

Minutes of a meeting of the Regeneration and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 28 February 2017 at Committee Room 3 - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 6.03 pm
Concluded 8.30 pm

Present – Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT	INDEPENDENT
Heseltine Mallinson	Farley Pullen Green Jamil	R Ahmed	K Hussain

Also in attendance: Councillor V Slater, Deputy Leader of Council and the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing

Councillor Farley in the Chair

47. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

The following disclosure of interests were received in the interest of clarity:

The Chair, Councillors Ahmed, Heseltine and Mallinson disclosed personal interests to the item relating to the Empty Homes Update (minute 52).

ACTION: *City Solicitor*

48. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

49. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no referrals to the Committee.

50. ACTIVE BRADFORD'S PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Active Bradford is a partnership of agencies from across the District that are committed to working together to increase the number of people being active and playing sport across the Bradford District.

The Strategic Director Place submitted a report (**Document “R”**) which was the final version of the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy Strategic Framework which had a vision to create a ‘healthy and prosperous Bradford where everyone chose to make physical activity and sport an every day part of their lives’.

The committee was asked to endorse the finalised version of the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy Strategic framework following consultation.

Following a synopsis of the report, a question and answer session ensued:

- In order to create a healthier population in Bradford a legacy had to be designed to pull the citizens towards fitness. How was the service intending to pursue this goal?
 - There has always been a slight struggle with people who were not keen in participating in sporting activities. The Government had embarked on a new strategy known as ‘Inactive People’ and other high level sporting activity showcases such as Tour De France would give people the incentive to become part of a sporting legacy nevertheless this was a significant challenge;
- What were the mechanisms behind engaging with people who were not involved?
 - There were various interventions taking place and every measure available was being addressed and being built in the process;
- Had the Wibsey ward been reached?
 - Every area of Bradford was part of the process and this was a slow transition;
- How were schools being engaged?
 - An Active Schools Group had been created in October 2016 for the sole purpose of engaging with schools. School Sports Partnerships across the District have been retained delivering services to schools, especially primary schools which have had an injection of around £1.5m government funding for PE and school sport each year;
- In addition to school children, how was the young population of Bradford being made to show an interest in the pursuit of a healthy living?
 - Bicycles had been donated to young people free of charge. In the meantime there were playgrounds, parks and a further 500 young people of all backgrounds in Keighley had participant in a cross country run;
- Not much had changed over the last 5 years and now with the reduction of resources how was the service intending to increase numbers of participants? For people to become active there was the element of a behavioural context. Yes, there was the issue of less funding but there was



no reason that the right message could not be delivered to the people to get more active;

During the discussion the Committee , Portfolio Holder and officers made the following comments:

- A significant amount of positive work was being undertaken for the purpose of delivering opportunities to all residents of Bradford;
- There had also been the issue of women and sports therefore this was another obstacle being hurdled by engaging with teachers, GP surgeries, activity leaders of all areas to motivate women into the area of sports;
- Obtaining the assistance of charities was another vehicle to assist in driving the agenda forward;
- The Council was drawing back on resources hence the district would be left with fewer physical resources every year;
- There had been no significant change in the area of sports in Bradford and therefore this agenda could be viewed as another paper exercise.
 - In response to comment, it was stated that in order to get people active there had to be a behavioural change. Of course the fact that there were a less resources available but this was no reason for people not to exercise.
- Women were least likely to get involved especially from minority communities and required motivating significantly through schools, leaders of communities and GP Surgeries. If GP Surgeries prescribed activities then this would be a great impact. The Bradford population was growing faster and this was a long term strategy. Even if schools had a lack of resources then this should not be the cause of no sporting activities for children;
- Occasionally sports could be considered only for the wealthier because following primary school, children in there secondary years had to pay for the cost of attending clubs such as football, rugby and the not so wealthy unable to afford the costs associated;
- Bikes could be rented directly from two train stations in the district. Either Bradford Interchange train station or Shipley Train Station. You had to register first on the Bike & Go website, then the member would be given a card and pay a small subscription. This scheme was run by one of the Rail operators and it was another factor towards a healthy lifestyle. The idea of building on this resource would be a big step towards making significant developments in behavioural change.

The Chair concluded the discussion of the item by stating that there was the importance of breaking down barriers within communities in order to drive this agenda forward and the key focus was to promote sporting activities throughout Bradford leaving no stone unturned in the process, therefore:

Resolved –

- (1) That the Active Bradford’s Strategic Framework for Physical Activity and Sport be welcomed and endorsed.**



- (2) That the Active Bradford Draft Delivery Plan be presented to Members in the municipal year 2017-18.

ACTION: Strategic Director of Place

51. UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE HOUSING STANDARDS TEAM

Housing Standards team (HST) delivers a number of statutory functions to address housing conditions across the district.

The report of the Strategic Director, Place (**Document “S”**) provided an update for members on housing conditions and the work of the HST taken to address these.

