



NOTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP
TUESDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2016

Held at 7 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West Bridgford

PRESENT:

Councillors T Combellack, R A Adair (substitute for Councillor J Donoghue), B Buschman, M J Edwards, R A Inglis, R M Jones (substitute for Councillor K A Khan), A L R A Pell, F A Purdue-Horan, J E Thurman

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

P Berrill Broadband Programme Manager, Nottinghamshire County Council

OFFICERS PRESENT:

D Dwyer Strategic Housing Manager
D Mitchell Executive Manager - Communities
V Nightingale Constitutional Services Officer
C Taylor Community Development Manager
A Tomanek Housing Options Team Leader

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillors J Donoghue, K A Khan

13. Declarations of Interest

There were none declared.

14. Notes of the Previous Meeting

The notes of the meeting held on Tuesday 23 August 2016 were accepted as a true record, following the amendment of Stamford Hall to Stanford Hall.

Councillor Edwards gave Members an update regarding the May Queen picture. He explained that the artist had worked in the Nottinghamshire area and had married a girl from Scarrington. He stated that he was assisting the Executive Manager - Communities in finding a location for the painting to be displayed.

15. Update on the Delivery of Rural Broadband in Rushcliffe

Members considered the report of the Executive Manager - Operations and Transformation and received a presentation from Mr Berrill from Nottinghamshire County Council. He explained that Contract 1 had been completed and the County Council was going through the closure process. He said that Contract 2 had commenced in 2015 and would be completed by March 2018. Members were informed that gainshare had been built into the contract and the County Council would receive money back if the take up by residents on the new service exceeded targets. A target of 20% commercial

premises had been set and he was pleased to state that there had been a 34% take up so far, which meant that BT had released £2.2 million. Further money was available for the project as there had also been efficiencies made during Contract 1. Mr Berrill explained that this extra funding would be spent in the three highest priority districts in the County, Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood and Rushcliffe.

Members were informed that 80% of the Borough had access to an adequate broadband speed, which had increased to 92% following Contract 1 and would be 96% after Contract 2. A modelling exercise was being undertaken to ascertain how to reach the final properties. Mr Berrill produced a map which detailed by postcode how many properties did not have access to the technology. He also explained the challenges that the project was facing trying to identify exactly which properties were not covered. He stated that there were issues concerning the inclusion of new builds. Following a question he explained that they had approached the Builders Federation and were being notified about developments of over 30, however for smaller developments it would be beneficial for officers to collaborate. He also stated that suppliers were keen to build the technology into new builds as this was more efficient and cheaper than retro fitting. The Executive Manager - Communities agreed to provide details of the correct officer and confirmed that information was being disseminated. Following a request Mr Berrill agreed to provide an updated map following the end of the modelling exercise.

The Group queried how households could obtain faster speeds. Mr Berrill explained that the project supplied fibre to the cabinet and then it was dependent on the copper wire to the house, the further away from the cabinet the slower the speed. When a new cabinet went live BT would supply a list of postcodes however if properties were too far away from the cabinet then the project would class these as not served. He stated that some properties were served by a cabinet and others were connected to the exchange and he emphasised that it was the consumers' responsibility to contact their supplier to upgrade their supply as it was not automatically done. This could involve an additional cost.

With regard to the prioritisation of rural enterprises and farms Mr Berrill stated that this had been the original intention however, it had been decided that these were often the most costly installations and therefore efficiencies needed to be realised by building out from the conurbations. He informed Members that there was a broadband voucher for purchasing satellite or wireless connections of up to 2 mbps available until those properties were served.

AGREED that the Community Development Group had considered and made comments on the presentation on the rollout of fibre broadband in the Borough.

16. South Nottinghamshire Homelessness Strategy and Review

The Group received a presentation from the Strategic Housing Manager regarding the development of a new Strategy for 2017- 2021 and the key achievements of the present Strategy. She stated that key partners had been contacted for pre-consultation input into the document and that the document

was now out for consultation until 6 February 2017. All Members would be consulted on proposal and it was anticipated that there would be a draft produced in March which would be presented to Cabinet for approval in May 2017.

Members were informed that the production of a Strategy was a statutory duty for local authorities every five years and that the new Strategy would be the second in collaboration with Broxtowe and Gedling Borough Councils. It was felt that this was an excellent example of effective partnership working, which included the monitoring of the Strategy by the South Notts Interagency Homelessness Forum.

The Strategic Housing Manager explained that there was a £40 million Government Homelessness Trailblazer fund which authorities could bid for and that officers were working with colleagues from Nottingham City Council , Broxtowe and Gedling Borough Councils to prepare a submission.

