

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Thursday, 23rd January, 2014

Present:- Councillors Robin Moss (Chair), Cherry Beath (Vice-Chair), Patrick Anketell-Jones, Brian Simmons, Andrew Furse, Dave Laming and David Martin

49 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

50 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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

51 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Geoff Ward had sent his apologies to the Panel.

52 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Cherry Beath declared an 'other' interest in agenda 10 as she is a Member of the Cultural Forum Board.

Councillor Dave Laming declared an 'other' interest in agenda item 12 as he is a Member of the River Regeneration Trust.

53 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

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

The Chairman invited Susan Charles to address the Panel.

Susan Charles said that she still didn't receive a response to the issues raised at the last Panel meeting, in regards of the disabled access to Keynsham Leisure Centre.

Members of the Panel debated the issue.

The Panel acknowledged that they received a response from Matthew Smith (Divisional Director for Environmental Services) and requested that a copy of the response should be forwarded to Susan Charles.

The Chairman and Vice-Chair also agreed to visit the site in question, disabled access at Keynsham Leisure Centre, together with Susan Charles.

It was **RESOLVED** to instruct Senior Democratic Services Officer to forward a response from Matthew Smith to Susan Charles.

55 MINUTES

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

56 CABINET MEMBERS' UPDATES (15 MINUTES)

The Chairman invited Councillor Ben Stevens (Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development) to introduce the update (attached to these minutes).

The Panel made the following points:

Councillor Anketell-Jones asked about the European Historic Spas project bid submission to UNESCO.

Councillor Stevens responded that Bath would retain its status as the World Heritage City, and the intention to achieve the European Historic Spa status would be a second designation.

Councillor Beath said that she was the Lead Councillor on the European Historic Spa project. Councillor Beath has been meeting with a group of European City Mayors to further Bath cause in a joint bid to UNESCO for the European Historic Spa project.

Councillor Anketell-Jones asked about the current number of subscriptions to the Hub in the Guildhall.

Councillor Stevens replied that 80 businesses currently subscribed to the Hub.

The Chairman commented that a record number of visitors visited Roman Baths in 2013 and asked if there were any concerns on reaching the point where the Council could not cope with any more visitors. The Chairman also asked if there were any reports on the impact from the Circular Tour that goes from Windsor Castle, to Bath and Stonehenge and back to London.

Councillor Stevens responded that the Council had been concerned with a number of visitors to Roman Baths, hence why there were quite a lot of improvements happening at the site, in terms of the accessibility and safety.

Councillor Stevens also said that the Council had been looking into number of ideas to mitigate any issues with coaches and tours, and also how this matter would fit into the Transport Strategy.

Councillor Laming commented that Cabinet Member's update should include 'The River' as from the next meeting of the Panel. Councillor Stevens agreed with a comment from Councillor Laming.

Councillor Beath commented she understood that the Arts Training Commission had been awarded to organisation in Cornwall and asked if Councillor Stevens could provide more information at the next meeting of the Panel on that decision, in the light of fact that the Council was having a local procurement policy.

Councillor Martin asked about the 'Retrofit Supply Chain' event held in conjunction with the Low Carbon South West.

Councillor Stevens responded that a briefing note could be circulated to Panel Members about that event. The event, as such, was well attended.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Stevens for an update.

The Chairman informed the meeting that the Panel requested an update from Councillor David Dixon (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods). The Chairman said that the Panel never received an update from Councillor Dixon.

The Panel suggested that the Chairman should write, on behalf of the Panel, to Councillor Dixon requesting an update for future meetings.

The Chairman agreed with the quest from the Panel.

57 COMMUNITY SAFETY: ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING BILL UPDATE (20 MINUTES)

The Chairman invited Andrew Snee (Head of Tenancy Solutions in Curo) to give a presentation to the Panel.

The Panel also welcomed Victor da Cunha (Chief Executive from Curo) who was at the meeting.

The following points were highlighted in the presentation:

- Aims of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill
- The tools and powers that disappear
- The new tools and powers available
- Part 1 - Injunctions to Prevent Nuisance or Annoyance
- Part 2 - Criminal Behaviour Orders
- Part 3 - Dispersal Powers
- Part 4 - Community Protection Notices

- Part 4 - Public Space Protection Orders
- Part 4 - Closure Notices and Orders
- Part 5 – Recovery of Possession of Dwelling Houses
- Part 6 – Local Involvement and Accountability
- Leeds Community Trigger Pilot
- Community Trigger Review Process
- Analysis of Calls Received
- Lessons Learned

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

The Panel made the following points:

Councillor Beath asked if there might be any problems with the Community Trigger process. Councillor Beath said that communications between different agencies could create difficulties within the process.

Andrew Snee responded that the most important part of the Community Trigger would be in information sharing. The Community Trigger process would never work without the relevant information sharing. In future, the services should work together and share working systems between themselves.

