



MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY GROUP
THURSDAY, 28 JANUARY 2021
Held at 7.00 pm via Zoom

PRESENT:

Councillors J Wheeler (Chairman), B Bansal (Vice-Chairman), G Dickman, L Healy, R Jones, R Mallender, D Simms, R Walker and G Williams

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

C Macleod - Director and Principal Consultant of KKP

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

L Ashmore	Executive Manager - Transformation
D Banks	Executive Manager - Neighbourhoods
D Burch	Service Manager - Neighbourhoods
G Carpenter	Environmental Health Manager
D Hayden	Community Development Manager
S Maher	Strategic Human Resources Manager
L Webb	Democratic Services Officer

28 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

29 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Jonathan Wheeler and Councillor Bal Bansal declared a non-pecuniary interest in the item 'Edwalton Golf Course Strategic Review' due to living close to the golf course.

30 Minutes of the Meeting 7 October 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2020 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

31 Edwalton Golf Course Strategic Review

The Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services introduced a report which detailed a position statement on Edwalton Golf Courses (EGC) and recommended alternative provisions for the asset of the Council.

It was noted that in January 2020, Cabinet resolved to review ongoing provision of golf at Edwalton as Lex Leisure had struggled to ensure the golf course retained any viability given the challenging operational environment (previously reported in financial reporting to both the Corporate Overview

Group and Cabinet), and that a report be commissioned to consider whether there was a golfing need for Edwalton Golf Course and an alternative options appraisal if a need is not established for consideration by the Communities Scrutiny Group.

The Group were informed that Knight, Kavanagh and Page (KKP) (which provides specialist services in sport, leisure, culture, regeneration and green spaces) was appointed to undertake a two-stage study in respect Edwalton Golf Course;

Stage 1: A Golf Needs Assessment

Stage 2: Edwalton Golf Courses Options Appraisal (Feasibility Study)

Clare Macleod, Director and Principal Consultant of KKP delivered a presentation to the Group which provided an overview of key findings and recommendations. The presentation covered:

- Background Information about KKP
- Edwalton Golf Centre
- Needs assessment and findings
- Feasibility study and findings
- Options
- Market Assessment
- Conclusion
- A future potential EGC Trading Account

Following the presentation, the Group asked several questions regarding the recommendations for alternative provision at Edwalton Golf Centre. It was explained that there was a requirement for a golf course in the area and that the development of driving range bays would enhance income potential. The development of a driving range would allow residents to practice golf, enable schools to visit and decrease the barriers often associated with taking part in golf. It was also emphasised that other options had been considered but in terms of viability the development of both a driving range and community facility and the continuation of the main golf course was the best way forward.

Members of the group raised concerns regarding the recommendation that some of the site could be developed for housing. It was debated that the site should be used to maximise sport participation and that bodies such as Sport England could object if it is perceived there is detriment to the leisure provision. It was also noted that there was no need for new housing in the area due to the Sharphill development nearby and that the Council should instead invest in community facilities for residents.

The Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services emphasised the importance of the consideration of value for money for all taxpayers and, as stated by KKP, other leisure options had been considered but were not considered affordable.

Following a discussion, it was agreed (outside of the meeting) that recommendation d would be changed to:

‘Golfing and/or other sporting and community use should be retained on the site. This could be achieved by developing and investing in the main golf course, a driving range and community facility and, if viable, other sporting activities, as part of the master plan work.’

Councillor Dickman was experiencing problems with his internet connection and so decided abstained in the following vote due to not being able to listen to the presentation or take part in the discussion.

Following the recommendations being put to the vote, the Group were tied in endorsing to Cabinet (recommendation (c)) that that at least some of the site should be considered for development for housing as part of the master plan work. Therefore, it was resolved that Cabinet should decide for themselves whether to resolve this recommendation at their meeting in March 2021.

It was RESOLVED that

- a) the significant asset Edwalton Golf Course should not continue in its current form, given its low usage and the current cost to the taxpayer;
- b) master planning work be undertaken for the site including a business case with a report to Cabinet in 2021 to tie in with the Local Plan process,
- c) Cabinet resolve whether at least some of the site (current par 3 course) should be considered for development for housing as part of the master plan work; and
- d) Golfing and/or other sporting and community use should be retained on the site. This could be achieved by developing and investing in the main golf course, a driving range and community facility and, if viable, other sporting activities, as part of the master plan work.

32 **Fly Tipping, Dog Fouling and Littering - Part Two**

The Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods presented their report which detailed an update on the Council’s approach to litter and dog fouling in the Borough. The Group had previously received a presentation which covered the Council’s approach, resources and performance in relation to reducing littering and dog fouling.

At the July 2020 meeting of this Group, Councillors acknowledged the very limited resources available to undertake enforcement of environmental crimes and requested that officers investigated the need for additional resources. , In response to the investigation the Council commenced a 12-month trial with a private sector partner “WISE” which provides dedicated resources to investigate all fly tipping reports and also undertake routine patrols at litter and dog fouling hot spots at zero cost to the Council. It was noted that “WISE” staff had delegated authority to issue fixed penalty notices (FPNs) where offences had been found.

