

ITEM 4

Time started – 6.00pm
Time finished – 8.20pm

COMMUNITY COMMISSION 11 FEBRUARY 2010

Present: Councillor Grimadell (Chair)
Councillors Bayliss, Chera, Leeming, Lowe and Richards

In Attendance: Councillors Baxter and Troup

93/09 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Khan and Redfern

94/09 Late Items introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

95/09 Declarations of Interest

Councillors Bayliss declared a personal interest in Minutes 100/09, 102/09 and 104/09 as a Council appointed member of the Board of Derby Homes.

Councillor Grimadell declared a personal interest in Minutes 105/09 and 107/09 as he is a Member of ViVA and Déda.

96/09 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chair.

97/09 Call-in

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

98/09 Councillor Call for Action

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

99/09 Responses of the Council Cabinet to any reports of the Commission

There were no responses of the Council Cabinet to report.

Items for Discussion

100/09 Further consideration of Revenue Budget Proposals 2010/11–2012/13 – Community Centres

The Commission received a briefing paper of the Corporate Director of Environmental Services on the revenue budget proposals for 2010/11-2012/13 in respect of community centres. It was reported that the Chief Executive has asked for more information on the five community centres that are run by the Council and the costs that are attributed to these facilities. Whilst the authority has been successful in transferring 19 of its community centres to community organisations five still remain under Council control. In the areas that the five community centres are situated there are not enough community organisations that are either willing or capable to take over the operation of these centres.

Councillor Leeming suggested that these centres could be marketed differently to the others and a number of organisations could be approached to run it for a couple of nights a week incorporating a range of activities.

Councillor Bayliss expressed concern that any proposed reduction in funding for the upkeep of these centres could eventually lead to their closure.

Resolved to recommend that Council Cabinet do not recommend withdrawal of the £130,000 in support funding to the community centres. However, the Commission added that no community centres should be transferred to voluntary organisations if officers are not convinced that they have the necessary skills to operate them.

101/09 Further consideration of Revenue Budget Proposals 2010/11–2012/13 – Mobile Library

The Commission received a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Community on revenue budget proposals for 2010/11-2012/13 in respect of mobile library services. The Assistant Director Cultural Services stated that this budget saving has been brought about because of the expansion of libraries within the city. The coverage is such now that the mobile library service is no longer required to meet the demands of residents.

The Chair expressed concern that the removal of the mobile library service would leave some in hard to reach areas without access to library provision. The Assistant Director Cultural Services stated that all of the libraries were easily accessible and the libraries can also offer a home delivery service.

Resolved to note the situation with the mobile libraries.

102/09 Further consideration of Proposed Capital Programme Budgets 2010/11–2012/13 – Housing Capital Programme

The Commission received a report of the Corporate Director of Corporate and Adult Services on the housing capital programme 2010/11 – 2012/13. Officers informed Members that capital resources for housing have been severely reduced in the new financial year. The housing capital programme based on this reduced budget was presented to the Commission and Members were invited to comment.

Councillor Bayliss expressed concern that the proposals included a cut to the private sector group repair programme. He stated that this should be resisted as it can aid the regeneration of an area. He asked officers how much is being retained in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reserves. The Head of Technical Finance David Enticott stated that currently £15m is being kept in the HRA reserves to cover potential reform proposed by the Government. This could either allow the Council to opt out of the current subsidy system or there may be a £5m pa charge introduced.

Councillor Leeming asked if it is cost effective to bring our existing housing stock up to the Decent Homes standard or would it be cheaper to rebuild them. The Head of Technical Finance David Enticott stated that this is difficult to judge as many homes are in different states of repair. Until the subsidy system is reformed it could cost more to build new council houses.

Councillor Troup informed the Commission that it is clear that when Britain comes out of recession public funds will not be as available as in the past. To counter this, the Council is considering establishing a regeneration fund of £10m.

Resolved:

- A. To recommend to Council Cabinet the proposed Housing Capital Programme for 2010/11 – 2012/13; and**
- B. That if cuts to the spending proposals for the private sector element of the housing capital programme are deemed necessary then they should be targeted on the group repair element of the budget and not the disabled facilities grant;**
- C. To recommend further investment of the £15m HRA reserve in our housing stock either in clear-and-new-build or in spend-to-save proposals such as the £10,000 solar panel installations which provides £200 worth of electricity savings to the tenant and £665pa for 25 years to the authority.**

103/09 Further consideration of Proposed Capital Programme Budgets 2010/11–2012/13 – Markeaton Crematorium Proposed Capital Expenditure

The Commission received a report by the Corporate Director of Environmental Services on the proposed capital spending for 2010/11 – 2012/13 in respect of Markeaton Crematorium. The Assistant Director Local Environment stated that the issue of Mercury abatement had been considered by overview and scrutiny before it went before the Cabinet in 2005. A fund of £1.9m was put in place for this eventuality. He proposed that an option for the Commission to consider would be to review the proposals by officers on either to replace or retain the current cremators at the same time as installing the Mercury abatement equipment. He stated that legislation had come out which requires a decision to be taken urgently on this issue in order to get everything in place by 2012.

Councillor Baxter addressed the Commission and stated that it is essential to retain four cremators and not three as proposed. He accepted that the installation of new Mercury abatement equipment may require an extension to the existing premises. But this should not be primarily based around the provision of office space for employees or unnecessary facilities for the public.

