

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Thursday, 19th January, 2012

Present:- Councillors Robin Moss (Chair), Ben Stevens (Vice-Chair), Patrick Anketell-Jones, Brian Simmons, Michael Evans, Lisa Brett and Manda Rigby

Also in attendance:

44 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

45 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Democratic Services Officer drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

46 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

There were none.

47 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Councillor Manda Rigby declared non-prejudicial interest on any discussion related to Tourism, Leisure, Sport and Culture in Bath as she is the Chairman of Bath City Football Club.

Councillor Robin Moss declared non-prejudicial interest on item 9 on the agenda (Bristol Credit Union presentation) as he is the member of Bristol Credit Union.

Councillor Brian Simmons declared non-prejudicial on any discussion related to 3rd sector funding as he is the Chair of Dial-A-Ride in Keynsham.

48 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none. The Chairman used this opportunity to inform the meeting that as per Panel's recommendations from the recent Call In meeting the Cabinet made the following decision on 'Improving access to superfast broadband in Bath and North East Somerset: the Broadband Delivery UK Opportunity':

To AGREE, subject to the normal Council capital expenditure decision making process, to enter into an agreement with Somerset County Council, Devon County

Council, North Somerset District Council and Plymouth and Torbay Councils to undertake a joint bid for Broadband Delivery UK funding to provide at least 2 Mbps to 100% of premises and superfast broadband of at least 20 Mbps to 85% by 2015.

Full decision from the Cabinet is available on Council's website
<http://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=405> .

49 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING

The Chairman informed the meeting that members of the public who wish to address the Panel will have the opportunity to do so before the relevant agenda item.

50 MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 17TH NOVEMBER 2011

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the 17th November 2011 meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

51 MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 5TH DECEMBER 2011

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the 5th December 2011 meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

52 BRISTOL CREDIT UNION PRESENTATION (20 MINUTES)

The Chairman informed the meeting that this agenda item does not constitute a recommendation for individuals as the Council does not provide personal financial advice.

The Chairman invited James Berry (Bristol Credit Union Chief Executive) to read the briefing about Bristol Credit Union key facts.

James Berry informed the meeting that Bristol Credit Union (BCU) is a financial services co-operative, dedicated to serving members and not for private profit. Membership is available to anyone who lives or works in the greater Bristol area (that's the 4 local authorities that make up the former Avon County). Formed by a merger between 4 community credit unions in 2007/08. Incorporated the credit union for Bristol City Council employees in April 2008, and the Bath & North East Somerset Credit Union in December 2009. BCU now have over 6,500 members – with membership growing at c125 new members a month (membership up 7% November 2011 v October 2010). BCU's assets are over £3.7m, with savings at c£2m and loans at c£1.7m. Assets have grown by 25% in the 12 months to November 2011, savings by 36% and loans by 11%.

A full copy of the briefing from James Berry is available in the minute book at Democratic Services.

The Panel asked the following questions and made the following points:

The Panel welcomed the briefing paper from James Berry and encouraged James Berry to extend BCU services for BANES area as soon as possible.

The Panel felt that the clients of the BCU seem to be people who are on income support and asked James Berry how BCU controls payments from those people.

James Berry explained that BCU has control via interest rates and loan assessment process. The BCU looks at what the income is, on what they are spending their income and the BCU sets the payment dates with the dates when those people who are on income support get paid (i.e. weekly or bi-weekly).

The Panel suggested that there should be a designated point of contact in the Council for the BCU.

The Panel also suggested that BCU should communicate with the Council and community groups in Bath and North East Somerset if they wish to provide services in this area. David Trethewey (Policy and Partnerships Divisional Director) suggested that the BCU could use some office space in the Council, as some other voluntary and 3rd sector groups already do, or that some community groups could also help with the office space provision.

The Panel suggested that one way to advertise services from the BCU is to use Council payslips.

James Berry added that BCU might be called differently in this area once the branch is set up.

The Panel commented that BCU should get in touch with the Council in terms of the advice on support and training of volunteers who work in the BCU.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the briefing and for the relevant officers to take on board comments and suggestions made by the Panel in this debate.