The Group thanked the officers for delivering the presentation and asked several questions following the introduction of WISE. It was explained that WISE could be extended to cover Town/Parish Council land and encouraged town and parish council’s to contact WISE directly if they wanted more

information.

The Group were also encouraged to ask residents to contact Streetwise if they wanted to undertake a community litter pick. It was noted that Streetwise were happy to provide residents with litter pickers, bin liners and would arrange a free collection of the litter collected. The Service Manager – Neighbourhoods also explained that the Council encouraged local supermarkets to take responsibility for litter on their sites. The Group were also informed that the Council were always exploring new technology such as ‘smart bins’ which would notify officers when a bin would need to be emptied.

It was suggested that a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) could be introduced in new estates within the Borough as a deterrent for dog fouling. However, this would require extensive consultation with partners such as Nottinghamshire County Council and require sufficient evidence for its implementation such as the number of service requests for the Council to pick up dog fouling. The Group were pleased to be informed that a PSPO could be extended to include other types of behaviour such as requiring dog walkers to have sufficient bags to pick up dog fouling. It was also suggested that communications be posted on social media to inform residents that they could contact the Council to report dog fouling.

It was RESOLVED that

- a) The report of the Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods be noted;
- b) additional information be circulated to the Group regarding WISE and if they can act on parish/private land;
- c) the Council undertake a feasibility study for the introduction of a Public Spaces Protection Order for dog fouling;
- d) communications be posted to social media to inform residents that they can report dog fouling to the Council and; supermarkets in the Borough be informed by the Council to take responsibility for collecting litter on their sites.

33 **Rushcliffe Equality Scheme - Part Two**

The Executive Manager – Transformation presented the report which provided the Group with an update on the Rushcliffe Equalities Scheme 2021 – 2025. It was noted that the Communities Scrutiny Group had originally responded to proposals in respect of the review of the Council’s Equality Scheme and provided a steer on further work to develop a refreshed Equality Scheme before being submitted to Cabinet. This report provided an update on that work for consideration by the Communities Scrutiny Group.

The Executive Manager – Transformation explained that taking into account the feedback of the Communities Scrutiny Group it was proposed to put forward an Equality Scheme that kept its focus at a strategic level, setting out the vision and aims of the Council over the next four years. It was noted that annual action plans would be developed to progress against these strategic aims. The action plans would be developed through consultation with key stakeholders and groups, which will ensure that the actions are relevant and support inclusion and engagement. The Group were informed that these

actions would be embedded as part of annual service plans to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are integral to the work of the Council and the design and delivery of services.

It was noted that examples of priorities for action plans for 2021-22 were:

- Health inequalities, considering an asset-based approach to health and wellbeing.
- The impact of COVID-19 on certain groups in terms of health, safety, housing and employment.
- Lessons and messages from the community regarding diversity issues.
- Recognising and respecting fluid identities.

The report also detailed a list of projects and work delivered by the Council which highlighted the work already undertaken and that which was ongoing to ensure that the Council's services are accessible to all.

The Group raised concerns about the content of the Equality Scheme and suggested that characteristics should be reviewed and monitored for inclusivity with performance indicators. It was noted that data and performance indicators would be reported at a later date once the equality scheme was approved. Additionally, the Group were reminded that the diversity annual report which was delivered to the Corporate Overview Group looks at the diversity of the Rushcliffe Borough Council workforce in comparison to the diversity of the local community.

The Group were informed that the Council would work in partnership with other organisations such as Nottinghamshire County Council to support work experience placements as part of the Government's Kickstart scheme, which will provide work experience and skills development for young people who are at risk of long term unemployment.

The Group agreed that the Equalities Scheme would be reported back to the Communities Scrutiny Group within 12 – 18 months. The Group were encouraged to contact the Executive Manager – Transformation if there were any specific areas of focus or data which the Equalities Scheme could capture beyond the themes already listed in the document.

It was RESOLVED that

- a) The report of the Executive Manager – Transformation be noted;
- b) the proposed approach for the revised Equality Scheme be supported for submission to Cabinet and
- c) the revised Equalities Scheme be reported back to the Communities Scrutiny Group in 12 – 18 months time.

34 **Work Programme**

The Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods presented the report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services which detailed the Communities Scrutiny Group work programme for 2020/21.

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The Group were informed that there were additional items which were due to be discussed at the next Corporate Overview Group in March 2021. It was noted that some items suggested such as police resourcing and community safety would perhaps need to be scrutinised by the Group at a later date due to the guidance regarding communications during the pre-election period (also known as purdah) which would prohibit councils from publishing any material which appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party.

It was agreed that the Chairman would discuss the possibility of the Equalities Scheme to be scrutinised by the Communities Scrutiny Group during the next Corporate Overview Group meeting.

It was RESOLVED that

- a) The work programme detailed below be approved by the Communities Scrutiny Group
- b) If agreed by the Corporate Overview Group; a progress update on the Equalities Scheme be scrutinised by the Communities Scrutiny Group 12 months following its approval and implementation by Cabinet.

29 April 2021

- Carbon Management Plan Update

The meeting closed at 9.48 pm.

CHAIRMAN