



COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

BURNLEY TOWN HALL

Tuesday, 19th March 2013

PRESENT

MEMBERS

Councillor Bea Foster – in the Chair.

Councillors Margaret Brindle, Paul Campbell, Tony Harrison, Anne Kelly, Andrew Newhouse, Paul Reynolds and Betsy Stringer.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor John Harbour - Executive Member for Leisure and Culture
Councillor Shah Hussain - Executive Member for Community Services

Tom Forshaw - Head of Chief Executive's Office
Joanne Swift - Head of Streetscene
Sharon Hargraves - Customer and IT Services
Sam McConnell - Community Safety Manager
Rob Dobson - Corporate Policy Officer
Saima Afzaal - Assistant Democracy Officer

37. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Steve Rumbelow and Mick Cartledge.

38. Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 13th February 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

39. Executive Notice of Key Decisions and Private Meetings

The Executive Notice of Key Decisions for April to July 2013 was received for comments relating to the remit of this Committee.

The Chair referred to the Leisure Options Appraisal and highlighted that a Special meeting of the Committee was scheduled for Tuesday 26th March at 5.30pm to consult the Committee and an All Member briefing planned for Thursday 21st March 2013 to consider the proposals as part of the wider consultation process.

**IT WAS
AGREED**

That the Executive Notice of Key Decisions and Private Meetings from April to July 2013 be noted.

40. Update on Children and Young People's Trust
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Rob Dobson invited Members to comment on the progress and performance towards the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYP Plan) 2012/13.

He highlighted that at a recent Trust meeting it became apparent that young people's mental health is an increasing concern and would be considered as a new priority in the CYP plan.

He outlined the four current priority areas as set out in the report. He further circulated performance details and welcomed any feedback and comments.

The following comments were received:-

- Alcohol misuse - what plans were in place to address the issue? Members suggested that it would be useful for the Committee to explore further in this area of work.

Rob Dobson advised that the Trust has a number of actions underway focusing on the existing priorities. It will be refining those actions over the coming months. He highlighted that further detail on quality of life outcomes for young people was available on the Lancashire County Council website, under the Children and Young People's Trust section for Burnley.

Joanne Swift emphasised that there were a number of local actions being undertaken amongst partners to address areas of concern and that these were co-ordinated via the Children's Trust and the Community Safety Partnership.

Members made the following points:

- Alcohol Consumption - Members enquired whether the Police were continuing to carry out test purchasing exercises on licensed premises.
- Early Years Foundation Stage - The impact on children if the ratio of children to staff is increased, as per Government policy.
- A question was raised about the support available for Children with

**IT WAS
AGREED**

Special Educational Needs.

- (1) That the Committee be provided a response by email in respect of test purchasing exercises on licensed premises; and
- (2) That the report and comments be noted.

41. Customer Access & Services Strategy 2013 – 2016
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Sharon Hargreaves reported on the new Customer Access & Services Strategy and gave an update on performance to date along with an overview on the delivery of services provided. She indicated that the Strategy document provided a clear direction as to how the Council would provide access to Council services over the next three years.

She briefed Members on future key priority areas and set out the 2013-16 Strategy Action Plan to ensure that delivery of exceptional services continued.

She further outlined some of the key challenges ahead with an emphasis to continue to build on what had currently been achieved. She stated that the key aim was to improve digital access, reduction in costs to serve and enabling the Council to focus on those customers with greatest need.

The following comments were received:-

- Digital/on-line services – to ensure that the residents were part of the wider consultation process.
- Understanding the impact on elderly who were not IT literate and had no access to online services.

Sharon Hargreaves indicated that further proposals were on-going with DWP to factor this potential issue by assisting the customer with digital services by filling in on-line forms

- Members suggested that the Council contact number on the website could perhaps be less easily accessible, to assist in promoting on-line services.

Sharon Hargreaves indicated that further work was in progress to improve digital/on-line services with the development of a new website, which included revisiting all existing information, creating a self-service solution for all of the existing processes that were easy to understand.

- What plans were in place to respond to increased customer contacts in April 2013, following the introduction to the Council Tax Benefit changes and Bedroom Tax?

Sharon Hargraves indicated that she was currently mindful of the recent increase in volume of calls. Additional staffing resources were put in place. She emphasised that the focus was to develop digital capabilities within the workforce quickly and effectively to reduce future volume in calls.

- Members highlighted that staff at Contact Centre provided an excellent service and should be thanked for their hard work and efforts.

**IT WAS
AGREED**

(1) That a summary of the forthcoming changes to Bedroom Tax be provided by email to the Committee.

(2) That the report and comments and be noted.

42. Community Safety Partnership Performance 2012/13

Sam McConnell updated Members on the Community Safety Partnership performance for 2012/13. He reported more notable success on overall reduction in all Violent Crime and a continued reduction in Criminal Damage including Arson.

He explained that a continued and significant reduction in Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) was being recorded across the district.

He highlighted that the (CPS) was required to produce a Strategic Assessment that outlined the crime and disorder priorities influenced by the local residents groups in their areas.

He outlined the agreed Strategic Priorities for the Partnership for 2013/14 as set out in the report and thanked Members for their input which had contributed to priorities being set for 2013/14.

The following comments were received:-

- Members highlighted that there was a growing concern for Substance Misuse / Alcohol and drugs and yet no supporting action plan against the priority area in the report.

Sam McConnell advised that partners were working in collaboration on a range of approaches to address the issue. He added further work by Inspire Partnership was on-going in identifying a detailed action plan.

- A number of further comments emerged highlighting priority areas and performance details identified for Burnley.

IT WAS That the report and comments be noted.

AGREED

43. Work Programme

Playing Fields - Working Group Update

The Chair provided a brief update in relation to the on-going Playing Fields Review.

She reported that Members of the Working Group met on Monday 18th March to progress with the on-going work. She indicated that Members felt that the review was focussing primarily on playing pitches and the initial aim of the review was to look at provision for playing fields in the Borough. (Open Space Areas). She highlighted that a further meeting would be scheduled in mid-May to continue with the progress on the Review and focus on the playing fields area of work.

**IT WAS
AGREED** That the verbal update be noted.

44. Work Programme

The Chair reflected on the work programme established for 2012/13 and thanked Members for their participation.

**IT WAS
AGREED** That the Work Programme for 2012/13 be noted.