

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF
THE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

held remotely on

29th October 2020

Commencing at 6.30 p.m.

Present:

Councillor Nunn, Chairman.

Councillors (panellists): Mrs Ackerley, Champion, Hollick, James, Mrs Page (ex officio),
Mrs Robinson and Mrs Simpson

Councillors (guest): Knowles

Officers: D. Atkinson, M. Bills, T. Day, P. Green, S. Pickering,
N. Proudfoot, V. Wenham, and G. Keeping

Guests:

Sgt D. Richardson	Leicestershire Police
L. Steiner	Citizens Advice Leicestershire (CAL)
M. O'Malley	Voluntary Action South Leicestershire (VASL)
B. Tallis	Harborough in Bloom
P. Eddie	Harborough in Bloom
S. Renwick	Homestart South Leicestershire
R. Warmington	Lutterworth Community Transport (LCT)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTION(S)

An apology was received from Councillor Fosker; Councillor James substituted for Councillor Fosker.

DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Cllr Mrs Ackerley	Cllr Mrs Ackerley declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest under Item 1, Built Sports Facilities Strategy. The nature of the interest was stated to be that she was a member of Lutterworth Town Council.
Cllr Mrs Simpson	Cllr Mrs Simpson declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest under Item 3, Charities and Voluntary Organisations. The nature of the interest was stated to be that she was a friend of one of the trustees of one of the charities.
Cllr Nunn	Cllr Nunn declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest under Item 3, Charities and Voluntary Organisations. The nature of the interest was stated to be that she was a volunteer for Voluntary Action South Leicestershire, but had not undertaken any work for them.

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COMMERCIAL SERVICES LTD

The Panel

RESOLVED that this item was deferred to its next meeting.

BUILT SPORTS FACILITIES STRATEGY

The Panel received a report inviting it to comment on the final Built Sports Facilities Strategy and to agree any comments to Cabinet.

The Council does not currently have a Built Sports Facilities Strategy (BSFS). The draft BSFS forecasts the future needs for sport and recreation up to 2031, taking into account the housing requirements in the recently adopted Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031, and is complementary to the Playing Pitch Strategy adopted in 2018. The assessment methodology follows the Sport England Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance, including consultation with the local clubs and national governing bodies, as well as the District and Parish Councils.

At its meeting on 27th June 2019, the Panel had requested that a further report on the Built Facilities Strategy be brought back to it, prior to the Strategy being considered by Cabinet and then Council.

Questions and comments were invited from the Panel and the following were noted:

Question/ Comment	Response
<u>Options for indoor Bowls:</u> i. what is the timescale for the options for indoor bowls, as included in paragraph 68 of the report? ii. How much is junior indoor bowls promoted? iii. Are there opportunities for other sports, e.g. indoor archery, to use indoor bowling facilities?	i. Further consultation on indoor bowls will be taking place as part of the Harborough Leisure Centre redevelopment and will help inform members' decisions at that time. ii. Discussion has taken place with the Indoor Bowling Club, who have worked with local communities and schools to seek to attract junior bowlers, but with limited success. iii. With regard to alternative uses, the bowling surface is sensitive to other uses and susceptible to damage.
<u>Planning:</u> what will be the impact of the strategy on the planning policy and process? How much weight will the Strategy carry in Planning terms?	The Strategy will help to decide planning applications and will provide evidence to advise officers when considering contributions through a S106 agreement.
<u>Consultation:</u> i. has Sport England seen and commented on the Strategy? ii. was Lutterworth Town Council consulted?	i. Sport England have been fully engaged in the development of the Strategy and were part of the steering group. ii. Consultation took place with all Parish Councils, including Lutterworth Town Council, and the strategy takes account of views put forward regarding Lutterworth East.
<u>Canoeing:</u> it was noted with disappointment that there had been no consultation response from the British Canoe Union, given the number of canals in the District.	Canals and towpaths form an important resource and Greenways contributions could be available for developing multi-user use of these, with the involvement of the Canal & River Trust.
<u>Lutterworth Leisure Centre:</u> if the current leisure centre needs replacing in the future, it is	Yes, discussions need to start with the owner of the current site and also the search for alternative

necessary to identify suitable land as soon as possible. The search should not be restricted to the town centre and should also include Lutterworth East.	sites should commence. A specific reference to Lutterworth East could be included in this part of the strategy, if the Panel wished.
<u>Storage provision at village halls:</u> a lot of village halls could provide other facilities, for example short-mat bowling, but are lacking suitable storage. Can the issue of storage be part of the discussion in seeking funding?	The Strategy indicates that storage space is a key factor, especially for short-mat bowls. It would be desirable if a way could be found for getting contributions to allow village halls to provide new storage.
<u>Market Harborough Leisure Centre:</u> i. Is the Council confident that additional swimming pool space could be run commercially, even if increased gym facilities might help with profitability, given that there is growing competition from private gyms? ii. What is the projected life of the Dome? iii. How does the Strategy fit in with the work already underway as part of the Leisure Project?	i. Additional detailed work was undertaken with Sport England to look at swimming pool space, given expected population growth. Pools are expensive and need cross-subsidising with other activities. ii. The Dome is ageing, but is an important facility. Its replacement is discussed in the report either as part of the existing Centre or of a new Centre. iii. The Strategy links with the Council's continuing work at looking at the future of the leisure facilities. Two options are being looked at in more detail: an enhanced facility at the existing site and an enhanced facility at another location. This more detailed work will involve much more consultation on what the leisure offer would be in future.
<u>Other opportunities:</u> i. Is there potential for other sporting facilities around the gliding site? ii. It is good that traffic-free walking is included in the strategy. Is there potential for inclusion of off-road cycling?	i. Sports England indicate that the gliding centre at Husbands Bosworth is of national importance and requested its inclusion in the Strategy. However it is a private facility and it is not sure at this stage how it may develop in future. ii. Work on traffic-free routes is taking place with cycling groups.
<u>Disability Groups:</u> does the report cover opportunities for people with disabilities?	The freedom group was consulted in regard of their use of the Dome. A due-regard analysis of the strategy has also been made.
<u>Broughton Astley leisure facility:</u> how will this fit in with proposals regarding the Lutterworth Leisure Centre?	The new facility at Broughton Astley is taken into account within the Strategy and is expected to work well alongside the Lutterworth centre.
<u>Scraptoft:</u> there do not seem to be many proposals for development of facilities in the area around Scraptoft.	Thurnby and Bushby parish council are looking at ways to enhance their facilities. Scraptoft has a new community hub as part of their offer.

The Panel

- i. RESOLVED to note the report and
- ii. RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that:
 - i. A sense check be carried out of dates for projects that have been substantially delivered since the Strategy was received in February 2020;
 - ii. The recommendation contained in paragraph 5.81 of the Strategy was considered to be too narrow and should be expanded to state that, although the preference is for the Town

- Centre site for a Lutterworth Leisure Centre, it may be difficult to find a Town Centre site and that text should be added to secure a Leisure Centre site on Lutterworth East for use in the future, if required;
- iii. Text be added to the Strategy as to how community buildings could be assisted to improve storage for sports equipment; and
 - iv. Text be added to the Strategy to work with the Canal & Rivers Trust to open up canals and towpaths for leisure use, including for cycling and kayaking.

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The Chairman welcomed Sergeant Darren Richardson of Leicestershire Police. The Panel received a report which discussed the performance of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) in reducing crime and disorder in the Year 2019/20.

The CSP was set up under Sections 5-7 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 and is made up of statutory services who work together to protect local communities from crime and disorder, and to help people feel safer. The services (known as the 'Responsible Authorities') include: Harborough District Council, Leicestershire Constabulary, Office of the Leicestershire Police & Crime Commissioner, Leicestershire County Council and Leicestershire Fire & Rescue. As a two-tier area, there is a CSP for the County (Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board) and one for the District (the Harborough District Community Safety Partnership). Harborough District Council leads and administrates the CSP on behalf of the Responsible Authorities.

