

## **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

### **ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

Thursday, 28th November, 2013

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

#### **37 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **38 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

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

#### **39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor Andrew Furse had sent his apologies to the Panel. Councillor Ian Gilchrist was substitute for Councillor Furse.

#### **40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

#### **41 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There was none.

#### **42 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 David Redgewell will give his statement before item 9 on the agenda (Community Safety Plan: British Transport Police) and Susan Charles will give her statement before item 10 on the agenda (Leisure Strategy update).

#### **43 MINUTES**

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

#### **44 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE (10 MINUTES)**

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

The Panel made the following points:

Councillor Stevens confirmed that he had received a scoping study, by the River Regeneration Trust, which identified economic development opportunities in the Broadmead Peninsula. Councillor Stevens informed the meeting that he had only just received the study, so he had had no time to read the full report, though he was impressed with the executive summary of the report.

Councillor Beath asked about the status of the Assembly Rooms and the National Trust's intentions considering that they were thinking to set short lease contracts.

Councillor Stevens replied that there is a relatively short lease in comparison to some other leases that the Council deals with. Councillor Stevens said that he didn't know the exact intentions of the National Trust.

Councillor Anketell-Jones said that, according to his understanding, the economic area master plan was going to be brought to public consultation through the Placemaking process. Councillor Anketell-Jones asked if the master plan is still going ahead considering that the Placemaking process had been held up.

Councillor Stevens replied that the Council will continue with the master plan as planned but the public consultation is still considered around the Placemaking process. It does slightly delay the delivery of the economic area master plan.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Stevens for an update.

#### **45 COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN: BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE (30 MINUTES)**

The Chairman invited David Redgewell to address the Panel with his statement in advance of the presentation on the British Transport Police (BTP).

David Redgewell raised three points in his statement.

- The on-going issues with the Anti-Social Behaviour at the Oldfield Park Station, in particular on the graffiti problems and spray on the network rail property. The introduction of the community safety cameras is one of the ways forward to resolve these issues, something that could also be introduced on some other smaller train stations in the area.
- 'Access for all' initiative – hope to secure some money from the Western Riverside project towards Oldfield Park station.

- A plea for more BTP officers in the area, in particular for the North Somerset line.

The Chairman invited Chief Inspector Paul Richards (BTP's Sector Commander for the South West) to give his presentation to the Panel.

Chief Inspector Richards highlighted the following points in his presentation:

- BTP history
- Rail crime history
- 7/7 London bombings of 2005
- 2012 Olympics in London
- About the BTP
- Aims
- Local BTP Neighbourhood Policing team
- Local area
- How are BTP doing – statistics
- Leaflets, social media, information for the public, new text number and other ways to contact the BTP
- Trespass and Cable Theft
- Anti-Social Behaviour Order – ASBO
- Work with Samaritans and other organisations/partners

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

The Panel made the following points:

The Chairman said it is good to see that robbery is down 80% and that route crime is down 71% and asked how that matches with metal thefts.

Chief Inspector Richards responded that route crime includes a tremendous amount of other issues such as trespass, obstructions, etc. and has a much wider remit than cable theft.

The Chairman asked how we compare with other countries; number of officers in Bath; and if the BTP got involved in the Alcohol Harm review.

Chief Inspector Richards responded that he was not sure if there were any comparisons with other countries. The reason for that is, for example, some countries have different laws/views on trespassing. Chief Inspector Richards also said that there are two officers and six community support officers present in Bath – this was allocated in conjunction with First Great Western. Chief Inspector Richards concluded by saying that the BTP would get involved in the Alcohol Harm review via Avon and Somerset Police.

The Panel asked about the work in relation to stopping the graffiti along the railway lines.

Chief Inspector Richards responded that the BTP works closely with Network Rail who have their Community Safety Manager picking up on these particular issues. Chief Inspector Richards said that often these offences are very difficult to detect and asked everyone who witness these offences to report them to the BTP or Network Rail.

