

HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 27 AUGUST 2020 AT 10.00AM

PRESENT: Councillor Paton (until 12:15pm, Chair), Councillors Mrs Atkinson, Bainbridge (as substitute for Councillor McKerrell), Dr. Davison, Mrs Finlayson, McNulty, Tarbitt and Miss Whalen.

ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor Ellis, Deputy Leader and Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder
Councillor Higgs, Culture, Heritage and Leisure Portfolio Holder
Councillor E Mallinson, Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder

OFFICERS: Deputy Chief Executive
Health and Wellbeing Manager
Policy and Communications Manager
Mr Bestford – Head of Service, Greenwich Leisure Limited
Mr Rice – Partnership Manager, Greenwich Leisure Limited
Overview and Scrutiny Officer

HWSP.37/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor McKerrell.

HWSP.38/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

HWSP.39/20 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.40/20 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2020 be approved.

HWSP.41/20 CALL IN OF DECISIONS

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

HWSP.42/20 GREENWICH LEISURE LIMITED UPDATE

The Health and Wellbeing Manager submitted report CS.20/20 which set out the annual performance and operations update for 2019 in respect of the Carlisle City Council Leisure Contract. It was noted that the report, which had been due to be submitted to the April 2020 meeting of the Panel (the meeting had been cancelled due to Covid 19 restrictions), also information relating to the GLL's response to the Covid.

The Health and Wellbeing Manager introduced Mr Bestford, Head of Service at GLL and Mr Rice, Partnership Manager at GLL.

Mr Bestford and Mr Rice delivered a presentation covering: Contract Overview; Key headlines; The Four Pillars; Covid response and Covid recovery, copies of which had been included in the previously circulated agenda document pack.

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

- The Summer Delivery Programme with Parish Councils had been very useful, a Member expressed surprise that take up had been so low, he asked what measures could be taken to increase the level of participation.

Mr Rice advised that Parish Councils were contacted well in advance of the programme, but that he would look at identifying other ways to increase take up.

- A Member requested an update on the vandalism which had occurred at the Morton Pools site.

Mr Rice responded that a number of incidents had occurred towards the end of 2019, but that it had subsequently tailed off with only a single instance during the lockdown period.

- The report referred to the number of athletes who had participated in the GLL Sports Foundation in 2019, a Member asked whether the figures contained in the report related to Carlisle or Cumbria.

Mr Rice confirmed that the 22 athletes referenced in the report were in the Carlisle District, however, the programme was operated on a wider basis across Cumbria.

- What contingency plans were in place to recoup the monies lost on events cancelled as a result of Covid 19?

Of the events scheduled to take place in the final quarter of 2020, all but two had been transferred into 2021: 221 events were now planned for 2021. Mr Rice noted that whilst events would go ahead the visitor capacity was reduced from 1,400 to 400 as a result of current social distancing measures. Government grants were available from the Arts Council to help organisations minimise the financial impact of event cancellations and restricted capacity. GLL had lately submitted an application for such a grant to the value of £167,000 to underwrite its event costs and shortfalls for the period September 2020 – March 2021. It was hoped that by March 2021 the current social distancing measures may be relaxed, thereby allowing the numbers permitted to attend events to increase.

- A Member thanked GLL for its Summer Scheme work, which he felt had been especially important in 2020, he asked whether it was expected that scheme would continue in the future.

Mr Rice stated that GLL would do as much as it could, the principal aim of the Better Communities pillar was to deliver as many events as possible in the community and it was intended that the school holiday programmes would continue.

In response to a Member's question regarding the numbers who had participated in the Healthwise Scheme, Mr Rice undertook to provide that information in a written response.

- In relation to the staff training detailed in the report, was that knowledge being shared with local clubs in relation to cheerleading, trampolining etc?

