

Arts Leisure & Culture Select Committee

A meeting of Arts Leisure & Culture Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 7th October, 2009.

Present: Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell(Chariman), Cllr Andrew Sherris(Vice-Chairman), Cllr Hilary Aggio, Cllr Dick Cains, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr Alan Lewis, , Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Mick Womphrey

Officers: Andy Bryson(RES), Richard McGuckin, Julie Higgins(DNS), Judith Trainer, Sarah Whaley(LD)

Also in attendance:

Apologies: Cllr Kath Nelson, Cllr Sylvia Walmsley

1 Evacuation Procedure

The Evacuation procedure was noted.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd June 2009-To Confirm as a Correct Record for Signature

CONCLUDED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd June 2009 were signed as a correct record.

4 Draft minutes from the meeting held on 9th September 2009

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 9th September 2009.

CONCLUDED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 9th September 2009 be agreed as a true record.

5 Efficiency Improvement & Transformation Gateway Review-Review of Highways, Lighting & Network Management-Options Challenge (paper to follow)

Members were asked to consider comment and challenge the information provided by the officer project team which were undertaking the review of Highways, Network management and Street Lighting. It was highlighted that consultation for the new bus scheme was going on Stockton Web site w/e 16/10/2009 explaining how the public could have their say and the Acting Head of Technical Services agreed to send a core bus route map to all Members as part of the consultation process.

The Acting Head of Technical Services presented the committee with a report which detailed potential efficiency opportunities identified from the baseline analysis report and highlighted what was realistically achievable in the immediate, short and longer term in relation to the above mentioned review. The Opportunities discussed were as follows:

1. Future maintenance of Street Lighting
2. Street Lighting obsolete column replacement and lantern replacement for dimmed street lights.
3. Decommissioning of lit road signs and bollards, replaced with reflective equipment.
4. Appointment of delivery partners for capital highway works.
5. Develop a project management delivery function shared between Technical and Direct Services.
6. Bus Shelter maintenance, to be consumed with Direct Services existing revenue maintenance.

The Acting Head of Technical Services confirmed to the Committee that funding had been secured from the Tees Valley Major Bus Scheme and there was enough funds to replace all core route bus shelters over a three year period with the exception for those which had just recently been replaced. After the three year period it was confirmed that Stockton Borough Council had plans to replace bus shelters in more rural areas, however there was a risk attached to this as Stockton Borough Council had no control over bus operators cancelling bus routes making bus shelters obsolete. The maintenance of bus shelters should be minimised however due to the plastic glass now used.

It was explained to members the differences between Direct Services and Technical Services and where there was some areas of overlap. The Acting Head of Technical Services highlighted that some areas would need to be reviewed where it seemed there was duplication. Members highlighted other areas such as maintenance of paths which were uprooted by trees and the fact they had been repaired multiple times only to continue to be uprooted again. It was suggested that in these cases decisions to remove trees would be a better option. The Finance Manager confirmed that there had been a reduction in claims against trips and falls over the last two years which had had a positive impact on the Council's insurance premium.

The Committee discussed the history of how the above mentioned services had been delivered in the past compared to the current day and also how other neighbouring authorities delivered these same services and what the financial implications were. Members also heard and discussed what the possible financial options were to implement new ways of working to create efficiency savings and it was noted that more investigations would need to be undertaken before financial routes could be finalised.

CONCLUDED that the views of the Committee be taken into account in the submission of options to Cabinet on 26th November 2009.

6 Monitoring of Previously Agreed Recommendations

Members were asked to consider the assessments of progress contained within

the attached Progress Updates on the implementation of previously agreed recommendations. These were outstanding recommendations from the reviews of River Based Leisure Facilities and Festivals.

CONCLUDED that Members noted the information contained within the reports.

7 Work Programme

The Scrutiny Officer confirmed with the Committee that the next meeting of the 18th November would be for the review of Facilities Management. There was also an overview meeting to be arranged towards the end of year review and a site visit for the Adult Operations Review to take place on the 6th January 2010.

CONCLUDED that the information be noted.