

**Minutes of the Meeting of the COMMUNITY AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE held  
on 9 October 2017**

---

**PRESENT -**

Councillor Barry Nash (Chairman); Councillor Tony Axelrod (Vice-Chairman);  
Councillors Rekha Bansil, Kate Chinn, Hannah Dalton, Jane Race,  
Humphrey Reynolds, Jean Steer, Clive Woodbridge and Tella Wormington

In Attendance:

Absent:

Officers present: Rod Brown (Head of Housing and Community), Ian Dyer (Head of Operational Services), Joy Stevens (Head of Customer Services and Business Support), Richard Chevalier (Parking Manager), Jan Strivens (Accountant), Teresa Wingfield (Senior Accountant) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Officer)

**11 QUESTION TIME**

The Committee received one written question and one verbal question from a member of the public. These are set out below:

**Question from Mr Michael Ware**

What is the Council's reaction to a proposal from myself and my partners to finance and build a community cafe in Alexandra Park. Our thinking is as follows:

- The park is heavily used by young children, bowlers, footballers, cricket players and basketball players particularly during the summer months.
- There are no amenities for refreshments or toilets.
- There is spare land adjacent to the playground where we could site a single storey community cafe serving light refreshments and containing a toilet.
- The cafe would lease this land from the Council
- We would finance and construct a timber framed building designed to add to the aesthetic of the park whilst being environmentally friendly and incorporating renewable energy technologies.

- Similar cafes operate successfully in the parks in neighbouring parks and boroughs.
- We are currently meeting architects and building providers and can make drawings available to you.
- The cafe would be open during day and early even in the summer months and at the weekends in the winter.
- It would act as a community hub for the neighbourhood with a small meeting room, noticeboard, wifi etc.
- The cafe would be owned and managed by myself and my fellow shareholders.
- We would raise the funding as far as possible from the local community utilising the Government's Enterprise initiative Scheme (EIS) which confers significant tax advantages to investors in schemes such as these.
- There would be a net income to the Council from the lease and we would use a share of the profits to enhance the other facilities in the park.

### **Response to question**

Dear Mr Ware

We are grateful for the details of your proposal to develop a community café within Alexandra Park.

The Council has already been looking at this type of proposal, including the café in Bourne Hall (the operation of which we have successfully taken over in recent months), as well as the new privately managed café in Auriol Park. A review of these operations, including the costs and benefits of extending similar enterprises to other areas within the Borough will be completed by June 2018. We will then be in a position to consider the best way forward for future café sites across the Borough.

We want to ensure that should it be decided to extend the café provision, that any new enterprise is successful and able to provide our residents with a quality service. You will appreciate therefore that it is vital that we fully understand and assess the commercial opportunities and viability of both private and Council managed facilities within our parks and venues, before making recommendations and moving forward.

### **Verbal question**

The Committee received one verbal question from Mr Michael Ware regarding the review of café operations being undertaken by the Council. The Chairman informed Mr Ware that he would receive a written response regarding this matter following the meeting.

## 12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by Councillors in items on this agenda.

## 13 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 June 2017 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## 14 SHOPMOBILITY

The Committee received a report presenting the findings of a review of the Shopmobility service and asking whether it wished to continue to operate it.

The following matters were considered:

**Support for the service.** Members of the Committee expressed their support for the shopmobility service, noting that it was valued by a number of residents. The Committee also noted that the Council was one of only a few in Surrey which still provided such a service.

**Release of repairs and renewals funds into the general fund.** The Committee considered the recommendation that £12,000 be moved from the repairs and renewals fund into the general fund. It was noted that the funds would not be transferred to the Committee's direct budget, but that they would be marked as having come from the Committee.

**Insurance claim following damage to shopmobility vehicles by a car accident.** The Committee was informed that officers were pursuing an insurance claim for the recent accident which had damaged several shopmobility vehicles. It was noted that officers would also examine the terms of the council's insurance policy to ensure that it continued to provide adequate cover for the future.

Following consideration, the Committee agreed:

- (1) To continue running the Shopmobility Service.
- (2) To release funds from the repairs and renewals fund, estimated to be a maximum of £8,500, to purchase six new mobility scooters.
- (3) To release £12,000 of the remaining repairs and renewals fund back to the Epsom & Ewell Borough Council general fund.
- (4) To reduce the amount transferred to the repairs and renewals fund from £3,000 to £1,500 per annum.

## 15 BUDGET TARGETS FOR 2018/19

The Committee received a report informing it of the Council's revenue budget targets and seeking support for changes to services.

The following matters were considered:

- **Ebbisham Centre.** The Committee noted that the ownership of the Ebbisham Centre was unlikely to change hands before January 2018.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (1) Noted the implications of the budget targets presented to the Strategy & Resources Committee.
- (2) Supported the changes to services and savings identified in section 3.3 of the report and that these be included within the budget presented to this Committee in January 2018.
- (3) Supported in principle the future savings options as set out in 3.3 of the report for further work and inclusion in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- (4) Considered how additional savings could be generated to address the Council-wide funding gaps of £90,000 in 2018/19 as identified in section 3 of the report. No specific savings were identified.

## 16 CORPORATE PLAN: PERFORMANCE REPORT ONE 2017 TO 2018

The Committee received a report providing an update on progress against its key priority targets.

The following matters were considered:

- **Residential properties for temporary emergency accommodation.** A member of the Committee requested further information regarding the status of the action detailed on page 30 of the agenda with regard to securing two properties for temporary emergency accommodation. This was currently listed as 'Green'. The Head of Housing and Community informed the Committee that whilst no properties had yet been secured, he was confident that progress was being made, and that this status was correct.
- **Accommodation of 15 households through the private sector leasing (PSL)scheme.** A member of the Committee requested further information regarding the status of the action detailed on page 30 of the agenda with regard to accommodating 15 households through the PSL scheme. This was currently listed as 'Green'. The Head of Housing and Community informed the Committee that difficulties were being experienced in this project in relation to the willingness of banks to lend money for properties participating in the scheme. In light of this, the status of the action might change to 'Amber' in future monitoring. Officers would investigate whether the leases issued by the Council could be amended to assist with the issue. Members of the Committee suggested that if bank lending persisted as a problem, that the Local Government Association should be contacted to raise the profile of the issue.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (1) Noted the actions that had been proposed or taken where performance was currently a concern, as shown in table 3.1 of the report.

#### 17 OUTSTANDING REFERENCES

The Committee noted the outstanding references detailed in the Annexe to the report.

#### 18 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

As there were no members of the press or public present, the Committee did not pass a resolution of exclusion.

#### 19 SELF MANAGED ALLOTMENTS

The Committee received a report setting out the options for the leases of the three self-managed allotments within the Borough. The existing leases were due to end on 31 December 2017.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- (1) Agreed to offer the three self-managed sites the following options:
  - a) Option 1: to continue under a self-managed agreement as per the terms set out in section 3 of this report.
  - b) Option 2: to return 50% of all income to the council in return for the continued provision of all large maintenance and repair work.
  - c) Option 3: to return the self-managed site to the council and not grant a further lease.
- (2) Agreed that the consultation with the three self-managed sites be delegated to the Head of Operational Services to reach an agreement of their preferred option.
- (3) Agreed to remove the option for any further sites to become self-managed.

*The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.40 pm*

COUNCILLOR BARRY NASH (CHAIRMAN)