



Strategy and Resources Meeting
Tuesday 20th September 2022
The Trinity Centre
7:00pm

Present:

Cllrs S Ward (Chairman), Cairns, Cooper, Mackey, Parkin, Pears, Pocock and Raut.

In Attendance:

Olive O'Sullivan – Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mary Watkins – Finance Manager, Trevor Askew – Consultant and John Myatt – Consultant.

There were no members of the press or present.

19 Apologies for Absence

No apologies had been received.

7:01pm - Cllr Pocock entered during this item.

20 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Pears and Cllr Cairns both declared non-pecuniary interests as trustees of Royal Sutton Coldfield Community Town Hall Trust.

21 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved to exclude members of the public and press during discussion of item 34 under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s3.

22 Minutes of the Previous Meetings

In response to a question from Cllr Pears, the CEO confirmed that there is a meeting scheduled with the CEO, Cllr Ward and the Chief Executive of Birmingham City Council on 28th September to discuss the LUC Sutton Park report.

Resolved to confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 21st June 2022.

23 Matters Arising

In response to a request from Cllr Pocock on further details of the Town Ranger operating model, the CEO confirmed that this would be covered under the Agenda Item 26.

The CEO reported her disappointment that there was no further progress to report on the transfer of Vesey Gardens and Allotments and that this would be raised the meeting with the BCC Chief Executive next week.

The CEO reported that there had been discussions with a BCC cabinet member about moving the cycle hire docking station situated at Stonehouse Road and that a site visit was due to take place tomorrow at New Hall Valley Park and Rectory Park to look at potential locations for the relocation.



Cllr Parkin commented that the ‘friend’s of’ groups at each location may be able to help identify the best locations.

It was recorded that Cllr Cooper had advised that he no longer wished to be Deputy Chairman of the Strategy and Resources Committee. The CEO confirmed that election of a new Deputy Chairman would be on the next Committee agenda.

7:05pm Cllr Raut entered during this item.

24 Questions from Members

In response to a question from Cllr Cooper regarding the timetable for the transport hub, the CEO reported that consultants had now been commissioned and an inception meeting had taken place last week.

The CEO also confirmed that the dedicated webpage that simplified the technical and professional language of the Masterplan was launched in August and is available via the Town Council website. Work on the planned accompanying information boards for shop windows in the Town Centre, has been temporarily paused for additional work on the right messaging.

Cllr Cooper also asked if the Town Council would be taking over management of Sutton Coldfield Allotments from the 1st October and asked if the return of rents to allotments, as promised by the Town Council, would happen if BCC were to collect the rents this year. The CEO responded that whilst BCC had agreed in principle to the Town Council taking over the management of allotments from 1 October, no paperwork, had been received to confirm the arrangement BCC is due to collect the rents but these would be transferred to the Town Council. To avoid a delay in Allotments receiving the agreed 50% return of rents, the Town Council will arrange for these payments to be made while waiting for the funds transfer from BCC.

Cllr Parkin asked about the water pollution at Sutton Park as identified in the LUC report and asked if the Town Council were being kept informed of the progress of the Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP) investigation being conducted by Severn Trent; if immediate remedial action can be taken on any issues identified during the investigation and if the Town Council could be kept informed where Severn Trent have identified misconceptions to BCC and who is responsible for following them up. The CEO replied that the Town Council had not been kept informed and Cllr Ward asked the CEO to write to BCC to request this information. Cllr Pocock suggested that the Town Council take up BCC’s offer to join the Sutton Park Advisory Committee.

25 Minutes of Town Centre Regeneration Partnership (TCRP)

Cllr Cairns asked if the North Birmingham Integrated Care Board (ICB) had been included in the health hub discussions. The CEO confirmed that she has monthly meetings with the ICB and will provide feedback to and from them to the TCRP.

Cllr Pocock asked how community engagement for the environmental programme would take place. The CEO reported that the Community Engagement Officer had met with United Reformed Church and further site visits would take place including with ECO Sutton.

Resolved to note the minutes from the Town Centre Regeneration Partnership held 21st July 2022.

26 Town Ranger Service Update



Trevor Askew reported that discussions had taken place with Birmingham City Council (BCC) around what services an enhanced Town Ranger could deliver. Trevor reported that BCC get around 40 requests to plant trees in memorium and had indicated that this is a paid service they would agree to transfer to the Town Rangers. Cllr Mackey queried if BCC would be amenable to trees being planted on their land in the location requested by a resident. Trevor responded that his understanding was that BCC would be happy for the Town Council to take this service on. Trevor stated that some jobs, for example leaf clearance and fly tipping, were difficult to specify in a contract as jobs would be 'on request' but that provision could be made inside the contract for these jobs. The service going forward would be building on the knowledge gained over the last two years plus some reactive jobs.