Councillor Beath asked about the implications on resources.

Andrew Snee responded that, in the last 12 months, Curo expanded its Tenancy Solutions Team, a move which gave positive results in terms of dealing with anti-social behaviour cases.

Councillor Furse said he was slightly concerned on news that Dispersal Powers would not require consultation with Local Authorities.

Andrew Snee responded that Dispersal Powers would give more powers to the Police and would take away consultation element. Some of the Dispersal Power evidence would feed into the application for the Public Space Protection Orders.

Sue Dicks (Community Manager Partnership Delivery) added that current process, involving the Local Authority, could take up to four months.

Councillor Furse asked about Closure Notices process, which would last for no longer than 48 hours, and how that would lead to Closure Orders, which could last up to six months.

Andrew Snee responded that not only dwelling house would be subject to the Closure Notice – it could also be issued to a pub, and similar places. The Police and Local Authorities could consult on the specific premise and draw up the papers that would be served to the specific property, and that would be the Closure Notice. The matter would then be presented to the Court, in front of the Judge, within 48 hours. The Judge could then look at the case and decide to serve Closure Order, which could last up to six months.

Councillor Furse asked what would be the locality within the 'Recovery of Possession of Dwelling Houses'.

Andrew Snee responded that Curo tend to use Council's Ward Maps as the locality within the 'Recovery of Possession of Dwelling Houses'.

Councillor Simmons asked about the point of contact for the public, once the Bill becomes an Act.

Andrew Snee responded that Curo would be doing some sessions with their residents, making sure that people become aware of new powers, rights and who to contact. Curo would be also working together with the Police and Crime Commissioner. Andrew Snee added that Ward Councillors would be also involved in these sessions.

Councillor Anketell-Jones asked if the Bill would address the issue of aggressive and/or organised begging.

Andrew Snee responded that he would expect from the Bill to address this issue with its tools and powers.

The Chairman asked about the Community Trigger process, in particular how these powers would apply with rented properties.

Sue Dicks responded that this was an area of the Bill still under consultation between different agencies, partners and authorities. Sue Dicks also said that the Council would be monitoring closely the development in this area.

Sue Dicks also said that the Council, in respect of the Community Trigger, had had some measures in place two to three years ago. Instead of focusing on offenders at that time, the Council focused on repeated victims. Sue Dicks commented that the Council worked together with the Police and Curo on that project and thanked Curo for a support in that time.

Andrew Snee also added that Curo have been planning to appoint Victim Support Officer soon.

It was **RESOLVED** to note the context of the report and presentation and to receive a further update on the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill in near future.

58 B&NES ECONOMIC STRATEGY (30 MINUTES)

The Chairman invited David Redgewell to address the Panel with his statement. The Chairman also acknowledged that the Panel received background information from David Redgewell on this subject.

David Redgewell said that B&NES Economic Strategy had to be a part of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Economic Strategy. David Redgewell also said that

some areas in North East Somerset might feel isolated from the central economic development in Bath. Transportation should be an integral part of every Economic Strategy in the area.

The Chairman invited John Wilkinson (Divisional Director Community Regeneration) to give a presentation to the Panel.

The following points were highlighted in the presentation:

- Context for the Review
- Public Services Board : The Vision for B&NES
- Already renowned as one of the most desirable places in the country, though not always
- How do we compare with other areas?
- Beautifully inventive... for all: An affordability metric?
- What do we need to do?
- Economic Strategy review
- Purpose of the review
- Key objectives – overall
- Measures of success – by 2026
- Measures of success – Progress 2013
- Health & Wellbeing Strategy Theme
- Draft Core Strategy
 - Housing and jobs
 - The Strategy – Map of the region
- Economic forecast
- Vision
- Timetable

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

Members of the Panel debated the presentation and the report from John Wilkinson and made the following recommendations, to be considered in the Economic Strategy:

Graduate retention – the Strategy should strongly focus on the retention of post-graduates.

Employment in North East Somerset – the Strategy should focus on an increase in employment in North East Somerset area.

Ex Ministry of Defence sites – the Strategy should address that those sites must retain some employment use, rather than becoming solely residential areas.

Minimise the closure of businesses in the area - the Council should be looking of having a dialogue with businesses in the area, in particular what were their needs for accommodation, locality, employment space, and similar.

Housing and employment delivery – the Strategy should strongly focus on the adequate housing delivery, and those developers who were planning to build houses also deliver jobs they have been promising in their planning applications. The Strategy should also comprise what actions would be taken to achieve job predictions.

More about the sustainability – in particular as part of the health and wellbeing aspect of the Strategy.

Low-carbon – the Strategy should provide a vision of business and employment opportunities within the low-carbon industry.

Planning process – the Strategy should be important part of the planning process, and vice versa.

Work with two universities in Bath – the Panel felt that both universities should be mentioned in the Strategy, in particular economic activity within universities.

