OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13 November 2012 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Gifford (Chairman); Councillors Boad, Mrs Blacklock, Brookes, Copping, Davies, Edwards, Mrs Falp, Gill, Guest, Mrs Higgins, and Weber.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Coker and Cross (Portfolio Holders)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms Dean and Mrs Gallagher.

54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Minute Number 55 – Update from the Portfolio Holder for Cultural Services

Councillor Mrs Falp declared a personal interest as a family member worked within the service area.

Minute Number 63, Item 10 – Visitor Services Review

Councillor Copping declared a personal interest because he was a member of Royal Leamington Spa Town Council.

Councillor Gifford declared a personal interest because he was a member of Royal Leamington Spa Town Council.

55. UPDATE FROM THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CULTURAL SERVICES

Councillor Cross, the Portfolio Holder for Cultural Services, gave a presentation on the work done by Cultural Services to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. His presentation was thorough and went through:

- the services provided such as gyms, swimming pools, the Town Hall, and the Royal Spa Centre;
- the service plan;
- projects completed in the last 12 months;
- current projects being undertaken and their progress; and
- what projects would be undertaken in the next 12 months.

After the presentation, there was a question and answer session. The Committee focussed on areas that were income generators such as the cinema and the Head of Cultural Services, Rose Winship, explained what was being done to increase revenue and make better use of facilities. For example, as the cinema at the Royal Spa Centre was currently under-utilised, an idea to form a Film Club and present unusual films was being investigated to increase numbers as was the possibility to purchase projector equipment for digital film screenings.

Following the presentation and the question and answer session, the Committee thanked both the Head of Cultural Services and the Portfolio Holder.

56. UPDATE FROM THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR COMMUNITY PROTECTION

Councillor Coker, the Portfolio Holder for Community Protection, and the Head of Service, Roger Jewsbury, gave a presentation on Community Protection, the purpose of which was stated in the presentation to "Protect the Community and Individuals from Harm".

The presentation gave an overview of the activities undertaken by the department, what the budgets were, the priorities and how the department was working with other bodies to make the District safer and its success in this by giving key performance indicators. The presentation also gave details of projects being tackled to make the District a safer place to live.

Following the presentation, Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were able to ask questions on key points of interest. The Committee was pleased to note that there had been a steady decrease in crime as a result of the working in partnership with the Local Authority in Stratford-upon-Avon and the Police. Whilst it was noticed that overall crime had decreased, burglary had increased, and it was thought that the economic downturn might have some bearing on this. Members were aware that the Police were pleased with the success of partnership working. The "Street Pastor" scheme was proving to be a success in stopping drunkenness in the town which it was hoped would lead to an improvement in community health and less visits to hospital A & E departments. The Community Protection Department had an input on planning applications to mitigate any flood risks by new developments and it was involved in a flood alleviation project for Cubbington.

Following the presentation and the question and answer session, the Committee thanked both the Head of Community Protection and the Portfolio Holder.

57. VOLUNTEERING TASK & FINISH GROUP FINAL REPORT

In May 2011, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee established a Task and Finish Group to develop a Volunteering Policy for the Council, working to an approved scope. The report brought forward the draft Volunteering Policy from this Group.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that the report was excellent and accepted its recommendations.

RESOLVED that:

(1) the Volunteering Policy, as set out at Appendix B to the report, be approved for submission to the Executive;

(2) the Volunteering Policy be reviewed in 12 months, by three members of the Committee in liaison with Warwickshire Community and Voluntary

Action (WCAVA), to assess the impact it has made; and

(3) that a Task and Finish Group be established to produce a policy for Council staff volunteering and how they could be supported by the Council.

58. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2012 were agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

59. **COMMENTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE**

The Committee considered a report from Civic and Committee Services which detailed the response the Executive had given to their comments regarding the reports submitted to the Executive in October 2012.

The report was produced to create a dialogue between the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and it ensured that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were formally made aware of the Executive's responses.

In respect of item 4, Fees and Charges 2013/14, the Committee made a note to see whether the £25 concession could be granted to local residents for cremations.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

60. **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan which had been published for November 2012 to February 2013.

Members asked the Deputy Chief Executive, Andrew Jones, what business case had been given for the Mere at Kenilworth (reference 435 on the Forward Plan). The Deputy Chief Executive explained that the Mere feasibility study was part of the April 2012 Improvement Programme within Fit for the Future. If £250,000 was to be allocated for this, it would have to come from Reserves as nothing had been put in the budget as yet.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

61. **REVIEW OF THE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered a report from Civic and Committee Services on the Committee's work programme from November 2012 to March 2013.

The Safeguarding Children Action Plan would be moved back to the December meeting. Scrutiny of Partnerships would be added to the December meeting and the Committee requested that a Parking officer attend the December meeting to discuss parking provision.

The Chairman was asked to meet with portfolio holders who had yet to give their updates to the Committee as it was noted that the meeting in December had a very packed schedule. He would suggest that a written

report should be sent out before the meeting and that a presentation would not be necessary and there would be a question and answer session.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The Committee also agreed that a Task and Finish Group should be set up to develop a policy on Sexual Entertainment Venues (SEVs).

RESOLVED that:

(1) a Task and Finish (T & F) Group be set up to develop a policy on SEVs;
(2) an invitation be sent out to councillors for volunteers to join the T & F Group; and
(3) the T & F Group present a scope document to the Committee at its December meeting.

