

Minutes

of the Meeting of the

Community and Corporate Organisation Policy & Scrutiny Panel

Tuesday 3 March 2020

held at the Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset.

Meeting Commenced: 2.30 pm Meeting Concluded: 4.20 pm

Councillors:

P Steve Bridger (Chairman)

P Stuart McQuillan (Vice-Chairman)

A Gill Bute

P James Clayton

P Mark Crosby

P John Ley-Morgan

P Terry Porter

P John Cato

A Peter Crew

A Wendy Griggs

P Ann Harley (substitute for Peter Crew)

P Robert Payne

P Stuart Treadaway

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

Other Councillors in attendance: Mark Canniford, Caritas Charles, Geoff Richardson

Officers in attendance: Richard Blows, Hazel Brinton, Michèle Chesterman, Gemma Dando, Paul Morris, Philippa Penney (Corporate Services), John Flannigan, Dee Mawn (Development and Environment)

CCO 20 **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Agenda item 3)**

None.

CCO 21 **Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 November 2019 (Agenda item 4.1)**

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record.

CCO 22 Matters referred by Council, the Executive, other Committees and Panels (Agenda Item 5)

Council meeting – 12 November 2019 - Times of Panel Meetings in 2020 21 - to be discussed under Agenda item 10.

CCO 23 Framework for Heritage, Arts and Culture Development (Agenda Item 6)

The Transformation Programme Manager presented the report on the Framework for Heritage, Arts and Culture – Wider Engagement. Members were informed that the strategy had been developed in response to a request from the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture & Tourism for a more structured approach to North Somerset-wide development of arts, culture and heritage. The intention was to ensure a balanced focus across the district including on the principal towns of Clevedon, Nailsea, Portishead and Weston-super-Mare. Within each town there were key opportunity sites and partners with whom North Somerset Council could work.

Members noted that between 2016 and 2019 investment of over £6.3m had been secured by North Somerset Council and its partners in a range of arts, culture and heritage initiatives. This provided a baseline for securing further investment throughout North Somerset through the partnerships in place with agencies including Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund & Historic England. The Transformation Programme Manager informed members that quarterly meetings were taking place with these bodies to discuss project ideas.

To achieve the vision of North Somerset being recognised as ‘a distinctive destination for arts, heritage and culture, serving residents and visitors alike and contributing to the economic growth of the area’ five strategic objectives were being pursued by 2030 – promoting participation and quality; supporting placemaking; growing and retaining talent; raising profile and finally building capacity.

The consultation draft was approved by the Executive on 7 January 2020. It had been developed with feedback from North Somerset Council officers involved in delivery of services and tested informally with partners and stakeholder groups. Officers were now progressing to a more formal consultation phase using the ‘eConsult’ system.

Members were made aware that as part of the wider engagement process, there was an opportunity for them to attend a briefing on the strategy and thereby provide feedback to shape the final draft and delivery plan. It had been suggested that the briefing could be offered jointly by the CCO and SPEDR Scrutiny Panels reflecting the wide-ranging impact that heritage, arts and culture had on NSC’s strategic objectives.

Members discussed opportunities to promote heritage, arts and culture in North Somerset including promoting the Strawberry Line, the Heritage

Museum, Sandford, Cadbury Iron Age Hill Fort and the Tropicana as a venue for the arts.

Concluded:

(1) that the Panel received and discussed the report on the Framework for Heritage, Arts and Culture Development – Wider Engagement;

(2) that the Panel co-sponsor an all-member briefing on the strategy with the Strategic Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration Policy & Scrutiny Panel.

CCO 24 Re-wilding (Agenda Item 7)

The Community and Environment Service Manager presented the report on Re-wilding – Progress Update.

Members were informed that following Council motion COU50 (23 July 2019 Full Council), the CCO Panel report dated 5 November 2019 and discussion with Executive Members, a consultation exercise had been carried out (11/11/19 to 24/01/20) seeking residents' views on proposed re-wilding across North Somerset amenity grass sites and seeking volunteers to support implementation and ongoing maintenance.