GLL had close working relationships with a number of local clubs and was looking to working with gymnastic clubs at the Newman School site. It further planned to extend its Dryside Junior Programme at the site too which would offer similar facilities to the newly redeveloped Sands Centre. Due to the current Covid restrictions it was not feasible to do simultaneous activities at the Newman School site. Mr Rice noted that GLL's current focus was to concentrate on the return of swimming, gym and group exercise classes. By mid-September development work on the Junior course programme would take place, after which the organisation would look to work with colleges and clubs to further augment the programme of activities.

- How much money had GLL lost as a result of Covid 19 and what plans did it have to recoup that?

Mr Rice explained that the restrictions brought in to control the pandemic meant that from 20th March 2020 income was reduced to zero as facilities were required to close. Whilst sites were permitted to reopen at the end of July 2020, recovering the volume of people attending site to pre-pandemic levels was a challenge as numbers were limited and people needed to feel sufficiently confident to go to the sites.

GLL had sought to manage its costs effectively throughout the lockdown period, with all but essential staff being put on the Furlough Scheme. Mr Rice explained the open-book approach that GLL and the Council implemented, and the financial reporting GLL undertook with the Council.

Another Member noted the surplus of £232,000 indicated in the report and asked whether those monies would be used to assist with the financial impact of Covid 19.

Mr Rice advised that discussions would need to take place with the Council regarding the use of that surplus.

- Would the recently purchased moveable equipment be usable in the redeveloped Sands Centre.

Mr Rice confirmed that all newly purchased equipment and any items that were subsequently bought would be available for use at the new one site facility.

- In relation to GLL's work with children was the organisation able to use demographic information to ensure that its programmes were available to those most in need.

Mr Rice responded that working with those most in need was a fundamental part of the Outreach Programme. Postcode data analysis was used to help identify those areas with most need.

- A Member observed that a number of events delivered by GLL had offered discounted tickets via internet discount site. He recognised that such an approach would increase footfall at events, but commented that it would make them less profitable.

Discounted tickets were generally offered on individual events that were part of a long run, for example matinee performances of the Christmas Panto. The main aim of the discount was to increase audience capacity at such events.

- A Member commented that he felt the current booking fees levied by GLL were too high and could, in some cases equal the cost of an extra ticket for an event.

Mr Rice stated that the current booking system was being changed and that from next year the charges would be more dynamic. He further noted that in relation to comparable venues the booking fees were lower, and GLL aimed to make them as economical as possible.

- How many memberships had been cancelled as a result of Covid 19?

When government had instructed the closure of all leisure facilities, membership accounts were frozen, upon the reopening of sites, members were given the option to continue to freeze their account at no charge. 20% of members left during lockdown and a further 16-17% when facilities reopened. However, it was noted that continuing members were using the facilities more regularly following sites reopening. It was also hoped that the provision of group exercise classes at the Newman School site would increase participation.

In response to a question from a Member, Mr Rice set out how people could access services and sites via Pay As You Go, rather than taking out a membership.

The Culture, Leisure and Heritage Portfolio Holder thanked staff at GLL for their success in 2019 and their proactive and flexible approach to the challenges brought about by Covid 19.

The Chair thanked the Mr Rice and Mr Bestford for their presentation, and the Officers for the report.

RESOLVED 1) That report CS.20/20 be noted.

2) That a further updated report be scheduled in the Panel's Work Programme for the April 2021 meeting.

3) That Mr Rice circulate information to the Panel on the numbers who participated in the Healthwise scheme.

HWSP.43/20 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/21

The Policy and Communications Manager submitted the quarter 1 2020/21 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 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were also included. (PC.19/20). The report covered the period of April to June 2020 and therefore recorded the impact on service delivery of the Covid 19 restrictions.

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

- The Chair commented that given the Covid 19 restrictions, the reported performance of Talkin Tarn and the Old Fire Station was to be expected.

The Health and Wellbeing Manager advised that the café at Talkin Tarn had been open for some time providing takeaway only service. In addition, there had been a small number of Covid secure events which had taken place at the site, for example, an open-air theatre event.

