

CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **SERVICES OVERVIEW COMMITTEE** held on **19 SEPTEMBER 2019**

PRESENT: Councillor J Burton - Chairman
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Councillors: D Bray
E Culverhouse
M Flys
P Hudson
P Jones
S Patel
L Smith

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors N Varley, M Titterington, C Jackson, C Rouse and P Shepherd

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors I Darby and E Walsh

107 PRESENTATION FROM CHILTERN CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

Kristle Barker Chair of Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) presented their Annual Review for 2018/19. Also in attendance were Claire Seaward (Trustee and Global campaigner) and Jane Morris (Chief Supervisor). The Chair gave an overview of activities and achievements including supporting 4,342 clients with 17,070 problems and achieving £7.4m financial benefits to clients, £1.5 m value to other stakeholders and £8.3m public value to society (through keeping people in work, reducing homelessness and home evictions and getting mental/physical health support.)

The Trustee, Claire Seaward provided information on the clients age distribution, how clients accessed their service and a breakdown of advice issues. The Chief Supervisor provided Members with some case studies about how they had helped people including debt and eviction issues. A Member asked how frequently they gave advice in this area and was informed that there were one – two cases per week and that they had seen a recent rise in repossession threats. The Chair also mentioned the rise in complex problems with 4,000 clients having 17,000 problems which were dealt with by 13 specialist case workers and around 50 generalist advisors. There has been an increase in demand for advice with the introduction of universal credit and an increase in debt with residents not being able to pay basic costs. Coinciding with this was a 45% increase in food bank referrals. A Member asked if the

increase in debt had plateaued out since universal credit had started and the Chief Supervisor reported that this was hard to assess with fluctuations in figures.

In terms of budget the Council gave CAB £150,000 grant and CAB also raised £125,000 through other sources. In relation to the new Buckinghamshire Council, Chiltern had strong collaborative links with other CABs in Buckinghamshire and they were engaging at County level, through senior officers and Members. Councils across Buckinghamshire supported all their local CABs and it was important that this funding commitment continued with the new Council. Chiltern DC had allocated funding for three years to ensure that financing was secure until 2022. The Head of Healthy Communities was working with colleagues looking at commissioning for the new Buckinghamshire Council, which included supporting the voluntary and community sector.

Members thanked CAB for their incredible work with residents.

108 MINUTES

The minutes of the Services Overview Committee held on 13 June 2019 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

109 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

110 28 DAY NOTICE

The Committee received the 28 day Notice of executive decisions to be made by Cabinet on 15 October 2019. Members noted that the report on the review of recycling centres would be submitted to the next cycle of meetings.

RESOLVED

That the 28 Day Notice be noted.

111 PERFORMANCE REPORT - Q1 2019/20

The Committee received a report outlining the annual performance of Council services against pre-agreed performance indicators and service objectives for Quarter 1 of 2019/20. Members noted that the number of missed assisted containers was over target of 170 at 316 at the end of quarter 1. Further to the quarter, this had been raised as an area of operational focus for SERCO, resulting in a reduction to 140 in July and 69 in August, bringing the indicator back under target. The PI regarding speed of processing for new Housing

Benefit/Council Tax Benefit claims had been over target as the team were left with the more complex claims around the rollout of universal credit. The Committee were informed that this was now under target at 19.72 days.

RESOLVED

That the performance reports be noted.

112 CHILTERN DIAL A RIDE REPORT

The Committee received a report which asked for a grant to Chilterns Dial a Ride for the purchase of a new vehicle with a recommendation to use £39,378 from general reserves to support this funding application. Dial a Ride delivered valued community transport services across the District assisting vulnerable disabled and infirm clients and this service was oversubscribed. The aim was to use this extra vehicle to expand the Great Get Together (accessing day trips for older people).

Whilst Members were supportive of this initiative they expressed concern about the costs of the new vehicle and whether there were cheaper alternatives. The Head of Healthy Communities reported that it cost £30 a year membership and that they had purchased a mix of vehicles. He commented that a number of taxis were not wheel chair friendly. Another Member referred to cuts to bus services in their area which would increase demand for the use of this new vehicle.

Members asked for further information on the business case to be reported to the next meeting of this Committee which they would be happy to support if proved viable and affordable to residents. A number of local groups had commented that the service was not value for money, and more expensive than taxis, therefore information would be sought from Dial a Ride as to their journey costs.

