

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MONDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2009 AT 4.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK
PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors

Williams, Mrs. P. (Chairman)
Bernard, Mrs. A.F. (Vice-Chairman)

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| Ansell, Mrs. P. | Jones, R. |
| Beddows, J. | Mawle, D.L. |
| Bernard, J.D. | Mitchell. C. |
| Collis, C. | Morgan, C.W.J. |
| Davis, Mrs. M.A. | Thomas, D. |
| Green, M.R. | |

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M.J. Holder, and Mrs. L.J. Pearce, and Mr. S. Brown, Chief Executive.)

25. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restrictions on Voting by Members

None

26. Minutes

Councillor Thomas advised that the Cannock Park Golf Course had not, in fact, formed part of the 2008-09 Performance Report.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 September, 2009 be approved as a correct record.

27. Place Survey 2008-09 Analysis Report Update

In the absence of the Chief Executive, the Head of Policy and Performance advised that a feedback report of actions taken to address the findings of the Place Survey would be taken to Cabinet in January, 2010..

28. Teenage Pregnancy Update Report

Consideration was given to a report of the Community Partnerships Officer (Enclosure 5.1 – 5.5 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

Members expressed concern at the way in which data was presented; in particular the attribution of teenage pregnancies to the schools where the mothers undertook their last year of statutory education.

Furthermore, it was noted that the update did not contain any meaningful evaluation as to the effectiveness, or otherwise, of various partners' sex education, relationship education and personal sexual health education programmes. Accordingly, the Scrutiny Committee had asked the Community Partnerships Officer to examine ways in which the data could be reported more meaningfully, and that evaluation of the programmes should begin as soon as possible.

RESOLVED:

That the Community Partnerships Officer should take steps to:

- (A) Establish if the required data can be presented in a different manner in order that it gives a clearer picture of the breakdown by groups, as well as across schools and, particularly, that it does not reflect unfairly on schools where the teenage mothers no longer attend.
- (B) Ensure that evaluation of the effectiveness of the various partners' programmes be undertaken as a matter of urgency.
- (C) Report back to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee following evaluation.

29. Prince of Wales Theatre

The Chairman commented that she was disappointed to note that no Members, other than herself, had submitted specific questions to the Head of Leisure Services, as had been agreed at the last meeting.

The Chairman invited Members to discuss any particular concerns they had arising from the report. As a result, there was a wide ranging discussion covering a number of topics including levels of subsidy; ticket pricing; marketing of venue and shows; limitations imposed by the original design of the building; and whether or not the PoW bars and catering service had previously received a subsidy from LA Catering. The Chairman advised Members that she had gained a personal insight into the operation of the Prince of Wales Theatre following a visit to the premises, and recommended that her fellow Scrutiny Committee members do the same.

RESOLVED:

- (A) To establish a Prince of Wales Scrutiny Working Group comprised of 7 Members appointed in accordance with the political balance calculation (i.e. 3 x Liberal Democrat; 2 x Conservative; 2 x Labour). The Group Leaders would be requested to advise the Democratic Services Manager of their nominations to sit on the Working Group.

- (B) The Working Group would report back, in due course, to the Scrutiny Committee. However, because of the wide range of issues of concern, the Working Group would meet initially to determine the priority areas of investigation.
- (C) In recognition of the potential resource implications for Leisure and Major Projects staff, and, particularly, in order not to compromise the Sport England funding bid that was a current priority, it was agreed that it would be impractical to consider convening the Working Group before February, 2010.

30. Quarter 2 Performance and Finance Report

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive (Enclosure 8.1 – 8.174 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Policy and Performance Management advised Members of the reasoning behind the proposal to revise certain of the targets for actions / indicators as detailed in paragraph 2.6 of the report recommendations, as the Performance Management Framework acknowledges that there may be circumstances within which agreed targets may need to be revised, and that where such circumstances arise, Cabinet are required to consult the Scrutiny Committee on the proposed revisions.

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The performance outturn for Quarter 2 as detailed at Annexes 2a, 3a, 4a, 5a and 6a; 7a be noted.
- (B) The financial outturn for Quarter 2 as detailed at Annex 2c, 3c, 4c, 5c, 6b and 7c be noted.
- (C) The exception reports (Annexes 2b, 3b, 4b, 5b and 7b) (there were no exception reports for Environmental Sustainability) detailing the actions taken and actions proposed to be taken by Lead Officers for any action or performance indicator classified as Red or Amber be noted.
- (D) It did not at that time wish to further review and / or scrutinise the performance of the Council and/or its Local Strategic Partners in respect of the data provided for the Quarter 2 report.
- (E) In accordance with paragraph 8.6 of the Scrutiny Terms of Reference, the following proposed changes to the targets for actions / indicators be agreed:

Children, Young People and Families

- 2b(vi) Cannock Park Replacement Fencing 2009-10 – Revised target date Quarter 2 2010-11

Healthier Communities, Housing and Older People:

- 3b(iv) Determination of a long-term sustainable strategy for the Council's housing stock March 2010 – Revised target date 2010-11

Access to Education, Skills and Employment

- 4b(i) Reduce youth unemployment to County average by 2010 – Target to be determined at end of quarter four
- 4b(ii) Reduce unemployment to County average by 2010– Target to be determined at end of quarter four
- 4b(v) Co-ordinate additional research work through the LSP – Action to be removed

Corporate Improvement

- 7b(ii) VFM 2009-10– Revised target date 2010-11
- 7b(iv) To develop a generic governance framework for partnerships October 2009 - Revised target date March 2010
- 7b(v) Performance Management System 2009-10 - Revised target date 2010-11 (dependant on funding)
- 7b(vi) Procurement October 2009 - Revised target date December 2009
- 7b(viii) Risk Management October 2009- Target date for initial work on corporate inspections now November 2009
- 7b(x) Communications Plan for Civil Contingencies October 2009 - Revised target date January 2010
- 7b(xiii) Develop a workforce strategy September 09 - Date to be determined once the position on shared services known.

- (F) While accepting the revised targets, Scrutiny Committee wished to bring to Cabinet's attention its concerns that, in respect of the changes to corporate improvement targets / actions, under performance may have possible negative implications for future external inspections.
- (G) The inclusion of information identifying 17 indicators / actions for which no rating had been provided be noted.

31. School Visits

Councillor Mawle gave a short verbal update on recent visits he had undertaken with the Chairman to Blake Valley Technology College and Hagley Park Sports College.

It was reported that, following additional resources being made available to address poor exam results, Blake Valley's percentage of pupils attaining 5 GCSE's at grades A* to C including English and Mathematics had more than doubled from 17% in 2008 to 35% in 2009. Although results for Hagley Park for 2009 were not available at the time of the visit, the Headmaster had anticipated that they would be similar to the previous year at around 34% of pupils attaining 5 or more GCSE's at grade A* to C including English and Mathematics.

The meeting closed at 6.40 pm.

CHAIRMAN