

Review Committee – 8 April 2014

Minutes of the meeting of the **Review Committee** held on 8 April 2014 when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr C J Lumley
Vice-Chairman: Cllr D J Sperring

Cllr Mrs L A Butcher
Cllr R R Dray
Cllr J D Griffin
Cllr B T Hazlewood
Cllr M Hoy

Cllr J R F Mason
Cllr T E Mountain
Cllr Mrs C E Roe
Cllr I H Ward

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs T J Capon, Mrs A V Hale, C G Seagers and Mrs M J Webster.

OFFICERS PRESENT

C McClellan - People and Policy Manager
L Bliss - Senior Corporate Communications Officer
M Harwood-White - Leisure Services Manager
P Gowers - Overview and Scrutiny Officer
M Power - Committee Administrator

79 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

80 ROCHFORD DISTRICT MATTERS

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive, which provided Members with details of the function and purpose of Rochford District Matters (RDM).

In response to questions, the following was noted:-

- A new distributor had been used for the autumn 2013 edition of RDM, with an agreement for a 100% delivery rate. The evidence available showed that this had not been achieved and therefore the Council is using Royal Mail in accordance with the terms of the contract. This arrangement will continue until the autumn 2014 edition. A new distribution contract is currently being tendered.
- Virgin Active contributes £20,000 as part of the leisure contract.
- The on-line version of RDM is published on the Rochford District Council website; this replicates the paper version and, as such, is updated

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quarterly. The on-line version can be developed further and additional ways of engaging residents discussed. Officers would advise the Committee on the ratio of surveys completed via the on-line/paper version of RDM for the recent budget survey.

- There is no requirement for the Council to publish a Council newspaper.
- The Council's Communications team has editorial responsibility for each issue of RDM, with sign-off by the Senior Management Team. There is no consultation with Councillors.
- It was suggested that articles on Member involvement in the community as community leaders should be included in RDM. It was further suggested that input from residents be sought regarding both the content and style of the publication.
- Although the format of the newspaper has been criticised as failing to engage with residents, officers felt it compares well with the publications produced by other authorities.
- As well as good news stories, RDM should also highlight problems in the District and show the solutions that are being explored.
- Efforts have been made to increase the size of the Council's Have Your Say Group, which currently consists of 450 residents.
- An internal Council service review would include a review of public engagement . The outcome of this review could be made available to the Review Committee later in the year.
- The Review Committee would undertake a further review of RDM in the new Municipal Year.

Resolved

That the contents of the report be noted.

81 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (RIPA)

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Legal, Estates & Member Services, updating Members on the use of RIPA over the past year and providing the review of the Council's RIPA policy.

Resolved

That the Council's annual usage of RIPA be noted.

Recommended to Council

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That the amendments to the Council's RIPA policy, as set out in 4.2 of the report, be approved. (HLEMS)

82 ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee considered the draft annual report on its workings, which would be submitted to Full Council.

During discussion, the following was agreed:-

- One further meeting of the project team on the review of the Council's sports provision in open spaces to include a review of the pavilions and possible improvements, would take place this year; this review would continue in 2014/15.
- A further review of Rochford District Matters would be undertaken in 2014/15.
- A review of car parking charges would take place in June 2014, which is three months after the date originally set for implementation of the increased parking charges.
- A note of what has been achieved by the Committee during the year would be included in the Annual Report in the form of a Chairman's foreword.
- The Annual Report would state that the Committee's recommendation regarding car parking charges was agreed by the Executive but subsequently overturned by Council.

Resolved

That the annual report be submitted, with the amendments detailed above, to Full Council. (HLEMS)

83 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the recommendations emanating from Members' suggestions following the Committee's meeting on 4 March 2014.

Members agreed that the final recommendation in the report should be amended as follows: the Chairman will have the authority to sign off certain reports that have been circulated to Members, but only after all Members have confirmed that they have seen the report and have no comment or issues to raise.

Resolved

- (1) That there be a training session, facilitated by an independent trainer, prior to the first meeting of the Committee in the next municipal year to

agree a Member-led work programme, how information will be provided and how the Committee will deal with the agreed work plan.

- (2) The production of reports for the Review Committee should be streamlined so that Members receive the reports in good time to allow for preparation before meetings.
- (3) That the Chairman be authorised to sign off certain reports but only after these reports have been circulated to Members of the Committee and all Members have confirmed that they have no comments or issues to raise.

84 KEY DECISION DOCUMENT

The Committee received the Key Decisions document and noted its contents.

85 WORK PLAN

Members considered and approved the Committee's Work Plan.

The following was noted:-

Review of the operation of the ICT contract – the first scoping meeting would take place this year; the review would continue in 2014/15.

Review of the Council's sports provision in open spaces to include a review of the pavilions and possible improvements – this review would be continued in 2014/15, at the request of officers to provide more time for preparation of reports.

Discussion of the Rochford District Matters item had been moved to tonight's meeting. The call-in on the Locking of Parks and Open Spaces Executive decision would take place at the meeting on 22 April 2014.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

Resolved

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the next item of business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

86 REVIEW OF MAINTENANCE OF THE BUILDINGS WITHIN THE LEISURE CONTRACT

The Committee considered the report of the Review Committee project team.

Recommended to the Executive

As set out in the exempt appendix to this Minute. (HCS)

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The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.

Chairman

Date

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