

SELECT COMMITTEE
ON REGENERATION, CULTURE AND
ADULT EDUCATION

Wednesday, 3rd November, 2010 at 6.00 pm
in Committee Room 2 at the Council House, Dudley

PRESENT:-

Councillor K Turner (Chairman)
Councillor Mottram (Vice Chairman)
Councillors Ali, Attwood, Caunt, G H Davies, J Jones, Knowles, Ms Partridge
and Mrs Rogers.

Officers

Assistant Director, Housing Strategy and Private Sector (Lead Officer to the Committee); Assistant Director Economic Regeneration, Assistant Director Culture and Leisure, Head of Planning and Head of Sport and Physical Activity (all Directorate of the Urban Environment) and Mr J Jablonski (Directorate of Law, Property and Human Resources).

Also in attendance

Councillor Stanley (Cabinet Member for Environment and Culture)

19 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs Cowell, Evans and Woodall.

20 **SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was reported that Councillors Mrs Rogers and J Jones had been appointed as substitute Members for Councillors Mrs Cowell and Woodall respectively for this meeting of the Committee only.

21 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declarations were made by Members in accordance with Members' Code of Conduct:-

- i) Councillor Ali in Agenda Item 9 – London 2012 Community Games and Schoolympics – a personal interest in that he is the Chair of St. Thomas’s Community Games Association.
 - ii) Councillor Mrs Rogers in Agenda Item 8 – Update on Dudley’s Healthy Town Programme – recreational element – a personal interest in that she is the Chairman of the Friends of Mary Stevens Park and Swinford Common.
 - iii) Councillor K Turner in Agenda Item 9 – London 2012 Community Games and Schoolympics – a personal interest in that he has been involved in initial discussions with the promotion of the Schoolympics.
 - iv) Councillor K Turner in Agenda Item 8 – Update on Dudley’s Healthy Town Programme – recreational elements – a personal interest in that he is a Director/Chairman of Groundworks Black Country mentioned in the report.
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22 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 13th September, 2010, be approved as a correct record and signed.

23 CONSIDERATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY) REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY THE PETITIONS OFFICER

No petitions had been referred to the Committee.

24 PUBLIC FORUM

No issues were raised under this Agenda Item.

25 THE BLACK COUNTRY JOINT CORE STRATEGY UPDATE

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the progress made on the Joint Core Strategy which had now reached an advance stage.

The Head of Planning in her presentation of the report updated the Committee as to the findings of the Inspector’s Report that had been received on 15th October, 2010.

Following comments regarding the areas on which the strategy focused she reported that after a three week Examination In Public in the summer of this year the Joint Core Strategy was found to be sound. There had also been discussions during the examination period on the role and appropriateness of the strategy of developing Brierley Hill as a strategic centre, the housing building targets, the employment land portfolio across the Black Country, and in the role of transport infrastructure in delivering the vision for the Black Country and the viability of the strategy as a whole. The Inspector's report noted and commended the joint working that had been undertaken between the Black Country Authorities and whole heartedly supported the strategy recognising that this was the only strategy for the Black Country.

The Inspector's report also recommended some changes to be made to the document which were minor, inconsequential and aimed at improving clarity of the message. It was noted that the report was binding on the Local Authority.

Each of the four Black Country Authorities were currently seeking approval for the Adoption of the Joint Core Strategy with Dudley's Cabinet having approved the adoption of the Joint Core Strategy on 27th October, 2010, being the first Black Country Cabinet to approve the document. It was anticipated that all approvals would be sought before the end of the year with ratification by Full Councils in the early new year.

Once the plan was adopted it would be part of the development plan upon which planning application decisions were based and would replace some parts of the Dudley Unitary Development Plan which was adopted in 2005.

Arising from the information presented Members asked a number of questions relating in particular to the robustness of the strategy in the current financial climate and the opportunity the Strategy afforded the Black Country to start seriously regenerating itself. The Officers concerned were also congratulated on a job well done in relation to the strategy.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and as reported at the meeting, on the Black Country Joint Core Strategy update, be noted.

26 UPDATE ON DUDLEY'S HEALTHY TOWN PROGRAMME – RECREATIONAL ELEMENT

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on progress made with the implementation of the Borough's "Healthy" Town Programme with particular emphasis on the recreational activity element.

Attached as Appendices to the report submitted were details of hub site developments, at Appendix A; Appendix B summarised the latest provisional programme for developments in respect of the “active travel corridors” to and from the hub sites to promote activities such as walking and cycling; Appendices C and D gave details featured in the Summer 2010 “active zone” programme and the “just enjoy” play week held over the summer holiday period at all healthy hub sites whilst Appendices E and F detailed a full programme of October half term activities and details of family fit 4 life clubs that were also being promoted at the hub sites.

Arising from a presentation given of the content of the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted by the Assistant Director Culture and Leisure members asked a number of questions relating in particular to:-

- concerns expressed in relation to cycling at Mary Stevens Park and possibly at other parks in the Borough.
- possible conflicts between activities to be carried out and restrictions contained in byelaws and, in respect of Mary Stevens Park, the terms of the Deed of Gift.
- whether the healthy hubs were attracting people who had not previously been active.
- the need for more public awareness in relation to the active travel corridors.

The Assistant Director Culture and Leisure responded to the points made and reported in particular that a Code of Conduct in relation to cycling was in the course of preparation; that the main purpose of the project was the prevention of obesity by getting people active and that there were indications that this was happening and that the activities at Mary Stevens Park would not be in contravention of byelaws and the Deed of Gift.

Arising from further consideration of the points made it was agreed that the Assistant Director Culture and Leisure would liaise with Councillors Mrs Rogers and Attwood on the matters raised in relation to Mary Stevens Park and report back to the meeting of the Committee to be held in March, 2011.

Other points as follows were then raised:-

- whether there would be systems in place to measure throughputs and analysis of the data.
- how residents of wards neighbouring the healthy hubs would be encouraged to use the facilities.

The Assistant Director Culture and Leisure reported in relation to the first point above that the University of Worcester would be undertaking measurement and evaluation of the project and that a number of mechanisms will be in place as regards measurement.

On the second point the intention was that facilities would be enjoyed by the whole of the Borough and the use of the Active Travel Corridors would facilitate this.

In relation to the Buffery/Netherton area details in respect of this area would be forwarded by the Assistant Director Culture and Leisure to Councillor Ali.

The Assistant Director Culture and Leisure also commented on the various ways in which the project would be marketed and on the role of the Rangers that had been appointed.

It was noted that of the 10 persons to be appointed, 2 to each site, 8 posts had now been filled.

Arising from queries as to how the Rangers would be utilised it was reported that the hubs had a full programme of activity and that at this initial stage there was a need to ensure that they delivered and demonstrated that the approach was working.

Arising from a request for information as to programmes and the job description of the Rangers it was agreed that the Assistant Director Culture and Leisure would arrange for such details to be e-mailed to all Members of the Committee.

In response to a question about reviewing the effectiveness of the project including its impact on neighbouring wards and schools the Assistant Director Culture and Leisure reported that in three years time a significant report would be prepared on the impact of the project.

It was also suggested that interim reports on an annual basis be submitted to meetings of this Committee.

RESOLVED

1. That the information contained in the report, Appendices A-E of the report, and as reported at the meeting, on progress made with the implementation of the Borough's "Healthy" town programme with a particular emphasis on the recreational activity element, be noted.
2. That the Assistant Director Culture and Leisure be requested to:-
 - i) Liaise with Councillors Mrs Rogers and Attwood on the matters raised in relation to Mary Stevens Park and report back to the meeting of this Committee to be held in March, 2011.