With regard to the present Strategy the Strategic Housing Manager stated that the achievements set out a framework for continued improvements for the new Strategy. She outlined the three themes of the Strategy and gave examples of the key achievements, including negotiating for affordable housing on new developments, advice and assistance to approximately 4,000 people, awareness raising, etc. Members were informed that nearly 1,000 households had had their homelessness prevented and the Borough had a very low number of homeless applications where intervention was not able to resolve this. The Council had also worked in partnership with other agencies to assist people, including targeted support for vulnerable adults, the First Lets private rented initiative and working with health colleagues.

The Strategic Housing Manager outlined some of the challenges identified for the service including reducing resources in partner support services. It was noted that due to budget cuts at Nottinghamshire County Council there was less support available for people, especially those with mental health issues, and officers were being presented with more complex cases to deal with. Members queried if this was a failure of the health system. Officers stated that there were a number of variables to people presenting as homeless and there was never just one cause. However, the reduction in support over the last twelve months had resulted in an increase in the number of complex cases being presented. Officers worked closely with colleagues from the Health Services on a Health and Housing Action Plan, and that Nottingham was seen to be leading way on this type of work. Also Metropolitan Housing Trust worked closely with the Council in considering applicants with rent arrears where other factors may have contributed to this.

Other challenges included the Welfare reforms, including Universal Credit and Local Housing Allowance changes, the high housing costs in the Borough compared to Local Housing Allowance rates, Right to Buy proposals and potential changes to the Government's allocation of funding towards Starter Homes rather than social rented housing.

The Group was informed of the new Homelessness Reduction Bill 2016/17 that had just had its second reading by the House of Commons. If this Bill was adopted additional resources might be required as there would be an

increased statutory duty to help everyone and not just priority groups and also the number of days when a person would be considered homeless would be increased from 28 days to 56. On a positive note the Strategic Housing Manager stated that the Council's Choice Based Lettings system was currently being upgraded to produce personal housing plans for people which was a requirement in the new Bill.

The Strategic Housing Manager explained that the new Strategy had five key priorities:

- Minimising demand
- Reducing the extent of crisis presentations
- Delivering effective services at the point of contact
- Providing appropriate accommodation options
- Moving people away from homelessness.

She outlined each priority and the outcomes that would be included within the Strategy's Action Plan. This included providing timely advice, have a strong multi agency approach, making more use of the private rented sector and enabling people to gain skills to reduce repeat cases of homelessness. Officers were also working with colleagues at the County Council to identify any services that were being duplicated and to streamline these.

Members queried the number of incidents of advice given and how this correlated with the number of homeless people there were in the Borough. Officers stated that anyone could ask for advice and that only 80 had been accepted as being homeless. With regard to rough sleepers Members were informed that the Council worked closely with the Police and that when the survey was undertaken this year there had been no rough sleepers whereas last year there had been three and five in 2012. The Friary which was based in the Borough supported people from a wider geographical area and the majority did not have a Rushcliffe connection. Officers stated that they worked closely with the Friary and that they would be included in the consultation. Also officers were working with the City Council on a bid to secure additional funding to assist destitute economic migrants.

Members noted that the wording in the proposed Strategy was less firm than in previous years. The Strategic Housing Manager stated that when the first Strategy had been compiled there had been greater funding opportunities than now, especially for vulnerable groups of people requiring support. Whilst these challenges presented, continued partnership working and the pooling of resources and skills would help address some of these issues.

Following a question, officers stated that the number of people presenting as homeless due to loss of housing would likely continue to increase which mirrored national trends. It was noted that 120 cases had been prevented through the use of the Choice Based Lettings scheme and that information on the prevention of homelessness was available on the Members' Extranet.

Members raised concerns about the difference between market rents and the Local Housing Allowance. Officers stated that this was a particular issue for Rushcliffe and with benefit capping there would be a greater shortfall, however the Council could still award discretionary housing benefit during the

transitional process to cheaper accommodation. It was noted that Broxtowe Borough Council had a large number of sheltered and ex-student accommodation available which would assist single people who only qualified for the shared room accommodation rate. Options were currently being considered on how this accommodation could be utilised as part of the Homelessness Trailblazer bid. The Strategic Housing Manager confirmed that the Strategy would include information on welfare reform, its impacts and actions to mitigate any adverse impacts which might arise.

The Group commented on the number of empty properties there were in the Borough and how the Council could assist in bringing these forward. Officers stated that there were 796 in total, of which 336 had been empty for six months or more, and that this was a small percentage of the properties compared to the overall number of dwellings in the Borough. Officers stated that they were working with private landlords and also that people were being encouraged through the Council Tax system to ensure that properties were not left vacant for long.

Following the adoption of the Strategy it was felt that the Group could monitor the Action Plan in the future.

