

HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 10.00AM

PRESENT: Councillor Paton (Chairman), Councillors Mrs Bradley, Brown (as substitute for Councillor Mrs Atkinson), Dr. Davison, Mrs Finlayson, Mrs McKerrell, McNulty, and Tarbitt.

ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor J Mallinson, Leader
Councillor E Mallinson, Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder
Councillor Christian, Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder
Councillor Nedved, Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder
Councillor Higgs, Culture, Heritage and Leisure Portfolio Holder.

OFFICERS: Deputy Chief Executive
Policy and Communications Manager
Health and Wellbeing Project Manager
Policy and Performance Officer
Overview and Scrutiny Officer

HWSP.09/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs Atkinson.

HWSP.10/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

HWSP.11/20 PUBLIC AND PRESS

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

HWSP.12/20 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2020 be agreed as a true record.

HWSP.13/20 AGENDA

RESOLVED – That the Green Spaces Strategy be considered as the third item of business on the agenda.

HWSP.14/20 CALL IN OF DECISIONS

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

HWSP.15/20 LOCAL ENVIRONMENT (CLIMATE CHANGE) STRATEGY

The Policy and Communications Manager submitted report PC.08/20 which set out the background and context within which the draft Local Environment (Climate Change) Strategy was being developed.

The Policy and Communications Manager provided an overview of the various local authority partnership groups and the work undertaken by the Council, he emphasised the importance of countywide planning, action and joint working in achieving the best results in relation to climate change.

Selecting the methodology for carbon accounting going forward had proved challenging: effectively there were two models, production and consumption accounting. The Policy and Communications Manager summarised each and noted that it was feasible for a mixture of both models to be used, however it was important to ensure that double counting of carbon did not take place.

The process for consulting on the draft Strategy along with the timetable for its progress through the Council's democratic processes was explained.

In considering the report, Members raised the following questions and comments:

- A Member noted that there were two targets referred to in the report: the government's requirement for a carbon neutral UK by 2050 and the Council's target of net zero-carbon by 2030. She asked whether it was a risk to have two targets.

The Policy and Communications Manager responded that an initial countywide report had noted the Council's target for 2030 was stringent and questioned its achievability. The national strategy would comprise a 12 year rolling carbon budget. In terms of the Council's target it was possible that an annual review may be considered for the 2030 target as part of a statement of intent. It was his view that a pragmatic approach was needed.

- What had been the outcome of the Lottery Bid the Climate Action Fund?

The Policy and Communications Manager advised that the bid had not yet been determined but that the initial response from the Lottery had been positive, there was no date set for a final decision on the matter.

- How were the planned public consultation events to be advertised?

Levels of footfall were important to the success of the events, therefore consideration of appropriate venues and existing events was taking place. Draft documentation was also being compiled for the events and may need to be tailored to particular events and sectors, for example agriculture.

The Member responded stressing the importance of involving individuals in the consultation and the need for literature that was accessible to all. Another Member added that consultation in schools would be an important area to consider.

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder noted that the Council had experience of carrying out successful consultation events, most notably in relation to the St Cuthbert's Garden Village project. It was anticipated the activities undertaken in relation to the draft Strategy would also achieve a high level of positive engagement. Moreover, he added that it was important that all Members of the Council were communicating about the draft Strategy in their communities.

A Member commented that it would be useful for an Informal Council Briefing to be held so that Councillors were equipped with the most up to date information to share with their residents.

Another Member suggested that Mike Berners-Lee (Lancaster University) be invited to the briefing to address Members.

In response to a question from a Member regarding the holding of a Citizen's Jury as part of the consultation events, the Policy and Communications Manager advised that he was keeping a watching brief on a national Citizens' Assembly that was currently taking place. The Assembly was expected to report in Spring 2020, consideration was being given to such an event being held in Carlisle, but it was important that any work undertaken added value to the consultation and did not duplicate the work of other organisations.

- A Member thanked the Officer for his explanation of different approaches to carbon accounting, he asked which the Council was most likely to adopt.

