

ITEM 4

Time started – 6.11pm

Time finished – 8.28pm

NEIGHBOURHOODS COMMISSION 9 DECEMBER 2010

Present: Councillor Troup (Chair)
Councillors Berry, Jackson and Rawson

In attendance: Councillors Shanker and Turner

42/10 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barker, Harwood and Redfern.

43/10 Late Items introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

44/10 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

45/10 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2010 were confirmed as correct record and signed by the Chair.

46/10 Call-in

There were no call-ins to report to the Commission.

47/10 Councillor Call for Action

There were no Councillor Calls for Action to report to the Commission.

48/10 Responses of the Council Cabinet to any reports of the former Commissions

Streetpride Devolved Budgets to Neighbourhood Boards

Members considered a response of the Council Cabinet to a report of the Commission that asked the Cabinet to allow each of the Neighbourhood Boards to make spending decisions against a portion of the annual Streetpride revenue budget.

Resolved to note the response of the Council Cabinet.

49/10 Bus Services

a) Developments regarding Arriva services and the Derby Hospital

The Commission received a presentation from Mark Preval, of Arriva Buses, regarding changes that had been made to enable an improved service to Derby Royal Hospital after 9.30am.

The Head of Traffic, David Gartside, stated that officers had worked closely with Arriva to create a single bus service to Derby Royal Hospital. However, it had proven too costly to create a dedicated service. Instead Arriva had agreed to alter a number of routes to enable a service to the hospital from a majority of the city's suburbs. He added that service provision around Mackworth and Allenton needed improvement.

Councillor Jackson asked if the changes would affect gold card users. The Head of Traffic stated that if someone had a gold card and their appointment was before 9.30am they would have to pay £3.60 like any other user. The changes to the service provision would only happen after 9.30am each day so gold card users would be catered for.

The Chair asked how the changes to the service would be promoted. Mark Preval stated that it would be widely advertised on the buses themselves and through a range of other outlets. The dot matrix destination boards would clearly indicate that the hospital would be the destination after the bus station.

Councillor Rawson stated that this was a big improvement and asked if there were any plans for the south of the city. Mark Preval stated that there were no plans at the moment but if a viable option was presented to him it would be considered. But any service would need to pay for itself. He added that the changes Arriva had made to the services would not make them more profitable but they would provide a better service to customers.

b) Other Arriva service alteration

The Commission considered a presentation by Mark Preval, of Arriva Buses, on changes to bus services in Derby. He stated that because of the withdrawal of Government funding to concessionary fare reimbursement and removal of allowances to fuel tax, the company needed to reduce its costs. This meant reductions in the hours of operation and the number of buses every hour to services; 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 29, 32, 33, 33A, 36, 36A, 37, 38, 40, 41, 44, 45, 60 and 61.

The Chair stated that he understood Arriva's need to run a profitable business.

Councillor Berry asked if the changes to the bus services resulted in reduction in the fleet capacity to provide for the public would there be a way to reverse

the reductions. Mark Preval stated that the company could review any service.

Councillor Rawson expressed concern that the reductions in bus services would impact on the night time economy. Mark Preval stated that the company increased the bus provision in the evenings two years ago but the usage of the services did not increase and was not profitable.

c) Possible reductions to Council-subsidised bus services

The Commission considered a presentation by the Head of Traffic on some possible reductions to Council-subsidised bus services. The Head of Traffic stated that officers were now consulting users of those services to see if they found them useful. Officers had decided to consult at the same time as Derbyshire County Council. The Council would then decide in January, when the consultation ended, if these services were providing value for money.

The Chair asked if officers had considered negotiating a better price. The Head of Traffic stated that officers were continually looking at the value that each service provided.

Councillor Rawson asked how much is spent on each Council subsidised service. The Head of Traffic stated that he did not have the individual details but the total cost was around £300,000.

Resolved to note the presentation and to request a breakdown of the costs of each of the Council subsidised bus services.

50/10 Drains on Nightingale Road

Councillor Shanker stated that there had been a problem with the drains on Nightingale Road for the last two and a half years. He believed that the problem occurred because of a nearby fat processing factory discharging into the sewers. This had built up over time and had caused the smell. He stated that the response of Severn Trent Water, council officers and the factory had been poor. He added that it would be better to deal with the problem at its sources rather than clearing the build up in the sewers.

The Chair stated that highways drains appeared to be more at fault than the fat factory unless the factory had been putting the wrong things into the sewer. The Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods stated that it was complicated. Severn Trent Water could decide what could be put in its sewers and if the factory was within the agreed discharge levels then the Council's hands would be tied. The factory could put a scrubber on their discharge pipe but this would be expensive. If the Council established that the factory was causing a statutory nuisance then the authority could take up the matter with Severn Trent Water, however this could have huge ramifications.

