

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Thursday, 23rd May, 2013

Present:- Councillors Robin Moss (Chair), Cherry Beath (Vice-Chair), Patrick Anketell-Jones, Brian Simmons, Dave Laming and Geoff Ward

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Andrew Furse had sent his apology to the Panel.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Robin Moss declared an 'other' interest in item 9 on the agenda (Connecting Communities) as he is the Chairman of the Big Local for Radstock and Westfield.

Councillor Dave Laming declared an 'other' interest in item 12 on the agenda (River Corridor Report – Cabinet Member response) as he is a non-voting member of the River Corridor Trust.

5 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

The Chairman informed the Panel that the agenda item 'Apprenticeships, Work Placements, Work Experience, Internships and Volunteering' will be heard straight after agenda item 7 (Minutes of the last meeting).

The Chairman also informed the Panel that there will be an additional agenda item, which is Cabinet Member update. Cabinet Member update will be heard straight after 'Apprenticeships, Work Placements, Work Experience, Internships and Volunteering' agenda item.

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

The Chairman invited Pamela Galloway (Secretary of the Warm Water Inclusive Swimming and Exercise – WWISE) to address the Panel with her statement.

Pamela Galloway explained that she was speaking on behalf of B&NES residents who, because of disability or short and/or long term health conditions, need access to warm water pools to exercise and swim so they can help, and/or maintain their health and fitness.

Pamela Galloway described the needs of those residents and the necessity for the adequate facilities in local leisure centres, such as the appropriate changing facilities and water temperature between 31°C-33°C.

A full copy of the statement from Pamela Galloway is available on the Minute Book in Democratic Services.

The Chairman invited Susan Charles (Honorary Chair of the Access BANES Group) to address the Panel with her statement.

Susan Charles explained that she was speaking on behalf of the Access BANES Group with the request for a support that the disabled access to the rear of Keynsham Leisure Centre be reinstated.

Susan Charles explained to the Panel that the original rear access route through Keynsham Park was created and paid for by the Keynsham Lions club back in the 1970s though the same access route was removed in 2007 due to health and safety reasons but without an equivalent alternative.

The Panel confirmed that they received all the correspondence from Susan Charles re: Disabled parking and access at Keynsham Leisure Centre.

All correspondence submitted to the Panel by Susan Charles is available on the Minute Book in Democratic Services.

The Panel debated the matter and felt that the issues raised by Pamela Galloway and Susan Charles should be taken on board, and discussed with the relevant officers and Cabinet Members, when the Leisure Strategy is on Panel's agenda.

7 MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 14TH MARCH 2013

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

8 APPRENTICESHIPS, WORK PLACEMENTS, WORK EXPERIENCE, INTERNSHIPS AND VOLUNTEERING (15 MINUTES)

The Chairman invited Paul Gaunt (Employment and Skills Officer) to give the presentation.

Paul Gaunt gave a presentation where he highlighted the following points:

- Timeline
- Policy Statement
- Recommendations
- The Consultation
- The feedback
- Next steps

A full copy of the presentation from Paul Gaunt is available on the Minute Book in Democratic Services.

The Panel made the following points:

The Chairman commented that, in the report, there is a contradiction between internships, volunteering and unpaid work placements. There is also a need to focus on those areas in BANES that have highest levels of deprivation and those with high unemployment. The Chairman said that there appears to be a gap within the information in the report - if somebody is unemployed then the discussions with the Job Centre Plus should take place. What should not happen is for people to believe that those working local, or national, government, on voluntary basis, are not seeking the employment. The other danger is for those who were out of work due to illness or disability, and looking to get back into work, their status could be jeopardised because of those issues. Therefore, there is need for dialogue with the Job Centre Plus and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) so people are not disadvantaged in the process.

Paul Gaunt replied that the Council is already working with the DWP though comments made by the Chairman will be taken on board.

Some Members of the Panel suggested that some innovative employment schemes in Bath train people recommended from Job Centres in Bristol and Bath, and at the end of the training sessions those people gain employment.

