the cycle path network and the Council would continue to seek any opportunities to improve the green travel network. With reference to access to Talkin Tarn, the Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager explained that the Council could influence the travel companies and if they could show a demand for transport then a travel company may respond. He reminded the Panel that partnership working was important in achieving the Strategy.

- A Member commented that, although the printed Strategy was impressive, the choice of materials meant it was not easy to recycle.

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager agreed that the final document would be produced differently.

The Deputy Chief Executive reminded the Panel that 97% of the Carlisle district had green infrastructure which meant access to green spaces was there. He felt it would be useful if the Strategy clarified what was formal and what was informal green space as there was a lot of green spaces that did not belong to the City Council. The Council wanted the best way to manage green spaces so everyone could access them safely.

- The Strategy was well written but it was felt that it did not celebrate the existing green spaces or the spaces which the Council had protected and developed.
- How would young people feed into the Strategy?

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager felt that young people had an important and useful contribution to make to the Strategy and officers would seek out opportunities to consult with as many youth groups as possible.

- The Strategy stated that Active Cumbria was County Council led and this was incorrect.

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager agreed to amend the error.

- It was felt that some of the grass cutting in the City had not been satisfactory, grass cuttings were not taken away and some areas were not cut properly.

The Grounds Maintenance and Green Spaces Manager advised the Panel that the Council did not have responsibility for all grass cutting throughout the City, however, grass cutting crews were revisiting areas they had done with trimmers to clear seed heads and longer grass.

- A Member commented that Talkin Tarn was an excellent example of accessible green spaces and yet it had not been included in the Strategy.

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager stated that the final Strategy would include more photographs of Talkin Tarn and it was very much part of the Strategy. He added that the Talkin Tarn tea rooms had had a successful and extremely busy May half term week.

- Had any consideration been given to how unoccupied allotments could be used in an innovative way?

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager confirmed that there were a number of allotments that could not be let out and there had been meetings with organisations to potentially use some of the space to benefit the community. Officers were open to any suggestions for the use of hard to let allotments that Members had.

- Many green spaces within the City were not owned or maintained by the Council, was there any thing that could be done to encourage partners to take a view of the whole City and encourage them to maintain the green spaces better.

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager responded that the City Council could influence partners and housing providers to maintain their green spaces better and the Strategy was a good way of showing partners the Council's vision.

- The Spring Show had been an excellent opportunity to encourage visitors to Bitts Park was there any prospect of this returning?

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager explained that the Spring Show had ended due to a reduction in resources and she agreed to investigate potential opportunities to reintroduce some of the elements of the Spring Show and coincide it with other initiatives to encourage visitors in to the parks.

- The Panel requested that the Play Areas Review be made available for scrutiny.

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager responded that a formal document had not been produced but it was due to be reviewed as part of the Green Spaces Strategy. The review would identify play equipment that was reaching the end of its life and propose a programme of investment.

- Would the boats be reintroduced to Hammonds Pond?

The Green Spaces and Bereavement Services Manager reported that the provider at Talkin Tarn had put kayaks on the Pond for the Upperby Gala but there were no plans to put boats back on the Pond permanently. It had proved very difficult to find a provider who could run the boats commercially and safely.

RESOLVED –1) That the Green Spaces Strategy be endorsed as a draft for wider consultation (CS.26/18);

2) That the Green Spaces Strategy and consultation responses be submitted to the Panel in six months time;

3) That the Green Spaces Task and Finish Group be thanked for their input into producing the Green Spaces Strategy;

4) That a draft Play Area Review be submitted to the Panel in six months' time for Member's comments.

HWSP.37/18 END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2017/18

The Policy and Performance Officer submitted the 2017/18 performance against the current Service Standards and a summary of the Carlisle Plan 2015-18 actions as defined in the 'plan on a page'. Performance against the Panel's 2017/18 Key Performance Indicators were also included. (PC.06/18)

The Policy and Performance Officer detailed the summary of exceptions as set out in section 1 of the report drew the Panel's attention to the Service Standards which fell within the Panel's remit and appended to the report.

In considering the Performance Report Members raised the following comments and questions:

- The Panel asked why waste services' standard targets had not been met in 2017.

The Policy and Performance Officer reminded the Panel that the performance had dropped during the implementation of the changes to the rounds in the early part of 2017/18. He highlighted both the 3rd and 4th quarters which had exceeded the target.

The Deputy Chief Executive added that the service had seen significant challenges in 2017. The service had been brought back in house and had been dramatically extended. With this in mind he felt that the service standards were excellent and were now on target. He added that it was correct for the Panel to focus on performance but asked them to remember that the team worked very hard in all weather and the Neighbourhood Services & Enforcement Manager and his team should be congratulated.

- Was there any planning work being undertaken to forecast the impact of the reduction in the value of recyclable material on income targets?

The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that there was ongoing monitoring of the sale of recyclable materials collected through the contract with Cumbria County Council. He agreed that the market was challenging and there may need to be discussions with other authorities to achieve a better deal in the future.

The Panel discussed the current recycling receptacles that were being used and potential options for the future. The Panel understood that wheelie bins were not suitable for all homes and were clear that they would not want wheelie bins to be at the front of houses. They also understood that it was challenging to retro fit a system on existing housing schemes and agreed that smarter planning could include recycling into housing plans.

The Panel also discussed how to encourage people to recycle and methods for education and encouragement.

- Were there any plans to reintroduce the Local Food Partnership Officer post which ended in June 2017?

The Deputy Chief Executive responded that there was no established budget for the post. A post had been created to support the Healthy City initiative from existing budgets. The post was a more co-ordinated post that covered Food City, Healthy Eating and the World Health Organisation process.

- To what extent were schools involved in educating children and about recycling?

The Deputy Chief Executive understood that primary schools were very involved in educating children about recycling as it had been a very emotive subject in recent months.

- What consultation was used to measure public satisfaction with street cleanliness?

The Policy and Performance Officer responded that the public satisfaction survey was accessed through the City Council's website, hard copies in the Customer Contact Centre and promoted through the Carlisle Focus. He agreed that the response rate could be improved and was currently looking at different methods of doing so.

- A Member detailed a waste disposal plant he had seen abroad and asked if any such plans were being considered in Carlisle.

The Deputy Chief Executive recalled that planning permission had been granted for a disposal site previously. He explained that the City Council was the collection authority and Cumbria County Council was responsible for the disposal of waste.

RESOLVED – 1) That the End of Year Performance Report 2017/18 be noted (PC.06/18).

2) That further information regarding the recycling sales contract be provided to Panel Members.

HWSP.38/18 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Policy and Communications Manager presented report OS.15/18 which provided an overview of matters relating to the work of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel.

The Policy and Communications Manager reported that the most recent Notice of Executive Key Decisions, copies of which had been circulated to all Members, had been published on 1 May 2018. The Food Law Enforcement Plan had been circulated to the Panel for information only.

The report included a table of the progress on resolutions from previous meetings, all of which had been included in the Panel's work programme.

Suggested items for the 2018/19 Panel work programme had been attached as appendix 1 to the report for the Panel's consideration. The Panel added the following items to their work programme:

- Environmental Health
- Environmental Protection
- Health and safety
- Streetscene

The Policy and Communications Manager drew the panel's attention to section 4 of the report which detailed updates for the Panel to note. The Panel discussed and supported the draft Special Scrutiny Panel Protocol.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Overview Report incorporating the Work Programme and Key Decision items relevant to the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel (OS.15/18) be noted.

2) That the following items be added to the Panel's work programme:

- Environmental Health
- Environmental Protection
- Health and safety
- Streetscene

(The meeting ended at 11.45am)