RECOMMENDATION to Cabinet

That a grant of £39,378 to Chiltern Dial a Ride for the purchase of a new vehicle be awarded, pending further information on the business case.

113 FOOD AND HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICE PLAN

The Committee received a report and supplementary appendix which sought approval for the adoption of the Joint Food and Health and Safety Service Plan and Food and Health and Safety Enforcement Policies for the year 2019/2020. The Action Plans contained within the appendices highlight key areas which would be focussed on in the coming year to increase performance

standards. This included guidance on Brexit and preparing for the new Buckinghamshire Council. Following a question Members commented that only food businesses with four/five star ratings tended to display their certificate. Reference was made to the increase of food delivery businesses and the need to ensure the right standards were maintained and the Principal Environmental Health Officer confirmed that these services were being monitored.

RECOMMENDATION to Cabinet:-

1 to approve the Joint Food and Health and Safety Service Plan

2 to approve the Food and Health and Safety Enforcement Policies

114 PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDERS

The Committee received a report on the review of the current Public Spaces Protection Orders relating to alcohol restriction within Chiltern District and were asked to consider the responses to the consultation. The Principal Environmental Health Officer reported that this was a three year review. There were currently five PSPOs with alcohol restrictions and it was proposed that these Orders be discharged and where there was sufficient evidence to support alcohol restrictions that these be included in a new, single PSPO, attached as an Appendix.

Members noted that there was not any evidence to support the inclusion of Seer Green within the new PSPO and Parsonage Wood, Amersham. However, analysis of anti-social behaviour reports would support the inclusion of the other areas. It was also recommended that Amersham Station Forecourt be included.

In terms of anti-social behaviour a Member referred to the rise in use of nitrous oxide and whether this could be included in the Order. 200 capsules could be picked up a week in a local park. The Principal Environmental Health Officer reported that Thames Valley Police were very aware of this problem but it would not be appropriate to include this in the PSPO as it was more of a littering issue. Evidence would need to be provided that taking nitrous oxide was causing harm to others. He also referred to some local authorities being criticised for including issues in PSPOs such as rough sleeping and street begging which were not crimes and not classified as anti-social behaviour.

RECOMMENDATION to Cabinet:-

- 1. To consider the outcome of the consultation on the existing PSPOs which provide the Police with powers to require any person to stop drinking and surrender alcohol if they are causing or likely to cause anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the following areas:**
 - a- Chesham Cemetery**
 - b- Chesham Town Centre High Street and The Meades Water Garden**
 - c- Amersham-on-the-Hill and Old Amersham**
 - d- Seer Green**
 - e- Land at Roundwood Road and Station Forecourt, Amersham**
- 2. Where there is supporting evidence for restrictions to be in place in a specific area, to approve the addition of this within a single PSPO.**
- 3. Where there is no supporting evidence for restrictions to be in place in a specific area, to approve the discharge of that PSPO and instruct the Head of Healthy Communities to remove any associated signage.**

115 PROPOSED OPTIONS FOR THE ST JOHNS AMBULANCE SITE

The Committee received a report which sought support to progress the recommendations below in relation to the possible future of the former St Johns Ambulance building. This building was purchased as a development site to provide social housing but it was understood at the time that planning guidelines would require ongoing provision of a 'community use' on some of the site. At the time of purchase a community group approached the Council who had been seeking a suitable permanent site for a place of worship. The report outlines the other options that have been considered such as the use of the building by the youth club. However the prospect of attracting a community use which could also fund the development of their facility was unlikely and it would also be more appropriate for the youth club and other community groups to use the new Lifestyle Centre. Members supported the recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION to Cabinet

- 1. To progress to a formal planning application for the demolition of the existing building and its replacement with a ground floor place of worship/community facility with Social Housing over.**
- 2. To formalise working with stakeholders via a Project Board with agreed terms of reference, objectives and funding structure to create a place of worship/ground floor community facility with social housing over.**
- 3. To agree with key stakeholders that as part of the formal project board objectives, we ensure that the Chiltern Youth Centre operator and the Gateway Club are provided with future bases of operation at the new place of worship/community facility.**
- 4. To progress to Heads of Terms the occupancy arrangements of the place of worship/community facility and other parties.**
- 5. To bring forward a further report following the conclusion of the planning application**
- 6. To draw down £50,000 from the General Reserves for the necessary pre planning application surveys**
- 7. To draw down funding from the current Capital programme to support the planning application**

The meeting ended at 7.31 pm