

## **COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 7 JUNE 2019**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Kevin Tait (Chair)  
Councillor Oscar Gomez Reaney (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Lilian Deighton  
Councillor Roger Hall

Councillor Mark Foster

#### **Also Present:**

M Broughton      Joint Head Of Service - Partnerships & Transformation (for Minute No 37b only)  
T Buckland      Senior Engineer (for Minute No 37a only)  
T Burdett      Partnership Development Officer (for Minute No 37b only)  
N Calver      Governance Manager  
S Lee      Strategic Partnership Co-ordinator (for Minute No 37b only)  
C Mills      Leisure Operations Manager (for Minute No 37b only)  
S Veerman      Overview and Scrutiny Manager  
V Vernon      Senior Engineer (for Minute No 37a only)

#### **33      Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors D Hancock and E A Hill.

#### **34      Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared at this meeting.

#### **35      Minutes of Last Meeting**

As none of the Members present had been appointed to the Committee for the previous meeting none were able to confirm the accuracy of content, however, the consensus was to note the content for information and resolved for it to be approved.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 1 March 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **36      Scrutiny Review**

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager outlined the role and remit of Scrutiny and enabled a discussion around effective Scrutiny and selecting Scrutiny Review topics. She further defined her role in supporting the Committees and gave a presentation to Members, which included Principles of an Effective Scrutiny Work Programme, the Methodology used to consider topics for Scrutiny Reviews and the different types of Reviews that could take place.

Members also gave consideration to the Terms of Reference for the Committee and noted how this might work in practice, including Committee crossover. The Overview and Scrutiny Manager advised that officers would regularly be requested to attend meetings of the Committee and offered advice to Members on this process as well as effective questioning and the key things they should be considering. Members were very much in agreement with the advice offered around respect for Officers attending and the confidentiality of the views expressed during the meeting.

In considering examples of previous Reviews, the Overview and Scrutiny Manager pledged to provide Members with a list of these reviews, along with some further information around conducting spotlight reviews. It was noted that issues could be looked at through items on the agenda or by conducting a scrutiny review. Issues could also be considered by more than one Scrutiny Committee when they cut across Committee remits.

Scrutiny Committees could call witnesses to attend Scrutiny meetings and gather evidence. It was noted that Scrutiny had no decision making powers but could seek to influence by undertaking evidence based work.

**RESOLVED** – That the Communities Scrutiny Committee notes the update on the Remit of the Committee from the Overview and Scrutiny Manager.

(Overview and Scrutiny Manager)

### **37 Selection of Scrutiny Review Topic**

The Committee gave consideration to two topics presented for review by the Committee, with a view to selecting one as their main topic for the forthcoming municipal year. As a result of the meeting of Annual Council held on 20 May 2019 where a Motion was put in regard to a district wide parking review, the Scrutiny Committee had been asked to consider this as one of their topics for the forthcoming year.

#### **(a) Parking Review**

The Committee welcomed Tracy Buckland and Victoria Vernon from the Engineering Section to discuss known parking issues within the District.

It was noted that Council was mainly aware of parking issues within Council run car parks and housing estates managed by Rykneld Homes. They were aware of some on-street parking issues where damage to verges was taking place. However, it was noted that this was mostly a Derbyshire County Council matter. The issues made known to Members included:-

- Over-running (refuse vehicles);
- Parking on verges (DCC matter);
- Parking on open spaces;
- Lack of on-street space;
- Lack of off-street space; and
- Parking areas.

Over the years, the Team had looked at various schemes to address a number of the apparent issues and had put recommendations and bids for money to Rykneld to implement parking solutions within the estates managed on behalf of the Council.

Members noted that no recommendations had been approved by Rykneld Homes within the last year. Recommendations for improvement works at Holmesfield and Pilsley were made through the Asset Management Group and funded through the HRA. The Overview and Scrutiny Manager undertook to provide the Committee with a copy of the decisions taken.

Members reported that they had witnessed a lot of the issues highlighted around lack of on-street space. Some of the solutions and constraints were discussed and the following points were noted:-

- The car park at Eckington Pool was being extended;
- Some parking areas set aside for residents only were being used by non-residents (not enforceable);
- The budget for remedial works was controlled by Rykneld Homes;
- CPOs would be needed to procure land for parking if no NEDDC owned land was available;
- Extra bays on NEDDC owned land were the cheapest solution up to £2,000 per space;
- Putting in driveways on properties costs between £3,000 and £4,000;
- Allocated spaces – not a viable option as can be identified as Right to Buy;
- Within 2018/19 no additional spaces were created.

Members were informed that a parking review took place in Dronfield in 2013, to which the response was minimal and did not result in many changes. It was felt that social media as a tool for engaging with the public may help to remove barriers to communications with local residents and the review may be reconsidered.

Enforcement of parking issues was contracted to Derbyshire County Council. Members were advised that the contract was intended to be cost neutral but currently runs at a financial deficit.

Maintenance of parking areas was discussed and Members were advised that a competitive tender took place each year which appointed a local supplier for delivering maintenance on behalf of the authority. Any insurance claims made in relation to parking spaces were paid for from Council budgets, however, Rykneld Homes held the budget for delivering that maintenance.

Members thanked both the Senior Engineers for attending the meeting and for their honest accounts.

(b) Health and Well Being/Child Obesity

The Committee welcomed Matt Broughton, Steve Lee, Chris Mills and Tris Burdett to the meeting to update Members on the current national position in regard to child obesity and the facilities and services the Council ran (including the Partnerships to which it belonged) that promoted healthy activities for young people.

In opening the discussions, Councillor M Foster highlighted that national figures in relation to child obesity had recently sky rocketed with evidence emerging of the correlation between high levels of child obesity and more deprived areas of the country.

The District Council had limited methods to help tackle this national issue, however, it could influence the siting of take-away restaurants, including their proximity to schools, and the leisure services available to children within the Council's run leisure facilities. It was noted that the School Meals Programme was run by Derbyshire County Council.

Officers advised that 12.8% of reception children that took part in a recent survey were classed as obese. It was noted, however, that a number of children were not permitted to be measured to provide this national statistic, and therefore there was reason to believe that the percentage was potentially higher than that stated.

Chris Mills, the Leisure Operations Manager, advised that the Council was affiliated with a number of bodies who worked towards targets to reduce child obesity by 2030. This was not a target that the Council could manage on their own and were a contributing factor.

The Council owned leisure facilities at Sharley Park Leisure Centre, Clay Cross, Eckington Pool & Fitness Centre and the Dronfield Sports Centre and offered under 5s free swimming at all venues. It was approximated that 15,000 free swimming sessions were taken advantage of within the previous municipal year. It was also noted that any young persons who took part in swimming lessons was able to swim free during casual public sessions at any of the leisure centres, over two thousand children were currently registered for swimming lessons within North East Derbyshire. With three large swimming pools North East Derbyshire was able to host the Northern County Swim Squad who would train in North East Derbyshire's facilities along with our three competitive clubs (Rynkeld, Dronfield Dolphins and Eckington Swimming Club).

The Leisure Operations Manager also updated Members in relation to the Leisure Pass Scheme which offered reduced rates for residents with disabilities or those claiming benefits. Members were also reminded that the concessions offered within the leisure services were influenced and set by Members as part of the annual fees and charges review. The concession scheme could be reviewed/utilised to target health priorities such as child obesity but this needs consideration against the potential loss of income.

Nutrition was an area which could be developed within the leisure offer. There has been some nutrition/healthy eating outreach delivery in communities, generally funded with Public Health resource but no co-ordinated link with leisure facilities.

More recently Derbyshire County Council had withdrawn funding for the 5/60 Scheme promoting five a day nutrition with 60 minutes of exercise. Despite the withdrawal of funding the Council continue to provide the scheme in 19 schools within North East Derbyshire funded by NEDDC.