Members of the Panel commented that this is the vital area to help youngsters to get on the job ladder. Members of the Panel asked what is stopping businesses engaging apprentices in BANES.

Paul Gaunt replied that the approach on internships and apprenticeships is not consistent across the area. The main purpose of the policy is to capture why there is an inconsistent approach and make coordinated approach which should be followed by all Council services.

The Vice-Chair said that she was pleased with the commitment from the Council to set consistent approach to identify opportunities for apprenticeships, work experience and volunteering. This will stop silo working between departments. The Vice-Chair said that she would look forward to hear more on this subject.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the report and for the officers to take on board feedback from the Panel.

9 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE (10 MINUTES)

The Chairman invited Councillor Ben Stevens (Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development) to give an update to the Panel (attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes).

The Panel made the following points:

The Panel welcomed the update from Councillor Stevens. Some Panel Members felt that they should receive regular updates on the Economic Development, which was welcomed by Councillor Stevens.

The Panel commented that the Economic Development is one of the main issues for Bath and asked what efforts Councillor Stevens will make in order to engage fully with the business community of Bath. Some Members asked if the wrong type of trade is coming more and more to Bath, in particular high street coffee shops and restaurants, and whether Councillor Stevens feels that this should continue.

Councillor Stevens agreed that the Economic development is very important for Bath. Councillor Stevens said that he will continue to engage business community of Bath in the economic development. Councillor Stevens reminded the Panel that he was Council Champion for small businesses for the last two years and well linked with the small business community. Councillor Stevens said that the Council is well aware of the value that high street brands bring to the area though the Council will be also committed to engage small and independent businesses.

The Chairman commented that he would hope to see more discussion on the Tourism Levy. The Chairman also said that in the interest of Bath to have a tourism strategy to encourage people to stay longer, 2-4 days rather than 2-4 hours.

The Panel thanked Councillor Ben Stevens for an update.

Appendix 1

10 YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE (15 MINUTES)

The Chairman invited Sally Churchyard (11–19 Outcomes Service Manager) to give the presentation to the Panel.

Sally Churchyard gave a presentation where she highlighted the following points:

- Statutory Framework - Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012
- Who are service users

- Reduce rate of first time entrants – 3 year data
- Reduce rate of re-offending – 3 year data
- Reduce the rate of custody – 3 year data
- Youth Justice Plan

A full copy of the presentation from Sally Churchyard is available on the Minute Book in Democratic Services.

The Panel made the following points:

The Panel welcomed the presentation, in particular the information that crime figures were going down and asked why the figures went down over 3 years.

Sally Churchyard replied that crime rate figures were going down tremendously and there is a lot of speculation why that is happening though there is no real evidence yet. Sally Churchyard said that one of the speculations was due to changes in young people's behaviour, in particular spending more time on internet, social media, etc.

The Panel asked how BANES compare with the other areas in terms of young offenders figures and what prevention techniques are used to stop young people committing the offence.

Sally Churchyard replied that the data is reported nationally. BANES figures are better than national average. In terms of the neighbouring areas – BANES is better in 'Reduce rate of re-offending' and 'Reduce the rate of custody' whilst 'Reduce rate of first time entrants' is slightly proportionally higher. Sally Churchyard also said that the service is keen to work with partners in schools, colleges and with the Police and co-fund new projects in order to prevent young people committing a crime.

The Panel commented that BANES population is smaller than Bristol or Wiltshire so statistics could be quite high when counted proportionally to population figures

Some Members of the Panel suggested that one way of preventing young people committing an offence is to create centres of excellence for youth in areas such as sport, science, art, culture, etc. Sally Churchyard welcomed the suggestion from the Panel.

The Vice-Chair asked about the impact of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) appointment on young people.

Sally Churchyard replied that her service work quite close with the PCC, Sue Mountstevens. The PCC showed a real commitment to work with young people even though it is not on her list of main priorities.

The Panel asked about the work with parents.

