

Place Select Committee

A meeting of Place Select Committee was held on Monday, 12th March, 2018.

Present: Cllr Cllr Derrick Brown (Chair), Cllr Sonia Bailey (Vice-Chair), Cllr Paul Weston (sub for Cllr Chris Barlow), Cllr Evaline Cunningham, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Louise Baldock, Cllr Bill Woodhead MBE, Cllr Ken Dixon

Officers: Steven Hume (CHS); Jamie Stephenson, Faye Johnson, Craig Willows, Jayne Robins, Andrew Ruddock (CS); Judy Trainer, Gary Woods, Annette Sotheby (DCE)

Also in attendance: Cllr Steve Nelson (Cabinet Member)

Apologies: Cllr Chris Barlow, Cllr Maurice Perry

PLA 67/17 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

PLA 68/17 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from Members.

PLA 69/17 Minutes of the Meetings Held on 11th December 2017 and 15th January 2018

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meetings held on 11th December 2017 and 15th January 2018.

Members referred to the progress updates provided at the December 2017 meeting, specifically the Fire Safety of High-Rise Residential Buildings review. A number of comments and questions were noted, and it was queried if any answers had been provided in relation to these – Scrutiny Officer to follow this up with the review’s Link Officer, and forward responses to Members as soon as available.

AGREED that the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

PLA 70/17 Scrutiny Review of Disabled Parking (Task & Finish)

Consideration was given to the draft final report which included the following recommendations:-

- To introduce prosecution for fraudulent use of blue badges (on the basis of the Council recouping the costs incurred).
- An audit of the location and suitability of disabled bays (for both wheelchair and non-wheelchair users) be conducted.
- Prior to any new car parks being developed by the Authority in the future, Disabled Motoring UK and/or other Disability Advisory Groups be consulted to ensure we are meeting the needs for those who are using them.

Members requested that appropriate training for Civic Enforcement Officers be carried out in order to facilitate the introduction of a prosecution process, and

that this should be acknowledged in the recommendation.

AGREED - that the final report be approved for submission to Cabinet, subject to a slight amendment to recommendation 1 reflecting the need for appropriate training for Civic Enforcement Officers be carried out in order to facilitate the introduction of a prosecution process.

PLA 71/17 Action Plan for Agreed Recommendations - Review of Asylum Seeker Services

Members were presented with the Action Plan setting out how the agreed recommendations from the Review of Asylum Seeker Services will be implemented and target dates for completion.

- Members asked for clarity around the reference to 'Hate Champions' as this term may cause confusion – it was noted that this will not be an official title and that the role is more likely to be referred to as 'Anti-Hate Crime Champions'.
- Committee were informed that the post-2019 asylum contracts were currently out for tender, with a major change being separate contracts for support and transition. It was hoped that the new contracts would address room-sharing concerns, but it does not look like they will.

AGREED that the Action Plan be approved.

PLA 72/17 Scrutiny Review of Management of Memorials

Consideration was given to the revised Scope and Project Plan for the Review of Management of Memorials, which had been amended following concerns raised by Members over the original content presented at the last Committee meeting in February 2018. The proposal was now for the review to be a health-check of current policy which will seek to:

- Understand the current policy around grave personalisation, maintenance of cemeteries and access requirements for such sites.
- Ascertain how the Council communicates with bereaved families in terms of current policy, and how it manages complaints.
- Establish how effective the current policy is and determine if any amendments are required.

Comments/questions raised by Members, including any responses, were recorded as follows:

- Is this Council securing enough land for cemeteries? No problem in the north of the Borough, though less available space in Stockton. Work is ongoing in terms of identifying future space for cemeteries.
- Is the Council still committed to woodland cemeteries? This will form part of the scoping exercise when considering alternative burial space.
- Threats to cemeteries staff – need to consider this issue as part of the review.

AGREED that the Draft Scope and Project Plan of the review be approved.

PLA Work Programme 2017-2018

73/17

Next meeting to be held on 9th April 2018.

AGREED – that the work programme be noted.

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Chair's Update

The Chair had nothing further to report.