The consultation had been publicised using a range of approaches including meetings with each of the Town Councils to explain the purpose of re-wilding and where it was being proposed to be implemented; two meetings with Parish Councils for the same purpose (feedback of which was largely positive); informing 18 individuals and groups with an interest in nature conservation of the consultation; posting notices in all libraries; running a media campaign in the printed press and social media directing people to the consultation pages.

There had been a high response to the consultation with 494 people responding of which 78% supported re-wilding in North Somerset and 71% supported re-wilding in their neighbourhood. The focus for the re-wilding had been at sites where 'amenity grass cutting' was carried out and a target of a 25% reduction in amenity grass areas had been identified.

Members were provided with a schedule of the re-wilding phases as follows:– Phase One 5000 trees to be planted (by 1 March 2020); Phase Two - tall grass management (summer 2020); Phase Three - 20,000 trees to be planted (winter 2020/21); Phase Four - tall grass management areas created (summer 2021); Phase Five – 25,000 trees to be planted; Phase Six – tall grass management areas created (summer 2022); Phase Seven – expand re-wilding beyond amenity grass (ongoing).

Members enquired as to arrangements for after care and watering of the trees – there was provision to mulch trees and volunteers had been asked to assist in the watering of the trees. In addition, if there was a serious drought a bowser would be utilised. Members noted that long grass contributed positively towards climate emergency and were encouraged that

only weeds would be suppressed amongst the trees allowing tall grass to flourish. With regards wild flowers being included in the tall grass it was clarified that wild flowers required specific conditions. Where wild flowers occurred they would be encouraged but it was not prevalent.

Volunteers were also being sought. Four hundred individuals had volunteered to help with re-wilding and some individual sites had attracted up to 50 people. In addition to tree planting, volunteers would be involved in maintenance and after care and measuring biodiversity before and after the initiative. Members felt it was important to publicise the work of those individuals through press releases and awarding certificates of achievement to volunteers. The intention was to encourage volunteers to stay long term and join up with existing groups. Members were informed that there would be a full page spread on re-wilding in the next edition of North Somerset Life with photographs of volunteers.

Members asked about the planting of trees in urban areas. There was an acknowledgement that there were not many trees in the urban areas of North Somerset compared to other areas. Members were also reassured that the appropriate trees would be planted in the appropriate areas as concerns had been raised previously that paving slabs had been dislodged from deep-rooted trees being planted.

Concluded:

- (1) that the Panel receive and consider the consultation responses to the re-wilding proposals and its implementation;
- (2) that the Panel consider how to improve future consultations and to weigh wider community benefits of re-wilding against local concerns.
- (3) that the Panel consider the development of a re-wilding working/Steering group.

CCO 25 Your Neighbourhood Consultation and Engagement (Agenda Item 8)

The Assistant Director, Neighbourhood Management presented the report on Your Neighbourhood Consultation and Engagement. Members were informed that the 'Your Neighbourhood' consultation commenced on 13 February 2020 and would run for 12 weeks until 7 May 2020. Members were asked if they would like to receive a mid-point review which could be carried out if required. The services being consulted on included garden waste, leisure and sport centres, libraries, parks and open spaces and street cleansing.

One of the focusses of the consultation was to explore local ideas about how the council could work better with local people, local communities and other local stakeholders to make services as efficient and sustainable as possible.

Members were informed that the purpose of the consultation was twofold. Firstly, to gather quality information about local communities and their neighbourhood services, and use the information to inform the strategic, policy and delivery framework for those services. Secondly, to implement a new way of working with local councils, local communities, businesses and other stakeholders that was collaborative and which offered opportunities for people to influence what happened in their neighbourhoods.

To date there had been 1050 responses. The first face to face consultations took place at the Sovereign Centre on 2 March 2020 with 40 residents engaging. Further consultation sessions had been organised for stakeholders at Nailsea, Portishead, Clevedon, Yatton, Long Ashton, Winscombe and The Campus, Weston-super-Mare.

In relation to green waste Members were informed that the preamble to the consultation explained the decision made and provided links to frequently asked questions and information on the consultation. Questions were also included in the consultation on whether people would continue to use the green waste service. Whilst engaging with individuals during the consultation process opportunities were being taken to discuss home composting (four different types of compost box being trialled). The Your Neighbourhood consultation also included questions on how people used libraries, their role and what people would like to see in libraries and questions in relation to street cleansing.