Questions and comments were invited from the Panel and the following were noted:

Question/ Comment	Response
<u>Fatal Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs):</u> the number of these has increased. Does this relate to the M1?	The figures are provided by the Fire Service. The eight fatalities from last year relate to hotspots on the M1 and probably the A5. There have been no fatalities in the last six months. The number of collisions has not increased greatly; there were 39 in the first half of the year that the Fire Service attended.
<u>CCTV:</u> i. From a police perspective, would it be useful to have more CCTV cameras in the District and if so, where? ii. Have the promised extra cameras been installed in Lutterworth?	i. The CCTV coverage in Market Harborough is proportionate, but the quality of cameras could be improved. The systems in Lutterworth and Market Harborough have been upgraded over the last few years. Kibworth are purchasing camera for the Harborough District Council to monitor. ii. The cameras in Lutterworth have been installed. Information on other cameras would be passed to the Chairman of Scrutiny outside the meeting.
<u>Greenspace in Little Bowden:</u> an area on Northampton Road seems to be an ASB hotspot.	This could be included within the police's patrol strategy, which is amended each week, subject to the availability of resources.
<u>Comparison with other authorities:</u> is data available on the number of officers and response times for Leicestershire as a whole and also for each of the different district and borough councils, so that comparisons can be made with the coverage for Harborough?	The new policing model started in March, with a move away from reactive policing using non-local officers, to one of more localised policing, mainly from Market Harborough or Wigston. Staffing numbers cannot be provided, but have increased

	since March. Response times could be included in the data going forward.
<u>Fatal Four</u> : could more information be provided on the causes of fatalities in RTCs?	It was AGREED that data on the causes of RTCs would be included in future, if available.
<u>Communications</u> : i. what is the current situation regarding publicising the work of the Community Safety Partnership? ii. the police used to attend meetings of parish councils. Could this be continued via remote technology?	i. The Swift Flash is being used regularly for the Lutterworth area. Quarterly newsletters are put out by the Partnership and the police send out monthly newsletters to parish councils. Upcoming campaigns are included in the Members' newsletter. ii. The Community Safety Partnership team are happy to attend parish meetings if there is something specific to be discussed. It was AGREED that a briefing note would be circulated to parish councils.
<u>Perception of crime</u> : is it still the case that the public are worried about crime levels, even though the district is a low crime area?	There is a movement back to closer working with communities, such as by holding Beat Surgeries, which are being planned. This will help the public's perception of crime levels.
<u>Shoplifting</u> : are reports of shoplifting followed up satisfactorily?	All crimes are recorded. The Police do not always attend issues of shoplifting, but will do so if the suspect is still at the scene of the incident. Evidence is gathered and shops are given the opportunity to submit CCTV information.
<u>Domestic violence</u> : are there refuges for victims to go to?	There are no refuges within the district, but there are some in Leicester. The Community Safety Partnership funds a JADA+ worker specifically for the district to work parttime with the families and children of those that have suffered domestic abuse. A perpetrator programme is to be introduced shortly, which will cover the county.

The Panel thanked Sergeant Richardson for his contribution and
RESOLVED to note the report.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER

The Meeting continued until 9.15 p.m., when in accordance with Part 4, Section 1, Paragraph 4.2 of the Council's Constitution (Duration of Meetings), the Panel

RESOLVED:

That the meeting should continue to allow the business on the agenda to be completed.

CHARITIES AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

The Panel received reports and presentations from the following guests on the work their organisations were undertaking and the outcomes and value for money of the core grants awarded to them:

- Liz Steiner Citizens Advice Leicestershire (CAL)
- Maureen O'Malley Voluntary Action South Leicestershire (VASL)
- Barbara Tallis Harborough in Bloom
- Peter Eddie Harborough in Bloom
- Stella Renwick Homestart South Leicestershire
- Roger Warmington Lutterworth Community Transport (LCT)

Questions and comments were invited from the Panel and the following were noted:

Question/ Comment	Response
VASL:	
Sources of funding:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. it was noted that, as well as receiving funding from the Council, VASL receives funding from Leicestershire County Council, the Lottery Fund and the Bowdens' Charity. The County Council contract is understood to be intended to deliver to Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Broughton Astley in the same way. To justify this Council's contribution, could clarification be given on the specific benefits that come to communities within this district? ii. it was noted that a substantial carry forward is shown in the accounts. Could this pay costs such as rent? iii. Could clarification be given on the distinction between the definitions of General Funds, Designated Funds and Restricted Funds set out in the report under the balance sheet at 31 March 2020? iv. What is the annual turnover and how does this compare with the size of the Council grant? v. Does VASL operate as a not-for-profit organisation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The County Council funding includes support for carers, which includes supporting family carers in Harborough District, and for a mental health project, which is purely in the Harborough District. The Lottery Project, which provides support for people over sixty, who are lonely and isolated, is also solely in Harborough District. The Transport Scheme is also only in Harborough District. This represents good value for money for Harborough District. Service delivery and value for money is intrinsic within the organisation, as shown by its small levels of supporting staff; 81 pence in every pound goes on delivery (compared with around 35 pence for other charities). The unrestricted funding from Harborough District Council and the Bowdens' Charity allows core costs such as rent to be paid without diverting money from projects. A detailed breakdown report can be provided. ii. The carry forward is restricted funding for specific projects. In addition, the Charity Commission requires six months of reserves to be kept. This accounts for all of the carry forward. iii. Designated Funds represent the reserves required by the Charity Commission mentioned above. Operational reserves are allocated by the Board each year to pump-prime projects which have been over budget. More detail can be provided from the treasurer if requested. Restricted funds are to cover project costs after the end of the accounting period. iv. Annual income is £526K and this is spent every year. The Council's contribution may be small in relation to turnover, but is critical because it is not restricted to specific projects and, for example, allows

	<p>bids for other projects to be developed. More detail can be provided from the treasurer.</p> <p>v. Yes, VASL is completely independent.</p>
<p><u>Demand for Services:</u> has there been an increase in demand for VASL's services since lockdown? If so, is it felt that this demand will continue to rise?</p>	<p>There has certainly been an increase in demand for VASL's support for people who are lonely and isolated. Demand relating to mental health is expected to increase further.</p>
<p><u>Young Carers Project:</u> this is a group that often seems to be neglected. How is VASL coping with this during lockdown. How effective are you in identifying these carers and do you have referrals from schools?</p>	<p>The Young Carers Group has had a number of new referrals this year and VASL works closely with schools and Barnardo's. Seventeen young carers are supported, currently meeting remotely.</p>
<p><u>Additional Questions</u></p>	<p>It was AGREED that any additional detailed questions, especially relating to finances, be sent through to the Council's Service Manager – Community Partnerships, so that VASL can provide the requested information.</p>
<p>Homestart South Leicestershire:</p>	
<p><u>Ring-fencing of funding:</u> the fundraising plan in the report indicates that the Council's funding is linked to the supporting families one to one home visiting service. Is this the case or is the Council's funding un-ringfenced?</p>	<p>The funding received is towards the delivery of services across the board. The fundraising plan was put together before the start of the last financial year and changes during the course of the year.</p>
<p>Where is Homestart South Leicestershire's base?</p>	<p>In 1999 Homestart received a lottery grant that allowed them to buy their own premises in Coventry Road, Market Harborough.</p>
<p>Harborough in Bloom:</p>	
<p><u>St Mary's Road:</u> why are there no planters in St Mary's Road? Is this linked to watering?</p>	<p>There is no water available on site to cover the length of St Mary's road. Watering is a major challenge and is outsourced.</p>
<p><u>Sponsorship:</u> do you think that you may lose some sponsorship next year?</p>	<p>No funding has been sought from sponsors this year. Sponsorship will begin to be sought again from April 2021.</p>
<p>LCT:</p>	
<p><u>Adaptation:</u> The Panel congratulated LCT on their adaptation to the pandemic.</p>	
<p>CAL:</p>	
<p><u>Expenses for next year:</u> this is shown as increasing. Is this due to increasing costs in running the telephone service?</p>	<p>This is due to a mixture of factors, but the phone system equipment does need to be replaced. The figures for next year are predictions.</p>
<p><u>Premises:</u> do you think your premises and premises costs may be too large in the year ahead, given that more may be achieved using remote meetings etc.?</p>	<p>The majority of the figure given in the report represents rent paid to the Council.</p>

ALL:	
<u>Format of future reports:</u> it was felt in future: i. that charities should identify specific outcomes in their reports that relate to funding received from the Council; and ii. that reports should be in such a format that actions can be associated with the Council's own priorities.	

The Panel thanked the guests for their work and for their contributions to the meeting and

NOTED the reports from the charities and voluntary bodies represented.

TO CONSIDER MATTERS OF URGENCY

There were none.

The Meeting ended at 9.38 p.m.