

## **Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014 at Pippbrook, Dorking from 7.00pm to 10.40pm**

Present: Councillors Stephen Cooksey (Chairman), Lucy Botting, Clare Curran, David Draper, Paula Hancock, Raj Haque, Mary Huggins, Howard Jones, Paul Potter and Peter Stanyard.

Also present: Councillors Margaret Cooksey, James Friend, Roger Hurst, Bridget Lewis-Carr, Simon Ling, Vivienne Michael, Paul Newman, John Northcott and David Preedy.

### **47. Minutes**

The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 28<sup>th</sup> October and 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

### **48. Disclosure of Interests**

Councillor Stephen Cooksey declared a non pecuniary interest in Agenda Items 6 & 15 as he was a member of Surrey County Council.

Councillor Clare Curran declared a non pecuniary interest in Agenda Items 6 & 15 as she was a member of Surrey County Council.

Councillor Raj Haque declared a non pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 16 as he had previously supported the charity.

### **49. Flooding Update**

At the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2014 a report on the Council's response to the flooding incidents earlier in the year was considered. Included as part of this item was the Flooding Review Action Plan, that set out the work being undertaken by the Council as a result of the flooding. At that meeting it was requested that an update be brought back before the Committee later in the year detailing the progress made against the Action Plan. As a result the Committee was presented with an updated Action Plan for their information.

There were two questions raised about the provision of sandbags, as set out in the Council's new Sandbag Plan and also a question about the My Alert service being developed by the ICT and Customer Service teams. It was agreed that updates would be provided to Members on these items outside of the meeting.

On the whole, the Committee were very appreciative of the amount of work that had been completed and felt that tabled Action Plan provided a clear update on the progress that had been made. The Committee's thanks were extended to the author of the Action Plan, Ms Arabella Davies.

**Resolved:** That the Flood Review Action Plan be noted.

### **50. Service Update: Waste and Recycling**

The Committee received presentations from Josh Lambe, the Council's Recycling Manager and Jackie Lees-Howes, the Environmental Contracts Manager on the progress made against the Council's waste and recycling targets and the Surrey Litter campaign. During the course of these presentations the following points were noted:-

#### Waste and Recycling

- The report of the Waste Management Panel was published in April 2014 and looked at ways to improve the Mole Valley District Council's (MVDC) recycling rate in light of the reclassification of leaf fall as non-recyclable waste, which had caused MVDC's recycling rate to fall by 4–5%. The Panel produced a Communications Plan which set out a range of measures designed to improve MVDC's recycling rate together with a targeted improvement of 1% over the course of the next year.
- The Communications Plan produced by the Panel had also been informed by compositional analysis carried out by the Surrey Waste Partnership, which provided data on the type of residual waste being produced across the county. The study showed that Mole Valley residents were good at recycling materials such as paper, glass, metal and garden waste,

but there was room for improvement with other materials such as food waste, mixed plastics and textile recycling.

- The Communications Plan contained a range of proposals aimed to disseminate information about recycling to residents across Mole Valley. It included a mix of both audience tailored and general messages produced in a number of different formats including bin stickers, leaflets and campaigns such as the 'slim your bin' promotion.
- The recycling rate for 2013/2014 was 53.76% with a targeted 1% increase on this total for the current year. At present the recycling rate stood at 55.19%, but it was estimated that the final rate for the year would be nearer to 54%.

#### Surrey Litter Campaign

- Surrey County Council commissioned an online survey in December 2013 to gain an understanding of the public's perception of littering and dog fouling. 1749 residents responded from across the county.
- The results of the survey for Mole Valley showed that residents were most concerned with littering from bottles/cans, takeaway packaging, carrier bags and dog fouling. It was also felt that outside fast food outlets and the verges and gullies of roads were most likely to have a problem with littering. While many residents perceived the culprits of littering to be either motorists, school children or dog owners.
- As a result of the survey, Surrey County Council launched a six week Communications Plan for April/May 2014, which targeted motorists, pedestrian food waste and dog fouling. The Plan included radio adverts and tweets as well as posters, banners and bumper stickers.
- Locally, Officers had engaged with the Leatherhead Residents Association to provide advice and assistance on a number of different schemes aimed at cleaning up the local area. The Environment team had also assisted other Parish Council and Residents Associations to organise community litter picks. At the suggestion of Abinger Parish Council, a successful trial removal of litter bins had also been carried out at Abinger Hammer Green, which had reduced the amount of litter being left on the Green.

Members noted that many residents continued to be confused about what plastics could and could not be recycled and it was agreed that it was important to produce a simple and consistent message to educate residents. To this aim, a bin hangar was being produced which inform residents of Christmas bin collections, but would also advise what could and could not be recycled.

As it was highlighted that the level of food waste recycling in Mole Valley was relatively low in comparison with other recyclable materials a number of Members commented on possible difficulties with this type of recycling. In particular whether the bins were either too small or too big were suggested as possible issue, as well as the availability of food waste bags to line bins. In response to this it was confirmed that the Council had a stock of these, which could be purchased by residents from the reception at Pippbrook.