Sally Churchyard replied that parents are some of the key people to work with. The service makes an assessment on the needs that families and parents have, and the service is also co-ordinating accredited parent programme.

The Panel asked how the service copes with the reduction in funding.

Sally Churchyard replied that there was a significant reduction in funding and because of that the service is much smaller than it used to be. Nevertheless, there is still the capacity to increase preventative work and the service is working closely with the Connecting Families project. Sally Churchyard also said that it is difficult to understand, or project, what are the crime trends, though the level of offending in BANES are really low.

The Chairman thanked Sally Churchyard for her presentation.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the presentation and report.

11 'CONNECTING COMMUNITIES' UPDATE(30 MINUTES)

The Chairman invited David Trethewey (Divisional Director – Policy and Partnership) and Andy Thomas (Group Manager – Partnership Delivery) to introduce the item.

The Panel made the following comments:

The Chairman commented that 4.2 (2) of the report should read 'A quicker response from the Council'. The Chairman also asked what was the open tender process for the Re:generate Community Organised scheme, what track record and what monitoring is in place and whether or not they are reluctant to share their data. The Chairman also highlighted page 26 of the report, Asset Transfer, and commented that he would like to see some kind of register of Asset Transfer applications so everyone can see what applications have been made and which of those were successful (and under what criteria).

The Chairman also commented that page 31 of the report is looking at cluster arrangements and suggested that it would be useful having cross boundary work (i.e. work with partnership organisations in neighbouring authorities).

The Chairman said that on the page 38 there was no overarching co-ordinated 3rd sector body to look into investment applications, much funding issues and opportunities.

David Trethewey responded that officer thought long and hard where to put the lines for clusters. There is no coherent approach between agencies across BANES so this will try to recreate governance structure in the area and this will require some time. These clusters will be supported through a toolkit of approaches, information and opportunities for local projects and joint working. David Trethewey added that this will not stop joint work with organisations from other authorities.

David Trethewey suggested that the Panel might want to look at the work that is going in the cluster around the activities that they are responsible for. A key part of the cluster is to appoint a senior officer as contact point for the particular cluster.

David Trethewey welcomed a suggestion from the Chairman regarding the register of Asset Transfer applications.

David Trethewey said that BANES is interesting area in terms of voluntary community sector support. The area is not as big as Bristol or Wiltshire in terms of the capacity which does have an impact on how they, voluntary sector, access available funds. David Trethewey commented that there is a range of support agencies available and suggested that the Panel could have a separate item on the agenda on that subject.

Peter Duppa-Miller (Secretary of the BANES Local Councils Association) welcomed the initiative. Peter Duppa-Miller also said that communities in Bath could easier connect with each other whilst communities in North East Somerset not so due to considerable larger distance between communities with inadequate public transport. The Council should also consider interaction, and connection, between the PACT, existing Parish Cluster Groups and Connecting Communities. The report also looks to enhance the advocacy of the elected local Councillors.

The Panel commented that they would wish to have clear understanding on how 'hard to reach' communities are included in this initiative. Some Panel Members suggested that the Panel could get an update on how the PACT is working now and also a feedback on the Re:generate Community Organised scheme, as mentioned by the Chairman.

The Panel also commented that the Council should use the intelligence from local people and Ward Councillors in terms of the communities in their area. The Panel also suggested that the Council should use more social media to connect with local people.

Some Panel Members felt that the communities need to connect to the river as river connects everyone.

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

12 POST-MIDNIGHT ECONOMY AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO OVERALL ECONOMY (20 MINUTES)

The Chairman invited Andrew Cooper (Bath City Centre Manager) to introduce this item.

The Chairman also invited Inspector Steve Mildren to give the presentation on Night Time Economy crime figures.

The presentation gave the following information:

- Night Time Economy (NTE) crime diagram
- NTE Detected Crime diagram
- Violence in the NTE
- Anti-Social Behaviour Call logs

A full copy of the presentation is available on the Minute Book in Democratic Services.

The Panel made the following comments:

Members of the Panel welcomed the work of the Business Improvement District, Community Safety and the Police in lowering the number of Anti-Social Behaviour incidents. Some Panel Members volunteered to come out with officers on Friday and Saturday night to see how different schemes work across the city.

Members of the Panel were informed that the funding for the Business Improvement District was agreed for another 5 years. The Night Time Economy crime figures presented to the panel were not domestic figures, only related to the crime on the street.

The officers informed the Panel that partnership work between the Business Improvement District, Community Safety and the Police will continue in order to promote Bath as a safe city and attract day and night time economy.

It was **RESOLVED** to note presentations from Andrew Cooper and Inspector Steve Mildren.

13 RIVER CORRIDOR REPORT - CABINET MEMBER RESPONSE (15 MINUTES)

The Chairman said that the statement from Jan Brown had been circulated to the Panel and will be forwarded to Councillor Ben Stevens for his consideration.

The Chairman invited Councillor Stevens to take the Panel through the response as printed.

The Panel made the following points:

Councillor Cherry Beath, Vice Chair of the Panel and previous Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development, said that the River Strategy is on its way and will be incorporated into the wider regeneration plans for the Bath Enterprise Area, and Keynsham. Any future development and regeneration with respect to the river will need to fit within available resources. Councillor Beath also added that the Council cannot form the River Corridor Trust, as the Trust should be independent, though the Council is here to support those who would want to form a Trust.

Councillor Dave Laming made a plea to the Cabinet, via Councillor Stevens, to look for a venue which would be ideal as River Corridor Trust's headquarters. Councillor Stevens said that he will take that request on board.

The Chairman thanked everyone who took part in the review and also thanked the Cabinet Member/s (past and present) for their response to recommendations made in the report.

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

14 WORKPLAN

It was **RESOLVED** to note the workplan with the following additions:

- Magistrates (date to be confirmed)
- Empty shops (date to be confirmed)

The Chairman also informed Panel Members that they could always contact him, or the Vice Chair, if they have any suggestions for the workplan.

The meeting ended at 3.50 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

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Cabinet Member Update

Cllr Ben Stevens – Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development

Obviously I only took the position over from the AGM last Thursday. Since then I have been getting myself up to date with the portfolio, meeting with the Strategic Director and Divisional Directors as well as external organisations to ensure I am on top of things.

▪ **Economic Development**

- The Co-Working Hub is on track to be opened in July as planned, and is starting to take shape. The primary concern at the moment is how to deal with oversubscription, rather than lack of interest.
- A number of our key development sites are finally being brought forward to ensure a strong economy here in Bath and North East Somerset.
- Many of these sites are on the river and we're working to ensure that the river is central to our future plans.

▪ **Heritage**

- Our heritage assets continue to go from strength to strength; The Roman Baths has won a Silver Tourism Excellence award.
- The Heritage Services Business Plan 2013-2018 has been approved by Cabinet;
- Officers are working on the revised Room Hire Strategy which will be brought forward for adoption in the autumn;
- Charging for the large temporary exhibition gallery at the Victoria Art Gallery was introduced in April; performance is being monitored and will be reviewed in Q3;
- 23rd May marks the 50th anniversary of the Fashion Museum (then the Museum of Costume) opening in Bath; it is being celebrated with the exhibition '50 Fabulous Frocks';

▪ **Culture**

- In July a pot of money provided by Art Council England and Visit England will become available, the Council is supporting a joint bid from Bath Tourism Plus and Bath Festivals.
- Plans for the Tourism Levy are going to start being worked up shortly, and as promised this panel will receive an update once there is one.
- The Arts Development Strategy is currently out for consultation with arts groups.

I thought it might be useful for me to let you know my priorities for the next 2 years.

- Ensuring the river is properly valued
- Refreshing the economic strategy to take account of the changes since it was written (global recession, localism, core strategy etc)
- Bringing forward development sites
- Rationalise the marketing of B&NES to maximise the benefit
- Enhance the cultural offer across B&NES, encouraging cultural tourism

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