The Policy and Communications Manager explained that the production accounting model seemed most appropriate method of assessment for the Council's operations. It was noted that the Climate Emergency Motion adopted by the Council also stipulated a reduction in the carbon emission of the district. Consideration was being given to the most appropriate accounting mechanisms as it was important to avoid double counting.

The Panel discussed the importance of embedding consideration of Climate Change in all the Council's activities.

RESOLVED 1) That the draft Local Environment (Climate Change Strategy) be included in a future Informal Briefing for all Members of the Council.

2) That a further report on the draft Local Environment (Climate Change Strategy) be submitted to a future meeting of the Panel.

3) That Officers be thanked for their work in developing the draft Local Environment (Climate Change Strategy) thus far.

HWSP.16/20 GREEN SPACES STRATEGY

The Health and Wellbeing Projects Manager submitted report CS.06/20 which provided an update on the implementation of the Green Spaces Strategy. Members were advised about the restructuring of the former Green Spaces and Community Services Teams into a combined Health and Wellbeing Service.

As part of the implementation of the Strategy it had evolved from being a policy paper into a working document, forming the foundation of the work plans for the teams.

In considering the report Members raised the following comments and questions:

- Would trees planted by the Council be native species?

The Health and Wellbeing Projects Manager confirmed that the Council would plant native species of trees. He further noted that Ash Die Back disease had arisen as a result of the use of imported specimens.

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder added that the Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre would be able to advise the Council on native species of items for planting other than trees.

- Had the Council plans to provide Community Food Growing areas in its green spaces?

The Health and Wellbeing Projects Manager responded that it was a matter that had been considered by the previous Green Spaces team on a number of occasions. He was of the view that the best way to progress the matter was for a Community Group to approach the Council, and that Officers from the Health and Wellbeing team would be happy to work with such an organisation.

- What was the Council doing to develop sustainable travel routes by including movement through green spaces?

The Health and Wellbeing Projects Manager advised that the Council supported the use of and movement through its green spaces. New travel routes were often provided for through the payment of Planning Obligations by developers, the Health and Wellbeing Project Manager indicated his willingness to discuss that process in more depth outside the meeting with the Member.

- A Member requested that a Strategic Objective 4 - Play Area Review be added to the Panel's Work Programme.

The Panel assented to the proposal.

The Member added that Strategic Objective 4 – Allotments 100% Occupied seemed very challenging.

The Health and Wellbeing Projects Manager responded that it was important for targets to challenge Officers. He acknowledged that some issues with particular allotment sites meant that it was unlikely that the target would be achieved.

The Panel thanked the Officer for the format and presentation of the report. Works undertaken to bring Bitts Park back into operational use in time for half-term holidays, following recent heavy rain affecting the site was praised by the Members.

RESOLVED 1) That the Play Area Review be added to the Panel's Work Programme.

2) That the Panel continue to receive updates on the Green Spaces Strategy.

HWSP.17/20 REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SANDS CENTRE UPDATE

The Deputy Chief Executive presented report CS.05/20 which set out the background and updated Members on the progress of the scheme.

Planning Permission was secured to develop the former Newman School site to provide temporary replacement facilities, following which negotiations in respect of a lease were undertaken.

The plan of works for the site had been amended as a result of the Environment Agency switching its programme of works in the city to adjacent to the Sands Centre which had necessitated the relocation of the portacabins. An Enabling Works Agreement was expected to be finalised in the near future, after which the sign up of the main contractor would take place and works would commence.

In considering the report Members raised the following comments and questions:

- What plans had the Council for the Victorian Health Suite adjacent to the existing Pools site?

The Deputy Chief Executive responded that plans had not yet been developed for the Victorian Health Suite. As part of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal a Station Gateway project was being developed, until the particulars relating to that scheme had been clarified it was not feasible for plans to be developed. Once plans for the site were drawn up they would undergo a consultation process prior to a decision on the site being taken.

- What was the extent of the delay to the programme of works?

The Deputy Chief Executive stated that delay in the programme was around three to four months. Officers were currently looking at what actions would need to be taken to mitigate any additional costs to the project as a result of the delay. It was not anticipated that the project would breach its budget, the Deputy Chief Executive stated that the matter would be kept under a watching brief.