It was also requested that Members are given advanced notice of litter picks in their local area so they could ensure that they did not clash with other litter picks organised within local communities. Members were please to not the incentive offered by the Council of £1 per bag of litter collected ( up to a maximum of £30) and also the equipment being supplied to local communities by the Council.

The Chairman thanked the officers for their attendance at the Committee meeting and extended an invite for them to return at a later date.

#### **51. Family Support Programme**

The Committee received a presentation from Duane Kirkland, the Manager of the South East Surrey Family Support Team on their work with families in the local area. During the course of the presentation the following points were noted:-

- The South East Surrey Family Support team were part of a Surrey-wide programme as outlined by the Governments 'Troubled Families' agenda. The purpose of the team was to work with local families who had multiple and complex needs with a view to reducing their

dependence on and intervention from individual agencies.

- The 'Troubled Families' agenda was launched by the Prime Minister in 2011 and data collected in November 2011 had shown that an estimated £9 billion was spent annual on families who could be classed as troubled. This equated to approximately £75,000 per family per year.
- The key aims of the scheme were to get children back in school, reduce youth crime and anti-social behaviour, put adults back on the path to work and to reduce the high costs these families place on the public sector each year.
- The scheme was funded by a payment by results arrangement with the Government, although part of the money was released upfront to set up the programme. Local authorities were given £4,000 per family that they 'turned around'. In Surrey the scheme was coordinated by the County Council, who oversaw four area based teams. The approach of the scheme was to appoint a single key worker to coordinate local partners to deal with a family's problems as a whole, rather than each agency working separately.
- The South East Surrey team covered Mole Valley, Reigate and Banstead and Tandridge. The original target for the team was to turn around 277 families in these areas over the first two years of the scheme. To date 99 families had been classed as turned around and a further 95 families were going through the process, leaving a shortfall of 85 families. The South East Surrey team consisted of 15 members of staff including a Team Manager and 10 Family Support Coordinators.
- The criteria for a family to be supported by the scheme required them to consent to entering the process, to live within the local area and to meet three of the following four categories – education, work, crime & antisocial behaviour, discretionary.
- The first phase of the scheme was for an initial two year period. Phase 2 of the scheme would cover a five year period and would expand the criteria for families who could join the scheme, with a target of 1,000 families per year.

The low numbers of NHS referrals were questioned by Members, but it was advised that it was not as low as shown by statistics as they only recorded one referral per family and not where there had been multiple referrals.

The shortfall of 85 families entering the scheme was also questioned, to which it was confirmed that it had taken a while to spread information about what the Family Support Team were doing. As it was becoming better known, the amount of referrals were increasing.

The Chairman thanked Mr Kirkland for his presentation.

## **52. East Surrey Rural Transport Partnership**

The Committee received a presentation from Marcus Dodé, the Chief Executive of the East Surrey Rural Transport Partnership (ESRTP) on the activities of the Partnership in Mole Valley since his last update to the Scrutiny Committee in November 2013. During the course of the presentation the following points were noted:-

- ESRTP had been working with Mole Valley District Council for twelve years to improve transport options for residents living in the rural area of the district. ESRTP also operated in Reigate and Banstead and Tandridge.
- ESRTP operated 30 minibuses across the south east of Surrey, including the Buses 4U demand responsive services which provided door to door transport throughout the rural areas of Mole Valley. A second bus service running along the route of the former Royal Mail bus service was also in operation. Between the two services 6,300 trips were made per annum.
- The grant provided to ESRTP by the Council helped to fund a Partnership Officer, who was responsible for maintaining the funding for ESRTP projects and Training and Information Officer who provided minibus training and also produced publicity on the services offered by ESRTP.

- ES RTP worked closely with the Council's Dial-a-Ride service including paying the service to take bookings and schedule seven of ES RTP vehicles and sub-contracting three school routes.
- A new moped hire scheme called Wheels 2 Work was launched in April 2014, which offered riders either a 50cc or 125cc moped to get to work, training or college from £28 per week. All costs were covered by the scheme and at present 6 mopeds were available with plans for a further 34.
- In the past year, ES RTP had successfully bid to Big Lottery's Reaching Communities Fund for a number of schemes in Mole Valley including a commuter service to Dorking Station, a village school service, a day time demand responsive bus service, evening and Saturday youth transport and a summer Sunday Rambler bus between the National Trust properties in the District.

The number of passengers using youth transport was questioned, to which it was advised that ES RTP were actively looking to promote the service and would be happy to receive suggestions from Members as to how young people could be made aware it was available.

The Chairman thanked Mr Dodé for his presentation and invited him to return to another meeting of the Committee at a later date.

### **53. Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedures**

The Committee received the Executive report which set out the proposed Children Safeguarding policies and procedures. Members were asked for their comments and/or recommendation which would be submitted to the Executive during its consideration of the item at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

It was advised that the Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedures had been amended since it was presented to Members at the last meeting of the Scrutiny Committee to take into account comments from the Committee and a number of other sources including the Surrey Children's Safeguarding Board. It was also advised that the Policy could be updated in future when the Board produced new best practice guidance.