Resolved:

- A. To establish a sub group comprising Councillors Baxter, Grimadell, Leeming and Lowe to review the capital spending proposals for Markeaton Crematorium; and**
- B. To recommend Council Cabinet to only take a final decision after the outcome of the Sub Group's review.**

104/09 Tenancy Sustainment

The Commission received a report of the Corporate Director of Corporate and Adult Services seeking to establish a new Tenancy Sustainment Service for those introductory tenants that will have been assessed as requiring support and assistance. The Director of Housing & Customer Service at Derby Homes Maria Murphy informed the Commission that the proposal is for all introductory tenants to be assessed in terms of their ability and experience to live independently and successfully manage a tenancy. Those assessed as being in need and lack the skills to manage their household accounts will receive an intensive housing management service starting at the point when they are first offered a property. Those tenants who can clearly demonstrate that they are low risk in terms of tenancy failure will not be required to receive the service. Those introductory tenants who receive this service would be required to pay a £14.50 service charge. It is anticipated that some 70% of these tenants would have this charge met by Housing Benefit.

Resolved to recommend the Council Cabinet to approve the Tenancy Sustainment report subject to an additional recommendation requesting an evaluation report of the service after 18 months as well as the stated 12 month period.

105/09 Derby LIVE programme and outdoor events

The Commission received a report of the Director of Derby LIVE providing the Commission with an update on the organisation's progress and programme of events.

Councillor Leeming expressed concern that there had been comments in the press stating that Derby LIVE had not been allocating enough time for amateur performers. The Director of Derby LIVE suggested that those comments may have been linked to the previous management of the organisation. He said that while certain times of the year will always need to be allocated to the professionals, he meets regularly with amateur performers to allocate performances to them.

Resolved:

- A. To note the report regarding the progress of Derby LIVE and the additional information regarding its programme of outdoor events.**
- B. To congratulate the Derby LIVE staff;**
- C. To recommend the Council Cabinet considers providing Derby with a new theatre to enhance the Derby LIVE productions; and**

106/09 Physical Activity Strategy including b-Active

The Commission received a report of the Corporate Director of Environmental Services on the performance of the Council in increasing physical activity levels amongst children and young people as part of a Local Public Service Agreement. The Head of Sport and Leisure John Brown stated that Leeds University had conducted a study into the activity levels of residents in Derby and found that 90 percent were not meeting the recommended three sessions of moderate exercise for 30 minutes each week. In 2008/09 22 and a half percent of residents had started exercising to the recommended level. The Council now hopes to make Derby the most physically active city in Britain by 2015.

Councillor Leeming asked how talented individuals are identified and what support do they receive. The Head of Sport and Leisure stated that teachers throughout primary and secondary schools have been trained to identify talented youngsters and put them forward for clubs outside of school which specialise in their talents. The best athletes are given financial support and hopefully this will generate some of the country's future Olympians.

Resolved:

- A. To note the report;**
- B. To request officers to continue to review and refresh the city's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and produce a future 2010 – 2015 draft strategy report that will be tabled at a future Community Commission meeting which will form part of the consultation process;**
- C. To recommend that the 2010 -2015 strategy be acknowledged as a major contributor to the health and wellbeing of the Corporate Plan and within future reviews of the Sustainable Community Strategy; and**
- D. To request Officers to report back on an annual basis the progress in delivering the strategy and the health outcomes relating to child and adult obesity.**

107/09 Annual Grants Report 2010/11

The Commission received a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Community on a review of Annual Arts Grants 2010/11. The Principal Arts Officer Mike Brown informed the Commission that when Derby LIVE was created the Arts Team was restructured and the approach to arts grant funding was reviewed. This was intended to modernise the service and link the grants to the Council's Corporate Priorities. The Arts Team has adopted the cultural strategy aims and these aims will also be linked to any funding that an organisation receives. Their performance will then be monitored against these priorities.

The Chair asked if any of the organisations had disagreed with the proposals. The Principal Arts Officer stated there had been some concern from some of the groups however he had met with them and allayed their concerns. Most of the groups had seen it as an opportunity to gain access to more funding.

Resolved:

- A. To recommend moving to three year funding agreements in line with the best practice recommendations of the Derby Compact with Regularly Funded Organisations. These should also receive a year on year inflation linked increase in their level of grant funding.**
- B. To recommend that the existing Performance Matrix process of performance monitoring be updated to move towards a more rigorous process consisting of written report and grading of performance against specific criteria linked to strategic priorities**
- C. To endorse the repositioning of the Arts Strategy Action Plan within the context of the Cultural City Action Plan.**

- D. To recommend that organisations currently receiving under £2,500 will no longer receive regular funding.**
- E. To recommend that in lieu of a notice period the following organisations receive their first quarter payment in 2010/11 and then nothing:**
- Derby Chamber Music Society**
 - Flying Donkeys**
 - Media Archive for Central England**
 - Red Earth Theatre**
 - Opus**
- F. To recommend that the Derby Concert Promoters Association be removed from the portfolio of regularly funded organisations and to provide them with their first quarter payment in 2010/11 and then nothing.**
- G. To recommend that the disinvested money from the portfolio of regularly funded organisations be transferred to the Small Arts Grants Fund and increase the maximum grant available from £1,000 to £5,000.**
- H. To recommend that the discretionary £5,000 held in operational budgets by the Arts Team be transferred to, and administered from, the Small Arts Grants budget where it will be ring-fenced for culturally diverse activity.**

108/09 Council Cabinet Forward Plan

There were no significant items on the Council Cabinet's Forward Plan that the Commission wished to consider.

109/09 Matters referred to the Commission by Council Cabinet

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

MINUTES END