- ii) Forward to Councillor Ali details of the Active Travel Corridors in the Buffery/Netherton area.
- iii) Arrange for details of the programmes and job description of the Rangers to be e-mailed to all Members of the Committee.
- iv) Arrange for further update reports to be submitted to future meetings of this Committee in, approximately, November each year on the recreational element of Dudley's Healthy Town Programme and for submission of the full impact report to this Committee at the end of the three year project.

27 LONDON 2012 – COMMUNITY GAMES AND SCHOOLYMPICS

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on opportunities arising from engagement with London 2012 and current activities within the Dudley Borough and specific opportunities to engage with the Community Games and Schoolympics programmes.

Following an introduction by the Assistant Director Culture and Leisure and consideration of the content of the report by the Head of Sport and Physical Activity Members asked a number of questions and made queries in relation to:-

- the actual financial implications of the content of the report which it was considered needed to be clarified.
- that proposals may have a detrimental impact on existing community events such as that held in St. Thomas's Ward.
- that there was considered to be undue secrecy in relation to the People Dancing proposal for example and that there was a need for information to be supplied in relation to external sources of funding.
- whether the report was to be submitted to future meetings of Area Committees and clarification as to how communities would be supported by officers.

In response to the comments made regarding funding the Chairman reported on on-going discussions that he had been having with officers in relation to the Schoolympics proposals and the attempts that have been and were continuing to be made to meet the costs from external sources. He thanked the Head of Sport and Physical Activity in particular for the work carried out to date.

It was also clarified that the costs of using Council facilities would be met from existing budgets.

The Chairman also asked whether one or two Members present would be willing to join him to discuss further matters in relation to the Schoolympics project.

As regards existing events it was considered that these could become an integral part of the proposed arrangements with school children between the ages of 4-18 also being involved in a number of associated activities.

Regarding sources of funding it was reported that the whole London 2012 project was constantly changing and that an Officer group met quarterly to structure the programme of activities. Regarding the St. Thomas's Community Games these, it was reported, were a model to emulate and that such games were about what local people wished to do.

In response to a query regarding officer support to assist Friends of Parks bids it was indicated that such support would be available.

RESOLVED

1. That the content of the report on the opportunities for involvement in London 2012 games related activities be noted.
2. That the development of Schoolympics and the Olympic Style Schools Sports Competition be endorsed and that the clarification given at the meeting in relation to the financing of this project be noted.
3. That the provision of Community Games Events throughout the Borough be supported.

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the results and recommendations from the National Facilities Enquiry into the quality, accessibility and sustainability of community sport and recreation facilities and on a consideration of their implications and application within Dudley Borough.,

Arising from an initial introduction of the report by the Assistant Director Culture and Leisure the Head of Sport and Physical Activity presented in particular paragraphs 9-13 of the report submitted being a commentary on recommendations I to V of the enquiry set out in paragraph 6 of the report submitted.

Arising from the presentation given Members asked a number of questions and made queries in particular relating to comments made in paragraph 9 of the report submitted in respect of the recommendation that Local Authorities must not be afraid to rationalise facilities where they are no longer fit for purpose or located in the wrong place with particular regard to the closure of facilities in Dudley Borough and the development taking place at Bilston.

The Assistant Director Culture and Leisure responded to the points made and a further comment was made by a Member that, as with the Joint Core Strategy, discussed earlier in the meeting, there was a need for the four Black Country Authorities to work together.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, on the results and recommendations from the National Facilities Enquiry and on their implications and application within Dudley Borough, be noted.

29 QUARTERLY CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT

A report of the Lead Officer to the Committee was submitted on the performance of the Council in relation to the activities relating to the terms of reference of this Committee for the first quarter of 2010/11, April to June, 2010.

Arising from an initial presentation of the report Members commented in particular on the details shown under the heading Jobs and Prosperity – Highlights relating to progress on Major Projects. Responses to comments made were given by Officers present.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and extract from the report, submitted in relation to the activities relating to the terms of reference of this Committee for the first quarter of 2010/11, April to June, 2010, be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.03 p.m.

CHAIRMAN