AGREED that the Group had

- a) noted the progress on the draft South Nottinghamshire Homelessness Strategy and provided feedback on the broad principles and proposed priorities to preventing and tackling homelessness as part of the wider consultation process with key partners and stakeholders, and
- b) endorsed the draft consultation strategy prior to the final Strategy being considered by Cabinet.

17. **Leisure Facilities Strategy**

The Group received a presentation from the Community Development Manager regarding Group's on going consideration of the Leisure Facilities Strategy. He explained that they would be considering the quality of the Borough Council's Leisure Centres and quantity of provision for residents of the Borough as well as a review of the consultation. He explained that Sport England recommended that there should be a centre within a 20 minute travel time, which equated to approximately six miles, and Members were shown a map of the Borough and nearby Centres with the six mile radius highlighted. It was highlighted that this assessment was 'broad brush', so officers were working with Sports England on a planning model which would take into account all neighbouring authorities leisure provision, road networks, planned housing growth and the change from two to one leisure centre in West Bridgford.

The Group was given comparative data for all the Nottinghamshire local authorities and authorities that were considered to be similar by CIPFA. When looking at all community access facilities Members noted that Rushcliffe was well provided for.

The Community Development Manager stated that a condition survey had been undertaken in November 2016 in respect of Bingham, Cotgrave and Keyworth Leisure Centre and estimations had been made to keep the centres operational and functional, but not to extend provision or improve car parking. The largest costs were attributed to Bingham Leisure Centre, as this was the oldest centre, with keeping the centre waterproof being the largest cost. The condition surveys had also identified that within the next fifteen years a new sports hall roof might be required at Cotgrave Leisure Centre and the refurbishment of the roof might also be needed at Keyworth Leisure Centre. The survey had not included the New Rushcliffe Arena as a new facility or the East Leake Leisure centre as this was subject to a PFI arrangement that had refurbishment/improvement built in. Following a question the Executive Manager - Communities stated that appropriate improvements would be incorporated into future Capital Programmes.

In respect of the consultation there had been 40 delegates from 17 parishes at the Parish Forum in October, which had been followed by a questionnaire on playing pitch, skate parks and indoor provision. There had been a survey of the seven secondary schools of which five had replied. All sports clubs that used the leisure facilities had been sent details of an online questionnaire, which had also been available in a paper format; 25 clubs had responded and this equated to over 2,100 people; predominantly this had been from sports hall users. The majority of clubs were satisfied with the facilities provided and overall the comments were good however cleanliness of changing rooms and showers at two sites had received a poor rating and there was some dissatisfaction regarding parking at the joint use sites of Rushcliffe and Bingham Leisure Centres. Members were pleased to note that over 50% of the clubs had reported an increase in their membership which they felt was likely to increase over the next 18 months; with very few stating that the membership had declined. Officers confirmed that the results particularly in relation to poor hygiene would be raised with the Council's leisure providers Carillion and Parkwood.

Following a question regarding the new Arena site officers stated that they had been working hard with the Bowl's Club helping to support the establishment of a new committee. The Community Development Manager said that interest levels at the last meeting with the Club were strong and over 30 people attended to appoint the committee. It was mid season for indoor bowling and the impact of the new centre would be shown towards the end of 2017.

Members discussed the provision of facilities by developers through Section 106 funding. The Executive Manager - Communities said that no development would fully fund a new centre only additional facilities or refurbishment of existing provision. He also said that officers were working with Sport England on the current provision and what scale of facilities would be required with the planned increase in housing by 2028, the end date of the Council's Local Plan, in order to present robust evidence when discussing leisure contributions from developments.

AGREED that the Group had:

- a) Commented on the supply of leisure provision within Rushcliffe, identifying any key issues the refreshed strategy should consider; and

- b) Commented on the consultation undertaken and proposed.

18. Work Programme

The Group considered and approved its work programme. The Chairman highlighted the topics that would be considered at the Group's next meeting.

Date of Meeting	Item
21 February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure Strategy Development • Economic Development Update • Work Programme
May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leisure Strategy Development • Work Programme

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm.

Action Sheet

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP - TUESDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2016

Minute Number	Actions	Officer Responsible
15. Update on the Delivery of Rural Broadband in Rushcliffe	a) the Executive Manager - Communities to provide Mr Berrill with officer contact details b) Mr Berrill to provide the Group with an updated postcode map following the modelling exercise	Executive Manager - Communities Mr Berrill
16. South Nottinghamshire Homelessness Strategy and Review	a) Constitutional Services to provide Members with a link to the information on the Extranet b) Officers to include the Action Plan in the Group's future work programme.	Constitutional Services Executive Manager - Communities
17. Leisure Facilities Strategy	Officers to pass on club consultation responses highlighting hygiene information to Carillion and to Parkwood Leisure	Community Development Manager