Reference was made to the detail of the report and in particular Section 3: 'the financial challenge still remains, and in order to continue to deliver some of the local, neighbourhood services that people value, they will need to be delivered in a very different way in the future. The council will need to work more alongside communities and volunteers, generate more income, create more partnerships, make services as efficient as possible and potentially reduce some of the things that are currently delivered'.

Concluded:

(1) that the Panel receive and discuss the report on Your Neighbourhood Consultation and Engagement.

(2) that the Panel consider their role in developing and shaping the strategies and service design leading on from the consultation.

(3) the Panel to be provided with a mid-point review of consultation responses.

CCO 26 Business Planning and Performance Management 2020-21 (Agenda Item 9)

The Head of Human Resources presented the report on Business Planning and Performance Management 2020/21. The Panel received regular performance management updates from across the organisation. These updates informed Members about levels of performance and progress towards achievement of the council's ambitions as well as details of action being taken to improve performance. The council's Performance Management Framework was updated annually. The report aimed to give Members an update on the Performance Management Framework for 2020/21 and the timetable for reporting.

The Head of Human Resources explained that a key element of the Performance Management Framework was the Annual Directorate Statements (ADS) which translated the aims and priorities in the Corporate Plan into directorate level commitments. Achievement of these commitments was measured through a combination of progress against the delivery of Key Projects and achievement of Key Corporate Performance Indicators.

The Annual Directorate Statements also included key challenges and risks for each Directorate which were monitored through Risk Registers. Aligned to this was a framework for monitoring of the Council's key contracts. Taken together this progress monitoring formed the annual Performance Management Framework with reports to Directorate Leadership Teams, Corporate Leadership Team, Executive and Scrutiny Panels at least quarterly.

Concluded:

(1) that the Panel received and discussed the information provided in the report and the timetable for future reporting.

CCO 27 Time of Panel Meetings in 2020-21 (Agenda Item 10)

The Council approved the draft 2020/21 Municipal Calendar at its meeting on 12 November 2019 but in doing so invited committees and panels to determine the start time of their meetings. Meetings of this Panel were currently scheduled to start at 2.30 pm and the draft dates for 2020/21 were 16 July 2020; 12 November 2020 and 4 March 2021.

In discussing the times and dates of CYPS Panel meetings for 2020/21 it was agreed to bring forward meetings to 2.00 pm on Thursdays. Panel members also agreed to move the scheduled for Panel meeting on 16 July 2020 to 2.00 pm on Thursday 18 June in light of the fact that decisions around the 'Your Neighbourhood' consultation would take place at Council and Executive in June.

Concluded:

(1) that CYPS Panel meetings for the 2020/21 municipal be convened at 2.00 pm on Thursdays.

(2) that the CYPS Panel meeting scheduled for 2.00 pm on 16 July 2020 be Moved to 2.00 pm on Thursday 18 June 2020.

CCO 28 The Panel's Work Plan (Agenda Item 11)

Members discussed the Work Plan as presented by the Electoral Services and Scrutiny Manager.

Members' attention was drawn to upcoming Panel activity:-

- An invitation had been extended to Sue Mounstevens to meet with the Panel to discuss her role as Police and Crime Commissioner and future challenges for the incoming PCC (awaiting response).
- All Member briefing on Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) 1 April 2020.
- Joint CCO/SPEDR Briefing for Members on the draft Heritage, Arts and Culture Strategy (to be arranged)
- Re-wilding working group/long term steering group (to be arranged)
- Community Safety Scrutiny Steering Group (to be arranged)
- CCTV - the current analogue system had reached the end of its life and was increasingly difficult to manage. A tender process was underway for the implementation of a new digital system (CCTV to be placed on the agenda of the next Community Safety Scrutiny Steering Group)
- IT Scrutiny Steering Group (to be arranged)
- Planning and Waste Management Task and Finish Group – an initial conversation had taken place with the Senior Transport Planner (to be arranged).

Concluded: that the Panel's work plan be updated accordingly

Chairman