Chief Inspector Richards also invited everyone to attend the next BTP PACT meeting at the Royal Hotel, Bath, on 10<sup>th</sup> December at 10:30am and communicate any issues, local or wider, to the officers.

The Panel asked how many officers are in each area.

Chief Inspector Richards responded that his area was going through restructuring at the moment though he was hoping to get additional staff as an investment in Swindon. This is significant because of the way the South West network is set up. There is a significant number of staff in Bristol and some staff in Bath and Chief Inspector Richards was hoping to get a sergeant and up to eight officers which should co-ordinate the BTP response more effectively.

The Panel asked about the work between the BTP and other organisations in order to prevent suicides.

Chief Inspector Richards responded that it is exceptionally difficult to deal with these tragic events. It is about balancing the needs of the family of the deceased whilst minimising disruption to the rail network. Chief Inspector Richards said that this is also about educating officers to work together with the Samaritans on dealing with these sensitive issues.

The Panel asked how many offences are from repeat offenders.

Chief Inspector Richards responded that he had no figures in front of him though he would not think it was a tremendous amount of repeat offenders according to the statistics in the presentation.

The Panel asked if travelling without a ticket was a crime and, if so, whether it was included in the BTP statistics.

Chief Inspector Richards responded that ticketless travel is not the same offence like theft etc. If someone travelled without a valid ticket and could not give a valid reason why they did that then it could be prosecuted and it would be part of crime statistics.

The Panel asked about the target response time.

Chief Inspector Richards responded that the BTP does have response time.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

1. Note the Community Safety Partnership work with BTP, First Great Western and Network Rail.

2. Note future challenges on our local rail stations, to include Keynsham and Oldfield Park.
3. Welcome the presentation by Chief Inspector Paul Richards; and
4. Note that the next BTP PACT meeting is on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2013 at 10:30am in the Royal Hotel, Bath.

#### **46 LEISURE STRATEGY UPDATE (45 MINUTES)**

The Chairman invited Susan Charles to read out her statement, and also statements from Jenny Shrubsall and Joyce Stock.

Susan Charles expressed her concerns (quote) 'about the lack of specified disabled parking for users of the Keynsham Leisure Centre, which was removed in 2007 and with no suitable alternative being offered' (quote finished).

All three statements are available at the Minute Book in Democratic Services.

Councillor Brian Simons (Keynsham North Ward Councillor and Member of the Panel) said that he will discuss the issue over disabled access at Keynsham Leisure Centre with Ms Charles and the relevant Council officers outside the meeting.

Members of the Panel debated the issues raised in the statements.

Councillor Geoff Ward said that he will, as Shadow Cabinet Member, speak to Matthew Smith (Divisional Director for Environmental Services) on this matter.

The Chairman also asked that the statements are sent to the appropriate Cabinet Member/s. The Chairman also said that the Panel does not have any decision making powers like Cabinet Member/s have but that the Panel will expect prompt replies from the relevant Cabinet Member/s and officers on this matter for the next meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to send the statement to the relevant Cabinet Member/s and to receive replies on this matter at the next meeting of the Panel.

The Chairman invited Marc Higgins (Business Development Manager from Sport and Active Lifestyle Team) to give the presentation.

Marc Higgins highlighted the following points in his presentation:

- Vision for discussion
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing Initial Consultation
- Health and Wellbeing – Emerging Priorities
- The Strategy

- Facilities
- Initial conclusions
- Opportunities
- Feasibility
- Procurement
- Next steps

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

The Panel made the following points:

The Panel asked if the report needed to be more complete and overarching so the procurement process fit in the strategy. The Panel also asked what is the cross-border use of the facilities in B&NES and what opportunities exist to engage people from outside B&NES to use facilities.