With respect to the Old Fire Station, the Health and Wellbeing Manager explained that the Council was currently in negotiations regarding the lease with the new leaseholder. He would update Members, on the progress of that matter in due course.

- A number of Members commended the increase of the reach of the Council's social media platforms.

The Policy and Communications Manager undertook to thank the Officers involved. He noted that during the lockdown phase of the pandemic, local authorities were seen as a safe and reliable source of information which may have been a factor in the increased performance.

- With reference to the target for the percentage of household waste sent for recycling (including bring sites) not being achieved, a Member noted that during that time, Copeland Borough Council had delivered good performance in that area. He asked whether the falling short of the target in Carlisle related solely to the suspension of garden waste collection or whether other factors had impacted the performance.

The Policy and Communications Manager noted that waste recycling performance was measured by the weight, therefore the suspension of the garden waste collection was a significant aspect of not meeting that target. Data was collected on the tonnage of each type of waste recycled (including bring sites), the Policy and Communications Manager undertook to liaise with the relevant Service Manager to gather a more detailed breakdown of the types of recycled waste in Quarter 1 which he would circulate to the Panel. He further undertook to carry out a comparison of the Council's performance in recycling garden waste against that of Copeland Borough Council.

Responding to a question from a Member regarding the booking system at the Bring Site on Rome Street and the likely length of its continuation, the Deputy Chief Executive responded that the site was a Cumbria County Council run facility. At present it was not known how long the booking system would remain in place.

- A Member noted that a high proportion of Council satisfaction surveys were conducted online, she asked whether other modes of data collection were used.

The Policy and Communications Manager responded that the Council was continually seeking new methods for gathering such data and welcomed suggestions from the Panel.

The Health and Wellbeing Manager added that, in addition to the data collected by the Communications Team in relation to events, his team also gathered data on customer satisfaction and economic impact, some of which was reported to the Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel.

The Member suggested that, given the increasing social media reach of the Council, it could be used for online surveys following events.

The Policy and Communications Manager thanked the Member for the suggestion and noted that at events, staff were also in attendance with satisfaction surveys.

The Panel discussed target setting for performance indicators particularly in relation to recycling. Members noted that: it was important that they were appropriate the particular area of service; the confidence intervals of the statistical analysis were sufficient, and that the data collection was broad enough to provide appropriate sample sizes for analysis. Members considered it important that the Performance Report focus on areas where performance was not meeting the set target. It was agreed that the Panel would work with Officers on those matters, including considering whether the matter be added to the Panel's Work Programme.

- Was a new Carlisle Plan in development?

The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that work was underway to develop a new Carlisle Plan, he emphasised that a number of areas of work from the 2015-18 Plan had been absorbed into the Council's regular operations.

The Member noted that a number of the actions under the former Plan were now identified as complete, she felt it would be useful for the Panel to understand which items had been delivered and which remained ongoing.

The Policy and Communications Manager undertook to circulate that information to the Panel.

RESOLVED 1) That the Policy and Communications Manager circulate the following to the Panel:

- i) A breakdown of the types of waste recycled in Quarter 1;
- ii) a comparison of the Council's performance of the recycling of garden waste with Copeland Borough Council in Quarter 1;
- iii) A summary of the actions delivered and those outstanding from the 2015 – 18 Carlisle Plan.

2) That the Panel work with Officers on the content of future Performance Reports.

HWSP.44/20 ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT 2019/20 AND ACTION PLAN

The Policy and Communications Manager submitted report PC.17/20 which outlined how the Council had met the duties of the Equality Act. It further set out an overview of the equalities work undertaken, including workforce profiling, training, employee support, customer satisfaction, complaints, consultation and engagement.

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

- Were Officers given sufficient time to attend relevant training?

The Policy and Communications Manager advised that training was offered in a variety of formats e.g. online and in person. The length of courses also varied from short online course to full day or week in person events. Online training was particularly flexible as it allowed learners to start then stop and save training so that it was able to be completed at convenient times for staff.