Arts and Culture – the Strategy should give arts and culture a bit more prominent place.

Rural skills – the Strategy should champion rural skills, such as farming thatching, etc.

Small businesses – the Strategy should focus on helping small businesses in the area.

At this point of the meeting the Panel paid a tribute to Angela Ladd, who was the driving force behind the small business community. Angela Ladd died recently following a long battle with cancer.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- 1) Request from officers to consider recommendations from the Panel; and
- 2) Receive the Economic Strategy report from March 2014 meeting.

59 VISITOR CONTRIBUTION PRESENTATION (20 MINUTES)

The Chairman invited John Wilkinson to give a presentation to the Panel.

John Wilkinson apologised to the Panel for not having a proper report when the agenda was published, and reason for that was because officers had been waiting for an outcome of tourism forums which were held this week.

The following points were highlighted in the presentation:

- Background
- Update
- Potential Options
- Next Steps

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

The Panel made the following points:

The Chairman commented that the Panel had been asking for this issue to be presented to the Panel for a number of months. The Chairman had a few concerns about this matter. This would not be potential £1m directly coming to the Council, but as direct investment to tourism, and if it didn't work then the investment would not go where it should go. The Chairman had a concern that the scheme would be a voluntary scheme and he suggested that the Panel could hear whether in open or close session, about examples in other parts of the United Kingdom.

Councillor Ben Stevens replied that the Council would cover any shortfall to Bath Tourism Plus if the Visitor Contribution was short of £1m. The voluntary arrangements would partly depend on the Government guidance. Councillor Stevens also said that the scheme could get close to £1m if it is implemented in a right way.

Councillor Laming said that the river was one of the most important attractions for the city, and should be used as a creator of financial input for the tourism.

Councillor Martin said it would be useful to know which other cities were using the same scheme. It would be also useful to know where the money (visitor contribution) would go.

John Wilkinson commented that in implementing any scheme the Council would need to be clear with the public about how the contributions would be used.

Councillor Beath said that contributors would need to see how this would help them, and that the money would go straight to tourism and not to the Council.

Councillor Stevens agreed with Councillor Beath that the Council must be transparent with contributors and visitors on this issue.

The Chairman said that people would need to see this as an investment in the heritage site, and not into Council coffers. This would be an investment in existing tourist facilities, though it would not give people an option to come to North East Somerset venues.

The Chairman commented it was good that guarantees were made to the Bath Tourism Plus in case of the shortfall though it would leave the Council with a hole in the budget.

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

60 THE RIVER REGENERATION TRUST STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2015 (10 MINUTES)

The Chairman invited James Hurley (The River Regeneration Trust TRRT rep) to give a presentation to the Panel.

The following points were highlighted in the presentation:

- TRRT's mission
- TRRT's aim for 2014-2015
- TRRT's Objectives 2014-2015
- TRRT's Eight Key Priorities 2014-2015
- TRRT's story so far
- TRRT's belief in Green Jobs - Circular Economy
- TRRT's belief in Affordable Homes for Boat Dwellers
- Proposed Organogram for B&NES River Strategy

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

The Panel made the following points:

Councillor Laming, the River Champion for the Council and the Vice-Chair of the Trust, welcomed the presentation from James Hurley and highlighted lack of co-ordination between the departments in the Council and also between other agencies.

Councillor Laming circulated to the Panel a copy of the scoping study prepared by the River Regeneration Trust.

Councillor Beath welcomed the presentation and the report. Councillor Beath appreciated that the Trust had been flagging up the river aspect of Bath, and Keynsham, in terms of its contribution to the economy. Councillor Beath also said that she would like to see a financial breakdown; in particular how the money put in for the river development would contribute to the economy.

Councillor Beath also suggested that the Trust should encourage a volunteer workforce to clean pathways along the river.

James Hurley responded that some of the Trust Members had been engaging a few community groups to pick up the litter along the river.

James Hurley also said that the Trust had received from the Council a list of most of the landowners along the river.

Councillor Laming welcomed a comment from Councillor Beath on encouraging volunteers to help cleaning pathways along the river, though one of the obstacles in communicating with the community was a lack of dedicated point of contact. Councillor Laming said that there was a strong need for a single point of contact which would deal with anything related to the river.

Councillor Anketell-Jones said it was very important to raise the profile of the river, as water had more and more economic, social and cultural impact on the city. Councillor Anketell-Jones expressed a slight concern on potential development of overlaps with other, existing, services and suggested that some kind of analysis should be conducted between the Trust and the existing services along the river (i.e. there might be already a point of contact, etc.).

Councillor Laming agreed with Councillor Anketell-Jones and added that nobody so far co-ordinated any work related to the subject.

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

61 PANEL WORKPLAN

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

- B&NES Economic Strategy (March 2014)
- Anti-social behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill further update (date to be confirmed)

The meeting ended at 3.45 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services