Marc Higgins showed a diagram (available in the Minute Book at Democratic Services) to the Panel on how the strategy will fit together in terms of the other strategies, budget, and procurement process. Marc Higgins also said that cross-border issue is not so strong in Bath whilst a bit better in Keynsham. The Council will look into redevelopment of Keynsham facilities to bring even more customers from outside B&NES.

The Panel asked how the Council set its 25 year delivery programme.

Marc Higgins replied that the 25 year delivery programme was based on housing projection number for the area, trying to set in parallel with the Core Strategy.

The Panel asked about the work with other organisations and venues (i.e. Bath University, Lambridge training ground, etc.) and also about the issue of heated swimming pools in Keynsham.

Marc Higgins replied that the Council has a very good working relationship with organisations such as Bath University. The issue of heated swimming pools is part of the consultation process for January 2014.

The Panel commented that young people are quite keen to get into sports centres but they could not afford the monthly cost of it.

Marc Higgins replied that discussion with young people will be part of the consultation.

The Panel also said that the Council should also get in touch with Curo.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the report and presentation and receive draft strategy at one of the future meetings.

## 47 DRAFT MEDIUM TERM PLAN (PLACE) UPDATE

The Chairman invited Louise Fradd (Strategic Director for Place) to introduce the report.

Louise Fradd introduced the report by saying that this is the second year of a three year plan. Page 32 of the agenda had some of the key issues addressed in the directorate.

Members of the Panel confirmed that they had all received an updated version of page 35 of the report (as amended and published on the Council's website).

The Panel asked about the latest on the Victoria Art gallery.

Louise Fradd responded that the Council is constantly reviewing this matter, though at the moment, the gallery was not doing that badly and hopefully it will continue to do well.

Louise Fradd also informed the Panel that the Divisional Directors interviews will happen before this Christmas.

The Panel asked about linkage between planning, building control, highways and environmental services together with the economic development drivers and the ability for the Council to create money.

Louise Fradd responded that she will be holding a workshop with the managers from her directorate, and one of the key aspects of that workshop will be what are the income drivers and what is it that the directorate needs to do to fit in the new environment (Enterprise Area, City Deal, West of England, etc.). The aim of the workshop will be to make everyone think about their budgets and how to work together. Louise Fradd also pointed out that services are working with each other from other directorates.

Some Members of the Panel asked Louise Fradd if she would commit not to close the Victoria Art gallery.

Louise Fradd responded she could not answer that comment though she will do everything to deliver the targets.

Councillor Stevens added that the Council is working quite close with the gallery to ensure that their footfall is maintained and that the Council will continue to work with the gallery to make sure that they are looked after.

The Panel asked Louise Fradd how confident she was that there could be further efficiency savings.

Louise Fradd replied that her priority is to meet statutory requirements in service provision. It is also all about officers thinking around wider picture, thinking more imaginatively on what the Council does and whether it can be done in other, more

visionary ways. For example, the Council is now charging pre-planning application and that works quite well.

The Chairman summed up the debate by saying that the whole issue is about generating money ourselves if we don't have as much money to spend, and looking at ways we can bring in other sources of funding.

Discussions last year were if the cuts from last year were sustainable and whether or not entrance charging, for example in Victoria Art gallery, would generate income and increase footfall. Last year's discussions also looked at the possibility of some capital investment to increase the amount of income that is generated through the shop, such as a coffee shop, at the gallery.

The Chairman also pointed out that there is external funding that is not accessible by Local Authorities and what reference was made to 3<sup>rd</sup>/voluntary sector working in partnership with Local Authorities.

Louise Fradd reminded the Panel that this is just an update on where the directorate are with the budget this year. Louise Fradd also said that the next year, and specifically the year after that, will be very difficult years.

The Chairman closed the debate by saying that the recommendations 2.2 and 2.3 of the report could not be supported by the Panel. Those issues will be discussed at the Full Council meeting in February 2014 (Budget meeting).

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

#### **48 WORKPLAN**

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

The meeting ended at 3.20 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**