Councillor Turner stated that if the contract drawn up between Severn Trent Water and the factory was substandard then it was Severn Trent Water's responsibility.

Councillor Berry stated that no community should have to put up with this kind of nuisance. The Council should put pressure on them to solve the problem. The Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods stated that Severn Trent Water were difficult to deal with as each case had huge precedent ramifications for them.

Resolved to request officers to meet with the manufacturing firm affecting the drains on Nightingale Road, Severn Trent Water and the Ward Councillors and report back to the next Commission the results of this meeting and to invite the public questioner, Karen Hillier, to attend the next Commission meeting when this is discussed.

51/10 Proposed Parking Tariff Amendments

The Commission were informed that this item would be dealt with as part of the budget setting process.

Resolved to withdraw this item.

52/10 City of Culture 2017

The Commission considered a presentation by the Director of Leisure and Culture, Claire Davenport, on Derby and Derbyshire's bid to be the City of Culture for 2017. The director raised concerns that the Department for Media and Sport might discontinue the competition and were making that judgement in 2014. But regardless of the future of the competition the city would be running a year of culture in 2015. She stated that a team of stakeholders had been brought together to prepare a comprehensive bid and identify the benefits to the region.

The Chair asked if this would be a boost to local creativity. The Director of Leisure and Culture said that officers would be working to develop the talent in local groups.

Councillor Jackson stated that she hoped the Commission would support this bid as in a time of cuts and austerity it would be something to aim for. Councillor Berry echoed Councillor Jackson's comments and stated that Derby has a lot to offer. He added that the tax payer should be made aware of what the funding would be spent on and the knock on benefit to the city.

Resolved to support the Derby and Derbyshire Year of Culture in 2015 and the subsequent bid for the UK City of Culture in 2017.

53/10 Arts Grants

The Commission considered a presentation by the Director of Leisure and Culture, Claire Davenport, on the provision of arts grants. The Director of Leisure and Culture stated that this report had been rolled into a larger corporate report which was now looking at the strategy employed to award grants from 2011-15. She informed Members that the aims of the strategy would now link to the Derby Plan. Officers would be looking to work with providers who can demonstrate that they can offer value for money. The provision of arts grants would change to one of commissioning with providers bidding for grants which are aligned to the city's priorities.

The Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods stated that this was about linking the Council's outputs to the money it provides. Any funding the Council provides should ensure that it goes towards its overall aims.

The Chair asked for clarification of the timetable for moving to this process. The Director of Leisure and Culture stated that the providers were all being made aware of the changes so that they were prepared.

Councillor Rawson stated that he had no problem with organisations being able to demonstrate their funding was spent on worthwhile projects but objected to the overall pot of funding being reduced.

Councillor Berry stated that the key to this process would be communicating the aims of the Council to these organisations. He added that a reduction in funding should not come as a surprise to any voluntary organisation.

Resolved to broadly support the inclusion of arts grants within a corporate policy on grant aid and the proposed principles about how the arts grant budget was to be distributed and that they reserved the right to subsequently scrutinise the actual allocation of funds to organisations.

54/10 Controlled Waste Regulations (1992) – Public Consultation

The Chair introduced the Controlled Waste Regulations (1992) consultation document to the Commission.

The Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods stated that his officers were preparing a response to this consultation and offered to send this consultation to the Commission Members for comment.

Resolved to request the consultation response be circulated to the Commission for comment.

55/10 Impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review on Neighbourhoods Directorate Services

The Commission considered a report of the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods on the impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review on the Neighbourhoods Directorate Services. The Strategic Director informed Members of the changes to the structure of the Neighbourhoods Directorate and the final discussions that were taking place on whether to have three or four heads of service in the Streetpride division.

Councillor Rawson stated that he could not support the changes to the services because he thought it would take too much away from the capacity of the Council. The Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods stated that the services would not have the same flexibility but hopefully better technology would yield better results.

The Chair raised concern that the Streetpride function was being altered so soon after being created. The Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods stated that there was an external driver pushing this agenda forward and that was the 30 percent cut in funding. The Council had to meet that cut.

Resolved to note the contents of the report and request an update once the consultation has ended.

56/10 Matters referred to the Commission by Council Cabinet

There were no items referred to the Commission by Council Cabinet.

57/10 Retrospective Scrutiny

The Chair requested that the progress of Streetpride be reviewed at the next opportunity. The Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer stated that this may be best dealt with by a topic review. The Chair asked for residents and the Neighbourhood Boards and Forums for their views.

Resolved to consider a topic review into the operation of Streetpride and to feed in the views of the Neighbourhood Boards and Forums.

58/10 Council Cabinet Forward Plan

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer reported the items on the Forward Plan relevant to the Commission's remit.

MINUTES END