62. DOG CONTROL ORDERS – TASK & FINISH GROUP

The Committee considered a report from Civic and Committee Services in respect of a Task and Finish Group to review Dog Control Orders. In November 2011, the Council had introduced four Dog Control Orders and it had been agreed that once these had been in operation for a year, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would set up a Task and Finish Group to review the effectiveness of these four orders. Having agreed a scoping document under which the Group would operate at a previous meeting, the Committee had sought volunteers to join the Task and Finish Group and the report sought approval for the Group's membership.

RESOLVED that the membership of the Task and Finish Group to review Dog Control Orders be made up of Councillors Mrs Blacklock, Mrs Bromley, Mrs Falp, Weber and Williams.

Councillor Mrs Blacklock informed the Committee, in anticipation that the membership would be approved, the Group had visited a local cemetery and a few local parks over the school half-term break in the hope that these places would be active with visitors and dogs. However, on the day chosen, it had rained continuously and so apart from one dog walker, no one else was present. The Dog Control Enforcement Officer had explained issues to the Group during their site visit and so had an officer at Royal Leamington Spa Cemetery. The Group hoped to present its recommendations to the Committee in the first quarter of 2013.

63. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2012

Item 6 – City Deal

The Liberal Democrat Group had requested that this item be discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee because of its considerable potential. The report from the Chief Executive, Chris Elliott, was due to go to the Executive the following day. The report sought to brief Members on the possibility of a second wave of City Deals to which Coventry City Council expected to be invited; outlined how a bid may involve a wider area and

what such a bid might cover. It also sought delegated authority for the Chief Executive in consultation with the Executive and other Group Leaders to negotiate and agree an initial proposal for submission by the end of the calendar year.

After discussing the report, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee accepted the recommendation in the report, but suggested a slight amendment to its wording as follows:

"That the Executive note the background information on City Deals set out at Appendix A to this report and delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Executive and the other Group Leaders to negotiate and agree *an initial expression* of interest on behalf of the authority for a City Deal proposal for Coventry, Warwickshire and Hinckley/Bosworth area."

(This simply moved where the words "an initial expression of interest" appeared in the sentence in the Chief Executive's report.)

The Committee suggested that the Executive might consider the Sheffield City Regional City Deal. The Committee also wished to emphasise that this was more than simply a planning issue. Whilst the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were happy for this to move forward, as it was being led by Coventry, the Executive should ensure that it was not at Warwick District's expense.

Item 9 – 2012/13 Portfolio Holder Statements & Fit for the Future Progress Report

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee made no comments on the report to Executive but as part of its own work programme, it did receive presentations from the Portfolio Holders for Cultural Services and Community Safety. The Committee had the opportunity to question the Portfolio Holders and Service Area Managers on the Portfolio Holder Statements. Afterwards, the Committee thanked the Portfolio Holders Councillors Coker and Cross and the Service Area Managers Roger Jewsbury and Rose Winship for answering its questions.

Item 10 – Visitor Services Review

The Liberal Democrat Group had requested that this item be discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to understand the rationale behind the opening hours of the Royal Leamington Spa Visitor Information Centre. The Labour Group also had questions on the report. The report, written by the Economic and Regeneration Manager, Joe Baconnet, gave an update to the March and September Executive reports which established the principle of a hub, spoke for visitor services within the District and also the establishment of a Destination Management Organisation (DMO). The report contained a series of recommendations of how the current set up for Visitor Services could be amended. The proposals allowed the rebalancing of the Tourism budget to support the emerging DMO and wider tourism promotion and business engagement.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee accepted the recommendations in the report and thanked Joe Baconnet for answering its questions.

Item 12 – Website CMS Replacement

The Labour Group requested that this item be discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as it felt that further discussion was necessary in light of information received from officers that was not in the report. The report, written by the website manager, Michael Branson, requested funds to enable the Council to procure a new website Content Management System (CMS).

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee accepted recommendations 2.2 and the second 2.2 (which should have been 2.3).

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended that the wording on recommendation 2.1 should be changed as follows:

"That Executive approves the development of the business case comparing Option A (Appendix A) to Option B, the new option as set out in the email sent to councillors on 9 November 2012."

Item 13A – The Community Right to Bid

The Liberal Democrat Group requested that this item should be discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee because of the significance to the communities of the district. The Labour Group also requested this item too because it had questions on the decision making process spelt out in the recommendations. The report, written by the Economic Development and Regeneration Manager, Joe Baconnet, advised Members of the implementation of the section of the Localism Act 2011 relating to Assets of Community Value and sought authority for setting up the list of assets and related processes. This part of the Localism Act was known as the "Community Right to Bid".

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended that recommendations 2.2 and 2.3 were changed so that the Heads of Service stipulated to be given delegated authority must consult with the relevant Portfolio Holder and Shadows:

2.2 That Executive delegates authority to the Head of Development Services in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder and Shadows to:-

- maintain the List of Assets of Community Value and a list of unsuccessful nominations;
- consider and decide the technical correctness of nominations for inclusion of assets on the list; and
- consider and decide, in consultation with the Development Services Portfolio Holder, the merits of nominations for inclusion of assets on the list.

2.3 That Executive delegates authority to the Head of Neighbourhood Services in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder and Shadows to:-

- conduct listing reviews and compensation reviews in respect of assets of community value; and
- consider and decide any review of listing, or compensation.

64. **EXECUTIVE AGENDA (CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2012**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee did not discuss any of the confidential items on the Executive agenda.

(The meeting finished at 8.50 pm)