A number of questions were asked about staff training as a consequence of the new policy. It was confirmed that staff who frequently came into contact with children as part of their job would receive regular training whenever the policy or procedures were updated. Members agreed that it would be important for training to also be extended to other services, which may not necessarily have direct contact with children, to raise awareness with other Council officers. It was also suggested that training could also be made available for organisations such as Parish Councils.

**Recommendation to the Executive:** That the recommendations set out in the report be accepted.

### **54. Mole Valley Housing and Traveller Sites Plan: Termination of Further Work**

The Committee received the Executive report which set out the proposal to terminate work on the current Housing and Traveller Sites Plan and the start the preparation of a new Local Plan. Members were asked for their comments and/or recommendation which would be submitted to the Executive during its consideration of the item at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

During the consideration of this report the process for developing the new Local Plan was questioned, to which it was advised that the Planning Policy Working Group were meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014 to discuss the process. It was noted that there were two significant issues which may have an impact on the development of a new Local Plan; these were the proposed second runway for Gatwick Airport and the Leatherhead Plan. It was also suggested that the provision of employment land and affordable housing needed careful consideration in the new Local Plan.

Overall the Committee supported the recommendations set out in the report and agreed that they should be accepted by the Executive.

**Recommendation to the Executive:** That the recommendations set out in the report be accepted.

## **55. Dorking Cemetery**

The Committee received the Executive report which set out the proposed way forward for future cemetery provision, once Dorking Cemetery reached its capacity. Members were asked for their comments and/or recommendation which would be submitted to the Executive during its consideration of the item at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

The recommendations set out in the report generated a significant amount of discussion amongst Members at the meeting. In particular the recommendation for the Council to no longer provide burial space once Dorking Cemetery reached capacity proved to be contentious. Some Members took the view that as the process was at an early, investigatory stage it would be preferable to keep all options open and to include the possibility of the Council continuing to provide burial space itself as well as the possibility of working with a commercial operator. As a result it was agreed that it should be reported to the Executive that there was a preference amongst the Scrutiny Committee for Option 2 to be accepted.

**Resolved:** That the content of the report be noted and the comments of the Scrutiny Committee be reported to the Executive during the consideration of this item.

## **56. Motion 5/2014**

This item was deferred to be considered at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, to be held on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

## **57. Scrutiny Committee Working Programme 2014-2015**

The Committee received a copy of its work programme and the Executive Forward Plan for it information.

The Chairman of the Committee advised Members that following the Surrey Highways presentation at their meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> November, Richard Bolton, the Local Highway Services Group Manager had sent a written response addressing many of the questions raised by Members and that this had been circulated by email to Members. It was advised that Members should notify Simon Trevaskis in the Democratic Services team if their query had not been answered and these could be compiled and sent to Mr Bolton for a response.

**Resolved:** That the Scrutiny Committee work programme and the Executive forward plan are noted.

## **58. Exclusion of Press and Public**

**RESOLVED:** That members of the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act; namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and (the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information).

## **59. Highways Horticulture Contract – Contractor Selection and Contract Award**

The Committee received the Executive report which set out the preferred option for awarding the new highways horticulture contract. Members were asked for their comments and/or recommendation which would be submitted to the Executive during its consideration of the item at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

The Highways Delegation Panel had been given the opportunity to review the report prior to its consideration by the Scrutiny Committee. As a member of that Panel, Councillor Stephen Cooksey advised the Committee that the Panel's main concern related to the procurement process and the fact that once the specification had been agreed there was very little scope for Member involvement in the final decision. As a result the Panel recommended that the Council should look at the process used for awarding future contracts and how Member involvement could be increased. It was advised that as part of a review of the Council's Constitution, the contract standing orders relating to how the Council awarded contracts was being reviewed and the comments of the Panel would be taken on board as part of this review.

There was also concern raised about the decision to use a 70/30 split between cost and quality to

adjudicate the winning bid, but Members were reassured that the new contract would improve upon the service currently being provided and that there were measures in place within the contract which would leave the Council in a strong position to address any instances where the contracted level of service was not being met. It was also advised that the contract placed a strong emphasis on community involvement and it was expected that it would soon be reported to officers if the expected level of service was not being delivered.

As there were a number of concerns noted about the limited opportunity for Members to contribute to the tender process, it was agreed that the Committee would not make a recommendation to the Executive on the report, but the comments of the Committee would be relay to the Executive during their consideration of the report.

**Resolved:** That the content of the report be noted and the comments of the Scrutiny Committee be reported to the Executive during the consideration of this item.

#### **60. The Pitstop, Leatherhead**

The Committee received the Executive report which set out a proposed way forward to assist the Pitstop charity. Members were asked for their comments and/or recommendation which would be submitted to the Executive during its consideration of the item at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014.

A number of concerns were raised by Members about the proposals set out in the report and it was agreed that these would be reported to the Executive. However on the whole it was agreed that the Executive should accept the recommendations set out in the report.

**Recommendation to the Executive:** That the recommendations set out in the report be accepted.