

Place Select Committee

A meeting of Place Select Committee was held on Monday, 14th May, 2018.

Present: Cllr Derrick Brown (Chairman), Cllr Sonia Bailey, Cllr Louise Baldock, Cllr Evaline Cunningham, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Paul Weston, Cllr Bill Woodhead MBE

Officers: Jamie Stephenson, Jane Edmends (EGDS); Craig Willows, Jayne Robins (CS); Gary Woods, Kirsty Wannop (DCE).

Also in attendance:

Apologies: Cllr Ken Dixon

PLA 7/18 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

PLA 8/18 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Derrick Brown declared a personal non prejudicial interest in respect of the agenda item entitled - Scrutiny Review of Consolidation of Thirteen Housing Group as he had family members who were residents in Thirteen Housing Group houses.

Councillor Paul Weston declared a personal, prejudicial interest in respect of the same item - Scrutiny Review of Consolidation of Thirteen Housing Group as he was currently an employee of Thirteen Housing Group. He therefore left the meeting whilst this item was being considered.

PLA 9/18 Minutes of the Meetings Held on 12th February and 12th March 2018 (to follow)

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meetings held on 12th February and 12th March 2018.

AGREED that the minutes of the meetings held on 12th February and 12th March 2018 be approved as a correct record.

PLA 10/18 Action Plan for Agreed Recommendations - Review of Disabled Parking (Task & Finish)

Members were presented with the Action Plan setting out how the agreed recommendations from the Review of Disabled Parking (Task & Finish) will be implemented and target dates for completion.

AGREED that the Action Plan be approved.

PLA 11/18 Scrutiny Review of Management of Memorials

The Committee reviewed the summary of evidence and discussed draft recommendations.

The main issues discussed were noted as follows:

- Reliant on Funeral Directors and Memorial Masons to get information out to families, but are trying to work more with Registrars and the Bereavement Service at North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust.
- Widening the choice of colour for the grave collars in the Durham Road Cemetery extension was suggested. Officers reported that, although the vast majority of families opt for grey/granite, alternative options can be explored.
- In terms of the new concept for the extension to Durham Road Cemetery, concerns were expressed around the limited time for families to make a decision on which grave option they preferred, and the need for them to understand that this is a final decision that cannot be reversed – this may be difficult for people so soon after the loss of a loved one. Officers re-iterated the proposed involvement of the Council's Registration Team who would speak to families before they met with the Funeral Director, as well a marketing/promotion drive to raise awareness of these new options which would enable people to think about what they would want before a death occurs.
- Woodland burial provision – work ongoing to look at alternative burial space.

AGREED that the information be noted and that the draft recommendations be included in the draft final report for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.

**PLA
12/18**

Scrutiny Review of Consolidation of Thirteen Housing Group

Consideration was given to the Scope and Project Plan of the Scrutiny Review of Consolidation of Thirteen Housing Group. A background paper supplementing the scoping document was also considered which highlighted some of the key aspects of this review.

The main issues / services that would be covered by the review included:

Thirteen Housing Group

- Rationale for consolidation and issues / challenges since July 2017.
- Customer engagement / satisfaction.
- Strategic and operational engagement with SBC (including Councillors).
- Investment programme (property and neighbourhood improvement, community, new builds).

Local Authority

- Thirteen's engagement with the Council (strategic / operational).
- Council's social (including health and well-being), economic and regeneration priorities, and how Thirteen's investment programme support this.

Committee discussions were noted as follows:

- Important that this review hears the voice of tenants in some way.
- Concern that, from a Member engagement perspective, Thirteen appear less receptive following consolidation – are they overstretched? Mixed experiences in terms of their 'Our Commitment' principles – some (new) Members have received little or no contact from Thirteen since they became Councillors, whereas other Members seem to have a better relationship.
- Thirteen have undergone a significant staffing re-structure recently – need to

understand the implications of this.

•Useful to include a site visit/s to witness some of Thirteen's investment in the Borough.

AGREED that the draft scope and project plan of the review be approved.

**PLA
13/18** **Work Programme 2018-2019**

Consideration was given to work programme. The next meeting will be held on 11th June 2018.

Members felt it would be useful if the remaining reviews scheduled for 2018-2019 were listed on future work programmes as a reminder of what the Committee will be considering in the months ahead – agreed that this will be included for future meetings.

AGREED that:-

1. The work programme be noted.
2. Future work programmes include all remaining topics that the Committee are scheduled to review in the current year.

**PLA
14/18** **Chair's Update**

The Chair had nothing further to report.