53 COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN: POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS & POLICE AND CRIME PANEL (30 MINUTES)

The Chairman invited Marc Hole from Avon and Somerset Police Authority to give a presentation.

Marc Hole gave a presentation where he highlighted the following points:

- Overview of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 – key powers and what's new
- Our approach
- Role of the Police and Crime Panels
- Composition of the Police and Crime Panels
- Police and Crime Commissioner role in Criminal Justice

- Opportunities for strengthen joint working and community involvement
- Next steps

A full copy of the presentation from Marc Hole is available on the minute book in Democratic Services.

The Panel asked the following questions and made the following points:

The Panel expressed their concerns that the Police and Crime Panels might have 2 roles in advising and also scrutinising and felt that there might be a conflict in decision making.

The Panel felt that meetings of the Police and Crime Panels should be public and they should be held on rotational basis in each authority that has their members on the Panel.

Marc Hole acknowledged comments and concerns from the Panel and said that there is not much clarity of the Police and Crime Panel's work but that the guidance should be available in summer 2012.

The Panel also said that the elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) must provide equitable service to all areas and not focusing on one service in one particular area.

Marc Hole responded that all authorities are expected to receive some sort of equitable service.

David Trethewey added that Council officers had the opportunity to discuss with Group Leaders these issues. It was agreed that Councillor Paul Crossley, Leader of the Council, will be BANES representative in discussion with other authorities on establishment of the Police and Crime Panels.

The Chairman summed up the debate by saying that there are few issues that needed to be thought through, such as risk assessment, boundaries for PCC, opportunities for recall of PCCs and equitable service. The Chairman expressed his slight concern that further away the election is, the lower turnout of voter will be. The Chairman also expressed his concern that the PCC election will be party political.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the presentation and for the relevant officers to take on board comments made by the Panel.

54 ANALYSIS OF FUNDING FOR THIRD SECTOR IN BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET IN 2010-11: UPDATE AND PROGRESS REPORT (20 MINUTES)

The Chairman invited Andy Thomas (Group Manager for Partnership Delivery) to introduce the report.

Andy Thomas took the Panel through the report and asked what further analysis that Panel would want officers to do. Andy Thomas suggested that the Panel might want to receive a briefing on what the commission is and what the grant is.

The Panel asked the following questions and made the following points:

The Panel commented that it would be useful to know what funding comes from other funding sources and not only from the Government.

The Chairman asked if the Panel could commission project, such as DEVELOP, from the Policy Development and Scrutiny budget, to do a questionnaire about the funding for the 3rd/voluntary sector.

The Democratic Services Officer responded that the Panel could use funds from the Policy Development and Scrutiny budget subject to discussion with the other Policy Development and Scrutiny Chairs and relevant officers (i.e. Scrutiny Officer, Monitoring Officer, etc).

The Panel agreed that the Chairman will communicate with DEVELOP about the questionnaire and also for the Chairman to discuss commissioning arrangements with the other Policy Development and Scrutiny Chairs and relevant officers.

The Panel asked how much funding was pulled back on occasions where 3rd/voluntary sector failed to deliver the service.

Andy Thomas replied that he will get back to the Panel with an answer to that question.

Alex Raikes (Support Against Racist Incidents) said that 3rd/voluntary sector funding process is quite stringing process on who gets the funding.

The Panel agreed with the suggestion from Andy Thomas that future briefing should specify the difference between the commission and grant

It was **RESOLVED** to note the briefing and for the relevant officers to note the comments from the Panel.

It was also **RESOLVED** that the Chairman will communicate with DEVELOP about the questionnaire and also for the Chairman to discuss commissioning arrangements with the other Policy Development and Scrutiny Chairs and relevant officers.

55 SERVICE ACTION PLANS (60-90 MINUTES)

POLICY AND PARTNERSHIPS SERVICE ACTION PLAN

The Chairman invited Alex Raikes and Navian Simms from the 'Support Against Racist Incidents' (S.A.R.I.) to read their statements.