The Committee were advised that the Council had just developed the PALS Scheme (physical activity and lifestyle support) and recruitment was still taking place to support delivery of this programme. The programme is a behaviour change approach engaging with long-term inactive people and through partners, addressing personal barriers to physical activity. The scheme offers direct support to overcome barriers to physical activity and assist the individual/families to undertake physical activity. The pilot scheme is in Clay Cross due to very low activity levels and considerable health, deprivation and has strategic support from Sport England, Active Derbyshire and Public Health.

Officers further advised that the Council was currently in partnership with Derbyshire County Council on the Healthy North East Partnership, with the current focus being older people. However, the Headteacher of Sharley Park School was also appointed to that Partnership, looking at initiatives to change lifestyles of families.

Whilst the Council was actively working with clinical partners to deliver the priorities within the older persons sector, however, the authority was working in partnership with DCC Public Health to address to get child obesity on the local agenda.

The current Health and Well Being Strategy 2015-19 was coming to an end and there were no plans for a review or reproduction of the strategy. The focus of the strategy has been diamond communities and silver communities with childhood obesity not identified as a priority area compared to some other issues based on the statistics available. However, in setting the strategic priorities in the future, members could prioritise childhood obesity either in an updated Health and Well Being Strategy, or any other strategy document under development such as the Council Plan.

When questioned about Partnerships it was advised that a Tackling Obesity Group was being led by DCC Public Health and the Committee requested to receive the Minutes of the previous two meetings and all Minutes from this Group going forward.

In addition to facilities (formal activity) and health interventions, further areas of influence for the Authority is the development of its open spaces trail networks and parks (e.g. developing a 'park run' type event at The Avenue utilising Council Office facilities and new trails around the site). Derbyshire County Council had also ran a scheme in the past such as the

Play Strategy which could bring investment into local play areas.

A conversation commenced in regard to the price of swimming lessons and it was confirmed that a junior swim cost £2.45, concessions £1.70 and under 5s swam for free. It was highlighted by Officers that cost was not the barrier/solution to inactivity. The example used was a previous Labour Government initiative (2009) to provide free swimming for under 16s and over 60s in England. The impact of swimming numbers in the District was negligible and resulted in a loss of income as regular swimmers were able to access the pool for free. It was considered that free swimming under the previous Labour Government provide that little difference was made by offering this as a free service and that price was not always a barrier to attending leisure facilities.

On consideration of both topics presented to the Committee, Members were minded to accept the parking review as their first review topic for the 2019/20 municipal year considering the indication from Council that this was a priority area for review. However, the Committee felt that consideration of child obesity was also a priority for the District and wished to keep this review on the radar and defer it until later in the municipal year if time was available.

RESOLVED – That a review in to parking facilities within the District be commenced.

(Overview and Scrutiny Manager)

### **38 Scrutiny Work Programme**

The Committee considered its draft Work Programme for 2019/20. In light of the agreement to commence a review in to parking and schedule a review in to child obesity the Work Plan would be amended to accommodate this. Further areas for consideration were identified as One Public Estate, Licensing Policies and Manor Farm.

In connection with the Scrutiny Review, as a result of the discussions, it was agreed that feedback would be sought from Eckington Parish Council, Dronfield Parish Council, Killamarsh Parish Council, Clay Cross Parish Council and Derbyshire Constabulary on parking issues within those areas. Councillor Cupit would also be asked whether she would share the results of a survey she undertook in regard to parking within her constituent area.

RESOLVED – That the Communities Scrutiny Committee draft Work Programme for 2019/20 be agreed as amended.

(Overview & Scrutiny Manager)

### **39 List of Key Decisions**

The Committee considered Issue No 85 of the List of Key Decisions which set out the major decisions being taken over the next few months.

RESOLVED – That the List of Key Decisions, Issue No 85, be noted.

**40 Additional Urgent Items (if any)**

There were no urgent items to be discussed at this meeting.

**41 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee would take place on Friday, 12 July 2019 at 10.00 am in Chamber 1. Members were asked to note that a Scrutiny Workshop would take place on Wednesday, 12 June 2019 at 2.00 pm.

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