

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 18TH JULY, 2005

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND RECREATION

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider the Annual Report of the Select Committee on Culture and Recreation for 2004/05, and the proposed work programme of the Committee for 2005/06.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Article 6 of the Council's Constitution requires Select Committees to report annually to the full Council and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate.

- 2.2 The work programme for the 2004/05 municipal year which the Committee agreed at its first meeting was:

- Directorate of Urban Environment, Equality and Diversity Report and Action Plan (Scrutiny).
- Erection of statues and monuments in public places and on Council owned land (Policy Development).
- Borough Festival evaluation (scrutiny).
- Key to Leisure (Options Plus) scheme implementation (scrutiny).
- Performance reports for services within Culture and Community Services Division including:
 - Council Plan monitoring.
 - National and Local performance indicators.
 - Working group action plans (Public Hall and Playing Pitch Provision).
 - CPA and RPA action plans.
 - Implementation of committee recommendations.
- Development of the Cultural Strategy.
- Insurance arrangements for community groups using Council facilities (Scrutiny).

In agreeing this work programme the Committee chose to concentrate on a manageable number of issues, in order to properly scrutinise them effectively.

- 2.3 In addition to its original work programme the Committee also considered:
- The decision to relocate the Borough's archive service. This was done through the 'Call in' process.
 - Options for the re-provision of Brierley Hill Leisure Centre following a request from the Cabinet. This involved an additional six meetings of the Committee being planned between October 2004 and May 2005.
 - Scrutinised the approval process for events being held in borough parks.
 - The 04/05 budget proposals.
 - The draft scrutiny protocol for Select Committees.
 - The draft protocol for relationships between Members and Officers of the Council.

- 2.4 Due to the considerable additional workload created by the Brierley Hill Leisure Centre, some of the work originally planned by the committee was not completed.

These items were:

- Project and site visits
- Performance reports
- Development of the Cultural Strategy
- Insurance arrangements for community groups using Council facilities

The following explains the approach and learning of the Committee during the year:

2.5 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The Committee has continued its website and public participation. The website details the role of the Committee, its membership and workplan for meetings. It also gives the facility for people to e-mail comments. The site received 607 visits, between 1st June 2004 and 31 March 2005. Each Committee meeting has a public participation session at the start of the meeting and a protocol is in place regarding this. There was extensive public involvement in the meetings concerning Brierley Hill Leisure Centre.

There has been significant media coverage of the work of the Committee during the course of the year.

2.6 WORKING GROUPS

The Committee agreed to continue the working group looking at Public Halls.

2.7 CONCLUSIONS FOR 2004/05

Areas that we have identified for improvement next year are:

- a) Tracking of recommendations. It was agreed to improve on this, the Assistant Director of Culture and Community Services would ensure a section will be included in all performance reports which details the concerns and recommendations expressed by the committee and provides evidence to support progress in these areas.
- b) Examining performance management information to identify areas of concern which need further investigations.
- c) Starting the work of the Committee off each year with site visits to help Members understand the many and varied services provided by the Culture and Community Services Division and how they contribute to delivery of Council plan priorities.
- d) Improving the publicity of findings and recommendations through putting a clear summary of findings on the committee website.

Approaches that have been successful this year include:

- a) Discussions between the Cabinet portfolio holder and the Committee Chairman (past and present) have been beneficial in identifying key issues which the committee could consider.
- b) A third of the Committee were newly elected Members and this was an advantage for scrutiny as they were unfamiliar with the old committee system. The Members who attended the internal training session on the role and workings of Select Committees all found it beneficial.

- c) Extensive consultation with relevant groups, particularly over the Brierley Hill Leisure Centre when representatives of swimming and diving clubs were asked to contribute throughout committee meetings and not just in the public participation session.

Overall, we believe we have contributed effectively to the work of the council through our involvement in policy development and scrutiny and the publicity we have achieved.

2.8 PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2005/06

The proposed work programme for 2005/06 was considered at the first meeting of the Committee in the 2005/06 municipal year on 23rd June 2005. The Committee agreed the following subject to Council approval:

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|---------------------------------|--|
| 15 th September 2005 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comprehensive Performance Assessment, Cultural Services Inspection including the role of Culture and Recreation in delivering Council Plan objectives. (Scrutiny)• Options Plus Scheme Implementation (Scrutiny)• Cultural Strategy (Policy Development)• Insurance arrangements for community groups using Council Facilities (Scrutiny) |
| 3 rd November 2005 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2005/06 Performance Monitoring (Scrutiny)<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Sports and Recreation○ Arts, Heritage and Parks○ Himley Hall and Events |
| 12 th January 2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural Strategy (Policy Development)• Playing Pitch Strategy and Provision (Scrutiny) |
| 16 th March 2006 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draft Work plan for 2006/2007• Draft Annual report to Cabinet and Council• Urban Environment 2005/06 Equality and Diversity Annual Report Action Plan (Scrutiny)• Health and Safety Issues in Borough Parks and Nature Reserves (Scrutiny) |
| Date to be determined | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budget for 2006/07 |

The Equality and Diversity Annual Report of the Directorate of the Urban Environment was considered at the Meeting of the Committee held on 23rd June 2005.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 That the Annual Report of the Committee for 2004/05, as set out above be received.
- 3.2 That the proposed Work Programme for the Committee for 2005/06, as set out in paragraph 2.8 above be approved.

4. FINANCE

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5. LAW

- 5.1 The requirement for the Committee to make an annual report to the Council is contained in Article 6 of the Constitution.
- 5.2 The relevant statutory provisions regarding the Council's Constitution are contained in Part 11 of the Local Government Act 2000, together with Regulations, Orders and Statutory Guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- 6.1 This report complies with the Council's Equality and Diversity policy.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That the proposals in Section 3 above be considered.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Article 6 of the Council's Constitution.

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Councillor Geoff Southall, Chairman of Select Committee on Culture and Recreation