Alex Raikes read out her statement in which she highlighted the following points:

- Policy and Partnerships' Service Action Plan and its impact on BME Communities.
- BANES is changing demographically changing. In 2009, as per the last estimate, BANES had 12% of its settled population as non-white British whilst Bristol had 13.5% BME population at the same time.
- Number of cases that S.A.R.I. considered over the past couple of years in BANES.
- The needs for newly arriving and existing BME Communities in a rural authority such as BANES.
- A letter from 19 old Zimbabwean man who lives and studies in BANES.

A full copy of the statement from Alix Raikes, including the copy of the letter read at the meeting, is available on the minute book in Democratic Services.

Navian Simms (former client of S.A.R.I.) read out his statement in which he supports the work that S.A.R.I. does and questioned why the Policy and Partnerships Service Action Plan didn't mention BME Communities.

A full copy of the statement from Navian Simms is available on the minute book in Democratic Services.

The Panel thanked the speakers for their statements.

The Chairman said that number of issues had been raised that require longer debate. The main issue is the lack on BME Communities mention in the Service Action Plan. The Chairman said that he will look together with the officers if there are any opportunities for external funding and these findings will be communicated with S.A.R.I. These finding will be also communicated with the Resources PDS Panel who have Equalities in their remit.

The Chairman invited David Trethewey (Divisional Director for Policy and Partnerships) to introduce the report.

The Panel made the following points:

The Panel expressed their concern that Council specific operational roles relating to Anti-Social Behaviour will end.

David Trethewey informed the Panel that new joint team involving Council, Somer Housing and the Police will be set.

The Panel expressed their concerns that schemes such as Taxi Marshals will cease to exist due to significant reductions in Community Safety budget.

Andy Thomas added that Taxi Marshals will be commissioned until July 2012. Council will negotiate what funding could be put in for integrated city marshalling.

The Panel asked about the CCTV budget.

David Trethewey responded that Council will have the assessment process on what equipment is there. The idea is to have one place with 24 hour service integrated with the Emergency Management Services.

The Chairman summed up the debate by saying that the Panel expressed their concerns on the following areas:

- Community Safety budget reduction. The proposal would need to be looked again and Community Safety reductions should not be as steep as they are proposed.
- Proposed Equality saving of 40%. Budget decisions in some Councils are overturned because of the lack of Equality Impact Assessments. The proposal of 40% saving would need to be looked again.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the Policy and Partnerships Service Action Plan with the summary of concerns mentioned above.

CULTURAL SERVICES SERVICE ACTION PLAN

The Chairman invited David Lawrence (Tourism, Leisure and Culture Divisional Director) to introduce the report.

The Panel made the following points:

The Panel asked about Mobile Libraries and if the multi-purpose vehicles had been considered, as the one in the PCT.

David Lawrence replied that multi-purpose vehicles had been considered but there was no financial support from the PCT. The service got to that position where vehicles needed to be replaced. David Lawrence also said that the service would be very keen on looking into using local vehicles to help people getting to libraries.

The Chairman summed up the debate by saying that the only concern made by the Panel was reduced spending on marketing and impact that will have on number of visitors to Bath. The Panel asked for regular reports on the initiatives that will continue to attract visitors to Bath.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the Cultural Services Service Action Plan with the summary of concerns mentioned above.

DEVELOPMENT AND MAJOR PROJECTS SERVICE ACTION PLAN (ECONOMIC AND ENTERPRISE SERVICES)

The Chairman invited John Wilkinson (Economic Enterprise & Business Manager) to introduce the report.

The Panel made the following points:

The Panel asked if there are any further updates on creation of Technology Hub in Bath to support our creative industries.

John Wilkinson replied that they are considering a range of options in order to take this further and create a viable sustainable model.

Some Members of the Panel commented that in Service Delivery of the Plan there is no information on how business rates will be collected.

John Wilkinson took on board that comment.

The Chairman summed up the debate by saying that the Panel did not have any concerns from the Service Action Plan but that they would wish to have more updates on the potential for a Social Enterprise Zone at future meetings.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the Economic and Enterprise Services Service Action Plan with the request for updates on Social Enterprise Zone at future meetings.

56 WORKPLAN

It was **RESOLVED** to note the workplan.

The meeting ended at 4.30 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services