A Member commented that some of the staff working at the Sands had not been aware that trees were to be removed from the car park as part of the works.

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the removal of trees had always been part of the planned works. There were mechanisms in place for ensuring that staff were kept up to date with the works being undertaken as part of the project, he undertook to investigate that process to ensure that it remained effective.

In response to a further question from a Member regarding the planting of replacement trees, the Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that new trees were included in the scheme.

RESOLVED 1) That report CS.05/20 Redevelopment of the Sands Centre be noted.

2) That further reports updating the Panel on the progress of the project be included in the Panel's Work Programme.

HWSP.18/20 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR CULTURE IN CARLISLE

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted report CS.04/20 and delivered a presentation covering: the background to the development of the Framework; the formation of Carlisle Culture; the audience for cultural activities in the district; the Framework's vision; the four areas of focus, and the framework's 10 point plan; the next steps for the development of the Framework.

The Deputy Chief Executive emphasised the importance of extensive consultation in relation to the Framework.

In considering the report Members raised the following comments and questions:

The Panel discussed previous large scale cultural events which had been held in the city e.g. Pride and the Fringe festival. Members considered the economic benefits of such activities and other potential venues in the district. Members indicated their support for a cultural festival in the district.

- How long was the development work on the Framework expect to take place?

The Deputy Chief Executive stated that the final Framework would be launched in May 2020.

- Would cultural events in the district remain accessible to those with low incomes?

The Deputy Chief Executive responded that events delivered by the Council ordinarily incorporated aspects which were free to those who attended.

A Member expressed his support for a cultural festival and suggested that consideration be given to the holding of events throughout the year, rather than a single event.

- Was the Local Enterprise Partnership's Sub-Regional Strategy completely separate from the Framework?

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the two documents were in parallel to each other, linkages between the two were important as the Local Enterprise Partnership was a gatekeeper to funding support.

A Member requested that a further report on the Framework be included in the Work Programme for submission in six months. The Panel indicated its agreement.

RESOLVED That a further report on the Strategic Cultural Framework for Carlisle be submitted to the Panel in six months' time.

HWSP.19/20 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2019/20

The Policy and Performance Officer presented the Quarter 3 Performance Report 2019/20 (PC.04/20).

The report contained the Quarter 3 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 Panels' 2019/20 Key Performance Indicators were also included.

RESOLVED – That report PC.04/20 be received.

HWSP.20/20 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented report OS.03/20 which provided an overview of matters relating to the work of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel.

The most recent Notice of Executive Key Decisions (published on 7 February 2020), copies of which had been circulated to all Members and made available to the public on the Council's website.

The Scrutiny Chairs Group had met on 23 January 2020 and asked that the notes be circulated to each Panel to allow for a discussion on the potential of reducing the number of Members on each Panel, how well the substitution system was working and the timing of meetings.

The Panel discussed the current substitution system and the timing of meetings and felt strongly that the substitution system was not working. Having all non-Executive Members as substitutes had resulted in a lack of continuity and understanding of Scrutiny subjects. They had also noted that substitute Members often arrived unprepared for the meeting.

Regarding the proposal for reducing the membership of the Panel, a Member commented that in his view the current number of Councillors was correct as it ensured effective scrutiny/

A proposal was put that the Scrutiny Chairs Group identify a list of options for scrutiny going forwards for the Panels to consider.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer drew Members' attention to the Work Programme and asked the Panel what they expected for each of the items which were scheduled for 2 April 2020:

Greenwich Leisure Limited – A focus on the community work undertaken by the organisation.

Enforcement Strategy – The background to the Strategy; an overview of the rules of the Strategy; it's effectiveness over the past year and, the benefits to the city.

Introduction to the Health and Wellbeing Team and Sports Development Update – Cycling development and infrastructure; sports pitches; strategy and development work.

Regarding the Community Safety Partnership, the Deputy Chief advised that the organisation was in transition, however, he undertook to provide an update report.

RESOLVED – 1) That report PC.04/20 be noted.

2) That the Scrutiny Chairs Group to identify a list of options for scrutiny going forwards for the Panels to consider.

[The meeting ended at 1:00pm]