

Executive Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of Executive Scrutiny Committee was held on Tuesday, 23rd October, 2012.

Present: Cllr Ken Lupton (Chairman), Cllr Julia Cherrett, Cllr Carol Clark (vice Cllr Barbara Inman), Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Terry Laing, Cllr Miss Tina Large, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Mrs Mary Womphrey.

Officers: Mark Freeman (CESC); Andrew Mearns, Linda Stephenson (DNS); Fiona McKie, Peter Mennear, Judith Trainer (LD); Garry Cummings, Tony Montague (R);

Also in attendance: Mr Richard Amir (Parent Governor Representative).

Apologies: were submitted on behalf of Cllr Lynne Apedaile, Cllr Robert Gibson; Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Jean Kirby, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Mick Stoker.

1 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

2 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Nigel Cooke declared a personal interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 7 further to being an employee of Tees, Esk and Wear Valley.

Cllr Terry Laing declared a personal interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 8 further to being a member of the Grangefield Community Centre Management Team.

Cllr Paul Kirton declared a personal interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 7 further to previously serving in the armed forces and being a member of SAFA.

Cllr Kenneth Lupton declared a personal interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 7 further to previously serving in the armed forces.

Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell declared a personal interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 7 further to being the Vice Chair of SAFA.

3 Minutes for Signature - 31 July 2012

The minutes of the meeting held on 31st July 2012 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

AGREED that the minutes were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4 Draft Minutes - 1 October 2012

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 1st October, 2012.

AGREED that the draft minutes be approved.

5 Local Council Tax Support Scheme Consultation Feedback

Members were provided with a paper that outlined the feedback received from the consultation events held between 13th August and 17th September on the draft Local Council Tax Support Scheme. It described the feedback received to date. The report also detailed some further work carried out to estimate the impact of the changes.

Members were provided with feedback from the consultation process, however analysis was still being undertaken particularly of the open questions that were included within the questionnaire. 1337 completed questionnaires had been received.

AGREED that:-

1. Executive Scrutiny Committee were requested to note the consultation feedback.
2. The impact assessment information be noted.

6 Update on Progress on Stockton's Armed Forces Community Covenant

The final report of the Regional Health Scrutiny Committee following its review of the health needs of ex-service personnel was considered by Cabinet in February 2011. The Joint Committee made a number of recommendations for consideration by the region's local authorities, regional NHS bodies and a number of other organisations. It was agreed to implement those actions applicable to Stockton Council, and monitor them on a six-monthly basis.

Many of these actions had subsequently been incorporated in Stockton's Armed Forces Community Covenant which was signed in March 2012. This progress report therefore summarised progress against all related issues to provide a summary of the support given to the armed forces community by Stockton Council and partners.

It was suggested that a prominent link to the Council's armed forces web page be placed on the Council's website.

AGREED that the progress and comments be noted.

7 Asset Review - update

Members were provided with an update on the Asset Review which built on earlier reports to Members in 2011 and in June 2012.

The report highlighted ongoing progress in rationalising the office accommodation estate and presented an option for consideration following an exercise to review the Education Development Centre.

Following agreement and approval of the libraries strategy, and the consultation on options for the Service, the report outlined proposals for delivery of the strategy.

An update was also provided on work that Catalyst were undertaking with respect to community asset transfer, including development of a Community Asset Trust, and also summarised developments with respect to aspects of Facilities Management.

Discussion was held on the mobile library service and where this would be relocated. It was stated that the service had some spare capacity and that the current route could be enhanced. No plans had been made at present for the relocation but this would need to be considered in due course.

Discussion was held on displaying art in the new council buildings in Billingham as well as the newly refurbished Forum.

A further report, updating progress and presenting the results of the consultation on the Libraries Service, together with updates on Youth and Community facilities would be presented to Executive Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet in the new year.

Cabinet were being recommended to agree:-

1. A second phase of consultation be undertaken on the proposals in respect of the Libraries Service.
2. The relocation of services from the Education Development Centre and the subsequent closure, which will be followed by an option appraisal to determine the future of the site be approved.
3. Given the Council's investment in modern, accessible pool provision at SPLASH and Billingham Forum and confirmation that the School cannot fund the running costs of the Abbey Hill Pool, the facility be closed.
4. The progress with respect to Asset Transfer and the CAT Scheme being developed by Catalyst.
5. Following receipt of expressions of interest in the properties at 98 Dovecot Street and Primrose Hill Community Centres, these properties now be advertised for disposal or asset transfer in line with the agreed strategy.

AGREED that the recommendations be supported.

8 Statutory Forward Plan - October 2012

Members were presented with the Statutory Forward Plan from 1st October 2012 to 31st January 2013.

AGREED that the Forward Plan be noted.

9 Report on Chairs Update

Members were provided with an update, from each Select Committee's Chair, on current and future review topics.

AGREED that the Chairs' updates be noted.