Trevor answered a series of questions put forward by Cllr Parkin:

- They may be more staff or vehicles but different contractors would have different strategies for this.
- Services devolved to the Town Rangers, i.e grass cutting, would not offer a cost saving to BCC as the time and staffing saving would be transferred to other areas of work within Sutton Coldfield, further improving the standards across the town.
- 80% of the contract will be a programme of work with 20% left for reactive jobs.
- Fly tipping is not included as this hasn't been flagged as a significant problem, so this would continue to be the responsibility of BCC. Cllr Mackey stated there were a couple of hotspots, Trevor stated that small areas of fly tipping could be included and that he would pick this up with officers.
- BCC do quickly remove offensive graffiti but non offensive graffiti would be included in the Town Rangers contract.
- Further discussions around devolution of assets and services had not formed part of the discussions for this contract as asset transfers do take a long time to process and service devolution would not be achievable within the current budget for the Town Ranger service.

Cllr Parkin provided Trevor with some suggested amendments to the Bill of Quantities for Reddicap Ward. Cllr Ward suggested that officers circulate the Bill of Quantities to Councillors asking them to review their Ward and feedback any suggested amendments.

In response to a request to provide a detailed breakdown of responsibilities and limits of the rangers services to be published on the website for residents to see, the CEO replied that at present there is only a formal agreement with BCC Street Services although a number of jobs have been carried out on Highways land .

Cllr Pears asked that when the contractors bids were reviewed that the vehicle base and travel time be taken into consideration. He also asked who would receive the income from sponsorship of traffic islands, once the Town Rangers were maintaining them. The CEO confirmed that the income generated by BCC from traffic island sponsorship was not ringfenced to maintain the island that generated it and that she had requested that the Town Council be made aware of any sponsorship opportunities on traffic islands within Sutton Coldfield.

Resolved to recommend to Full Council an extension of up to 3months of the current contract with idVerde with a price increase in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in November 2022.

Resolved that Committee approve the proposed revised operating model for the procurement and delivery of the Town Ranger Service.



Resolved that Committee note the draft Bill of Quantities in Appendix 1 for inclusion in the Tender Specification for the proposed enhanced Town Ranger Service.

27 Multi Modal Travel Support – Festive Season 2022

John Myatt presented the proposal for Multi Modal Travel Support as a comprehensive approach to provide support for all methods of travel into the Town Centre over the festive period.

Cllr Pocock spoke in support of the approach to include various modes of transport and asked if this could be widened to include use of private hire vehicles, as this would support the hospitality offer in Sutton Coldfield.

Cllr Mackey supported the use of all forms of transport and noted that individual circumstances would mean that some people would need to use a car. He also stated that the Town Centre had a retail offer alongside hospitality.

Cllr Parkin supported encouraging people into the Town Centre and raised concerns about the car parking charges that had recently been reinstated at Anchorage Car Park, resulting in volunteers at the Vaccination Centre having to pay for parking. The CEO reported that the Town Council had made arrangements to reimburse volunteers for their car parking charges while negotiations were ongoing.

Cllr Cairns asked if the Sutton Coldfield Business Improvement District (BID) were working to bring stalls and markets to the Town Centre to ensure that there was plenty on offer.

Cllr Ward summed up that there is a need to increase footfall and support the Town Centre and he hoped that BCC would be in support of the proposal.

Resolved to agree in principle to develop a subsidised travel scheme for residents and visitors during the 2022 festive season for the Town Centre. A report will come back to Strategy and Resources on its proposed implementation at the next meeting scheduled for 11th October 2022.

28 Performance to Date

Resolved to approve the recommended budget adjustments as detailed in section four of the report.

29 External Audit

Cllr Pears reported that he had discussed this with officers before the meeting and that SLCC and NALC had strongly recommended that all smaller authorities remain opted in to the Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Ltd (SAAA) central external auditor appointment arrangements as opting out would be a potentially costly exercise.

Resolved to note the external auditors report and certificate for the financial year 2021/22.

Resolved to approve that the Town Council continue to opt into the Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Ltd (SAAA) central external auditor appointment arrangements.



30 Internal Audit

Resolve to approve that Auditing Solutions Ltd be appointed to provide internal audit services to the Town Council for the financial year 2022/23.

31 Bank Reconciliations

Resolved to note the bank reconciliations for June, July and August 2022.

32 Use of the Chief Executives Delegated Powers

The CEO reported that delegated powers had been used to approve continuation of the contract for the Regeneration Programme Director from 8th to 30th September 2022.

33 Date of the Next Meeting

Committee noted that the next scheduled meeting on the 11th October 2022 now clashed with a Birmingham City Council meeting that had been rescheduled. Cllr Ward asked Officers to look at alternative dates for the next meeting and circulate to members.

The public session ended at 8:18pm.

34 Exclusion of the Press and Public

a) Review the contracts for consultants and specialist advisors working with the Town Council.

Resolved to recommend to Full Council that Tile Hill continue to provide services of agency worker, Jan Rowley, as Regeneration Programme Director for a further period of twelve months.

Resolved to approve that Andrew Tucker, PJA, Clarity NS, Trevor Askew and LGRC continue to provide consultancy services to the Town Council, as needed, for the next 12 months.

b) Communications Support

Resolved that recommend to Full Council that StoryComms be appointed to provide communications support for six months at a cost of £21,000 plus a campaign budget of £30,000 to be funded from the Town Centre Regeneration earmarked reserve.

a) Town Council Insurance

Resolved that Zurich Insurance provide insurance to the Town Council for a period of three years at a cost of £2,850 for 2022/23.

The meeting ended as 8:33pm.