The Principal Operations Manager was in attendance and gave the following synopsis accompanied with a PowerPoint presentation. The main legislation enforced by the team was the Housing Act 2004. The legislation came into force in April 2006 and used the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) as the prescribed method of assessing a house's condition. Under the HHSRS officers were required to ensure that each property was assessed against 29 separate hazards. Using the assessment tool hazards were categorised as either Category 1 or Category 2 hazards.

Under the Housing Act 2004 the Council had to keep the housing conditions in their area under review and had a duty to remove Category 1 hazards where they existed.

There had been a total increase of 37% in service requests compared to the number received by this point in 2015/16. In total 180 properties were inspected during the project with hazards found at 133 rented properties resulting in 20 formal Housing Act Notices, including three emergency prohibition orders. In 10 cases a property was found to have a fire risk high enough to justify Emergency Prohibition Orders but either the tenants moved out the same day and works were completed, or the property was owner occupied, so advice, information and smoke detectors were provided.

Since the introduction of these Regulations the service had served a further 19 notices that required agents/managers to prove that they were members of an approved scheme and had issued 3 penalty charges for non-compliance.

A question and answer session ensued:

- What was the reason behind tenants being occasionally rehoused?
 - This was due to poor kitchen standards, electrical hazards, dampness inside the property and including other defects. Occasionally tenants had other agendas and therefore the services worked with other West Yorkshire authorities and to learn new ways in educating people to help themselves;
- What status was the relationship between the authority and the fire service?



- A healthy one and worked with one another;
- Did the service work with other organisations?
 - Liaising with environmental services and the fire service for the sake of hygiene purposes and fire safety were important factors;
- Tenants being rehoused were additional expenses. Could these expenses be reclaimed from bad landlords?
 - Unfortunately no but the authority could prosecute or a tenant could progress towards private action;
- Which area in Bradford was known for the worst properties?
 - Significant amount of problems came from older properties and were spread across Bradford;
- How many referrals had the service received?
 - Since the previous year, there had been a total of 1400 referrals which was an increase of 17%;
- How was the increase of referrals coming in being resolved by the service?
 - This was a national issue and as a result legislation was changing for more powers in the future. In the meantime there would be a website for tenants to refer to on matters of guidance for tenants;
- What assistance was provided to tenants?
 - Advice and support. If ultimately enforcement action was to follow then the authority could offer financial assistance in the means of a loan or grant to tenants;
- The results from the recent Stock Modelling report indicated that there were potentially as many as 11,000 Houses in Multiple Occupation (*a house in multiple occupation is a property rented out by at least 3 people who are not from 1 'household' and share facilities like the bathroom and kitchen. You must have a licence if you're renting out a large HMO*) (HMO) in the Bradford district, of which 1,399 may require a licence. How proactive was the service in this area?
 - Not all HMOs were licensable however high risk properties were continuously monitored and there were on going discussions with landlords and tenants in relation to responsibility; and,
- What was done to reinforce good practice?
 - The service worked closely with the Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) and other services of the authority to enforce good practice however despite the Police also being made aware of ASB, without legislation it was difficult to progress towards reinforcing good practice.

The Committee ended the discussion by praising the team of officers for the immense work that had been undertaken in inspecting a total of 180 properties during the project with hazards found at 133 rented properties resulting in 20 formal Housing Act Notices, including three emergency prohibition orders.

Resolved –

That the report be welcomed and officers be thanked for their work. That an update report be presented to the Regeneration and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the municipal year 2017-18.



ACTION: Strategic Director of Place

52. EMPTY HOMES UPDATE

The report of the Strategic Director Place (**Document “T”**) provided an update on the Council’s empty homes programme of work and introduced the draft Empty Homes Delivery Plan.

The Principal Operations Manager was in attendance and gave a synopsis of the report.

A question and answer session ensued:

- Was there a specific reason why City ward had the most long term empty properties in Bradford?
 - This was due to properties being flats and were not necessarily targeted by the service because they were not problematic long term empty properties;
- Was it possible for the authority to get involved if empty properties caused problems?
 - An alternative use would always be considered initially;
- At what point was a home no longer considered as a home?
 - There was an acceptance that there are empty properties in cities but the authority always dealt with the most nuisance empty properties because owners of empty properties also had a legal right. There was also the element of a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) but an element of cost to the authority was also attached to this factor;
- Did the authority have any forms of agreements with developers in relation to empty homes that the authority may issue a CPO but through agreement a developer could finance the purchase?
 - If an interested party wished to purchase an empty property then then details of interested parties are passed to the owners.

Resolved –

That the report be welcomed and the draft Empty Homes Action Plan be endorsed. That a further update on the work of the Empty Homes team be presented to the Regeneration and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 12 months.

ACTION: Strategic Director of Place

53. REGENERATION AND ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2016-17

The report of the Chair of the Regeneration and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee (**Document “U”**) presented the Committee’s Work Programme 2016-17.



Resolved –

That the Work programme 2016-17 continues to be regularly reviewed during the year.

ACTION: Overview Scrutiny Lead

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Regeneration and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER

