

SELECT COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND RECREATION

Wednesday, 11th June 2003, at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor Tyler (Chair)
Councillors Crumpton, Kettle, Ms Nicholls, Sheppard, Simms, Southall and Waltho, together with the Assistant Director, Law & Property - Lead Officer, Assistant Director of Culture and Community Services, K. Clements, S. Piazzalunga and A. Webb (Directorate of the Urban Environment) Ms L Turner and Miss M Stephens (Directorate of Law and Property).

1 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 24th March, 2003, be approved as a correct record and signed.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Southall declared a Personal Interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, with regards to any item relating to football in view of his being a member of the Football Association.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor C Woodall.

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Councillor Sheppard queried progress on access for assistance dogs implementation. In response, the Chair confirmed that this had been pursued with the Lead Member. It was also confirmed that use of public halls for combat sports would be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee.

Further questions were raised regarding the game plan initiative. In response, Mr Webb informed the Committee that two programmes were underway in respect of this matter involving stepping to sport and the local exercise pilot.

5 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COMMITTEE

A report of the Chief Executive was submitted on the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Committee.

Mrs Reilly (Lead Officer) introduced and expanded on the report highlighting various extracts in the Constitution regarding conflicts of interest, party whips, referrals of the Select Committee and the Call in process.

After discussion it was

RESOLVED

That Article 6 of the Constitution and the Select Committee Procedure Rules, as set out in the appendices to the report submitted be received and noted.

6 PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE SELECT COMMITTEE 2003/04

A report of the Lead officer was submitted on the proposed work programme for the Select Committee in 2003/04.

Mrs Reilly (Lead Officer) explained that the programme was flexible and therefore should the Committee request them, further meetings could be added to the schedule. It was noted that a Special Meeting of the Committee had been arranged for 22nd July 2003.

In expanding upon appendix 1 of the report, Public Involvement Protocol, Councillor Tyler recommended that members of the Committee access this page on the Council's internet.

A question was raised regarding the appointment of consultants for the leisure centre review. In response, the Assistant Director of Culture and Community confirmed that the consultants were commissioned following the Executives approval of the project, in accordance with Council procedures.

A comment was made regarding the lack of financial transparency of the report submitted for item 11, Councillor Tyler informed members that should they wish to examine the financial implications of the consultancy appointment, the information could be accessed through the decision sheet process which approved their appointment.

The Assistant Director of Culture and Community Services also confirmed that with regard to development a skateboarding strategy, the main issue was deliverability of projects.

RESOLVED

That the draft work programme of the Committee as set out in the report submitted be received and noted.

7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was noted that no questions had been received from members of the public.

8 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL

A report on the draft annual report of the Committee for 2002/03 was submitted.

In introducing this item, Mrs Reilly (Lead Officer), explained that the previous Chair of the Committee, in her report to the Select Committee Chairs had indicated a list of themes for learning, rather than a list of meetings and the reports received. Mrs Reilly further explained that the report was a report from the Chair of the Committee and not the Committee itself, to the Executive and the Council.

RESOLVED

That the Annual Report of the Select Committee on Culture and Recreation be received and the work programme for 2003/04 as set out in the report submitted approved for submission to the Executive and Council.

9 BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLANS 2002/03 ARTS, PUBLIC HALLS, MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on Audit Commission Performance Indicators and Best Value performance indicators for 2002/03 for Arts, Public Halls, Museums and Galleries.

The Assistant Director of Culture and Community Services, outlined the content of the report submitted and reported on the overall performance of Dudley's Public Halls, Museums and Galleries.

He also commented that in future a more structured approach would be given to performance reporting, and that reports would be submitted on a more frequent basis if requested.

A comment was raised regarding employee survey results and how information from public consultation could be used to further monitor services.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, on the results of the Performance Indicators and Best Value Performance Indicators for 2002/03 for Arts, Public Halls, Museums and Galleries as set out in the report submitted, be noted.

10

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLANS 2002/03 SPORT AND RECREATION

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on Sport and Recreation Best Value and Association of Public Service Excellence Performance Indicators for 2002/03.

Mr Webb in expanding upon the information provided in the Service Continuous Improvement Plan Review report attached as appendix C to the report, explained that there were four themes for areas of progress - change in the culture of the organisation, strategy, investment and partnership.

A question was raised regarding the work of the key 2-leisure scheme and possible plans to expand this in conjunction with the Priority Neighbourhood initiative. In response, Mr Webb informed the Committee that a working group had been formed to scrutinise the key 2 leisure scheme and had established a pilot. The results of the pilot would be reported to the Select Committee at a future meeting.

Mr Webb also stated that work with youth out reach and connexions was taking place to develop a programme aimed at young people at risk of offending, to help engage this group in leisure.

There was also discussion on public football pitches and changing room facilities and in particular the rise in women football players and the suitability of present facilities.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted on Sport and Recreation Best Value and Association of Public Service Excellence Performance Indicators for 2002/03, as set out in the report submitted, be noted.

11

LEISURE FACILITIES PROJECT – APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the appointment of Consultants to undertake the Leisure Facilities needs assessment and options appraisal project.

The Assistant Director of Culture and Community Services, in expanding upon the report further informed the Committee that the project aimed to examine leisure facility provision within the borough, focusing on service delivery mechanisms to include; management, investment in facilities and provision of facilities.

A question was raised regarding wider consultation of the consultancy project. In response, Mr Webb explained that a range of methods for consultation would be used to capture the user opinions such as Sports Forum meeting and user and non-user surveys.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted on the appointment of Consultants for the Leisure Facilities Project and the projected timescale for its completion, as set out in the report submitted, be noted and that a Special Meeting of the Committee be held on the 22nd July 2003, to receive a progress report from the Consultants.

12

DUDLEY BOROUGH FESTIVAL

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the arrangements for the Dudley Borough Festival 2003.

A question was raised regarding the marketing of the Festival. In response, Ms Piazzalunga informed the Committee that marketing was undertaken corporately within the central marketing team as well as the individual event organisers arranging their own marketing needs.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted on the preparations made for the Borough Festival 2003, be noted.

13

SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the proposed programme of works at Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the Borough.

Mr Clements in expanding upon the report submitted explained that the criteria for the Government target of 'favourable status' had not yet been set. However, it was reported that the Turners Hill site had been determined as an 'unfavourable' area.

Mr Clements stated that in order to redevelop this site and bring it back into favourable status, a petition for grant aid was being sought from English Nature.

A question arose regarding the security of the SSSI sites in particular Fens Pool. In response Mr Clements commented that securing SSSI sites was a difficult task as most sites around the borough were open access with extensive boundaries.

RESOLVED

That the efforts being made to achieve and maintain favourable status rating for Dudley's Sites of Special Scientific Interest and the submission of grant aid applications to appropriate funding bodies in order that the remedial works identified could be undertaken, be supported.

The meeting ended at 7.30 p.m.

CHAIR