The Panel discussed the difficulty for Members, who worked, attending Council training. A Member undertook to raise the matter with the Members Learning and Development Working Group.

The Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder suggested that consideration be given to providing Member Training virtually through MS Teams software.

Councillor Paton left the meeting at 12:15pm. Councillor Finlayson assumed the role of Chair of the meeting.

- Had consideration been given to why those who had indicated a disability when applying to work at the Council and were shortlisted had such a low success rate in becoming employed at the authority?

The Policy and Communications Manager responded that it was the first year that data had been recorded. The HR Team was looking into the matter and the Policy and Communications Manager the undertook to look in more detail at the first set of data and report back to the Panel on any relevant trends.

Another Member commented that some individuals may not feel confident to report a disability on an equalities monitoring form, she sought assurance that there were mechanisms for staff to be able to confidentially report such matters and get any necessary support.

The Policy and Communications Manager explained that the Council sought to support employees in a range of ways through direct contact with managers in regular team meetings, annual appraisals and personal development plans. In addition, there was support provided across the organisation from the HR, Organisational Development and Occupational Health teams. The Council had a strong record of making reasonable adjustments to support Officers in delivering their roles in the organisation.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder questioned whether describing unprovided response on the recruitment equalities questionnaire as “unknown” was useful. He suggested it may be more accurately recorded as “refused”.

The Policy and Communications Manager undertook to look at the form.

- Did the Council plan to retain the Officer employed for the Improving The Private Rented Sector – Tackling Rogue project?

The Policy and Communications Manager undertook to provide a written response on the matter.

A Member noted that the changes in service delivery brought about in response to the Covid 19 restrictions meant that many more services were now accessible online, she felt it was important that the Council did not make its services exclusively available online as many residents did not have access to or the capacity to use such services.

The Policy and Communications Manager acknowledged the Member’s concern and noted that the Council’s telephone lines had remained open during lockdown and that the Customer Contact Centre had re-opened on an appointment only basis.

The Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder agreed that allowing access to services offline was important.

The Panel thanked the Officer for the report which they felt was useful and very informative.

REOLVED – 1) That the Policy and Communications Manager circulate to the Panel:

- i) Further detail on the data set relating to disability and recruitment;
- ii) Information regarding the continuation of post in the Improving The Private Rented Sector – Tackling Rogue project

2) That the Policy and Communications Manager consider how nil-responses on the equalities form be named in future reports.

HWSP.45/20 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented report OS.17/20 providing an overview of matters relating to the work of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel. Following the circulation of the report a Notice of Executive Key Decision was published on 14 August 2020, which contained an item relevant to the Panel: Private Sector Enforcement Policy. The item had not yet been included in the Panel’s Work Programme. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer also noted that a Special meeting of the Panel would be held on 17 September 2020 to consider the Sands Centre Redevelopment.

In considering the Work Programme, Members noted that the number of items scheduled to be scrutinised at the October 2020 was large. It was agreed that the following items would remain

on the Programme for that meeting: Disabled Facilities Grants and Supporting Move On From Hospital; Cycle Walking Infrastructure Plans; Active Spaces Review; Corporate Peer Challenge. The remaining items listed in the Work Programme for that meeting would be subject of a Briefing Note to the Panel.

The Panel agreed to discuss, by email, particular areas of focus for the reports being submitted to the October 2020 meeting.

RESOLVED 1) That report OS.17/20 be noted.

2) That the following items be submitted to the 8 October 2020 meeting:

- Disabled Facilities Grants and Supporting Move On From Hospital;
- Cycle Walking Infrastructure Plans;
- Active Spaces Review;
- Corporate Peer Challenge.

3) That the remaining items in the Work Programme scheduled for the 8 October 2020 meeting be the subject of a Briefing Note to the Panel.

[The meeting ended at 12:45pm]