

Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee

Meeting held 6 February 2023

**PRESENT:** Councillors Richard Williams (Chair), Marieanne Elliot (Group Spokesperson), Sue Alston, Tony Downing, Alan Hooper, Bernard Little, Karen McGowan and Peter Price

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 An apology was received from Councillor Paul Wood.

**2. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3.1 No interests were declared at the meeting.

**4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

4.1 Minutes of previous meeting held on 20 Dec 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.

**5. WORK PROGRAMME**

5.1 The Principal Democratic Services Officer introduced the report. Attention was drawn to amendments and future work programme items. Councillor Elliot requested to add a Bio-diversity working task and finish group to the work programme and the Chair suggested that this be discussed at the next pre-agenda meeting. There was some discussion and suggestions around the timings of other future items.

**5.2 RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That:-

1. The Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including any additions and amendments identified in Part 1;
2. Consideration be given to the further additions or adjustments to the work programme presented at Part 2 of Appendix 1; and
3. Members give consideration to any further issues to be explored by officers for inclusion in Part 2 of Appendix 1 of the next work programme report, for potential addition to the work programme.

## **6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

6.1 Duke Arundel submitted the following questions which was read out and responded to by the Chair:

**Q1.** How many known access controls are in place on Sheffield Parks & Countryside service land of: -

- a) A or K Frame type
- b) Chicanes type
- c) Other

**A1.** Parks and Countryside don't currently hold this information. We will however add this point to our standard assessments etc in order that the information begins to be gathered and regularly reviewed as part of site reviews and projects.

**Q2.** In light of the Equality Act, Section 20 and local transport note 1.20 guidance, what is the policy of this Committee towards barrier replacement to meet statutory requirements?

It should be noted as well as the aforementioned EA2010 S.20, EA2010 Section 29 outlines that it is unlawful to discontinue or not provide a service, or access to a service, on the basis of a protected characteristic. A person making use of a mobility aid or invalid carriage falls under the purview of this definition.

**A2.** Where possible our parks are open without entrance restrictions but there are a number of factors that make this problematic on some sites including significant anti-social behaviour issues (including but not limited to fly tipping and off-road vehicle damage). In some cases, K barriers have been necessary to improve safety on sites and removing these might exacerbate issues on site making them less safe for all users. We review access to sites and would always consider the most accessible option and replace barriers with a more accessible option if appropriate.

**Q3.** Does Sheffield Parks & Countryside Service or the Council's Capital Investment Teams have any planned replacement of barriers with bollards, excluding those underway on National Cycle Network 67/627?

**A3.** There is no ongoing or planned replacement program. When renewals are required, or other improvements are proposed in the vicinity of a barrier bollards may be considered if appropriate. This decision would be taken on a site-by-site basis.

**Q4.** Will the Committee be working with the new active travel commissioner to make the parks accessible for everyone, regardless of physical ability?

**A4.** Yes, every effort is taken to improve all sites and active travel is an important priority for this committee.

6.2 Stuart Wilson submitted the following questions which was read out and

responded to by the Chair:

**Q.** What is the current position regarding the provision of an indoor bowling facility as part of the new development at Springs Leisure Centre, which was due to commence in 2023?

**A.** We are currently reviewing the financial modelling for investment in our leisure facilities, as part of this we are taking into account the impacts of increased inflation and energy pressures. Within the investment proposals we are exploring the options for provision of an indoor bowling facility. The original planning was based on the potential to provide a facility at the Concord site when that is rebuilt. Following feedback from the indoor bowling community we are now also exploring the possibility of an indoor bowling facility being provided at Springs. More detail will be available later in the year once the financial modelling and more detailed design work for the sites has concluded.

6.3 Members gave some comments around types of frames causing issues for cyclists, people with prams and peoples in wheelchairs and a suggested a policy review on this.

## **7. COMMUNITY SAFETY - BRIEFING ON 'ALWAYS AN ALTERNATIVE'**

7.1 The Head of Communities introduced this item and was accompanied by Angela Greenwood and Anthony, CEO of 'Always and Alternative'. A presentation was given on knife crime awareness which outlines local context, data on knife homicides, violence reduction unit, weapons disposal options and the tree of opportunity.

7.2 Members gave comments and asked questions. Responses were provided surrounding knife bins, stab proof bests, peer group pressure, impact of social media, educating young people, youth services and the possibility of adding knife crime onto the future work programme.

## **8. COMMUNITY SAFETY - BRIEFING ON VAWG**

8.2 The Domestic and Sexual Abuse Commissioning Manager introduced this item. A presentation was given which outlined violence against women and girls and included information on Sheffield headlines around domestic abuse, sexual abuse services, domestic homicide, public health systems review of domestic abuse response in Sheffield, responses to VAWG, White Ribbon campaign, action plan: changing culture, initiatives, sexual assault referral centre, Sheffield rape and sexual abuse centre, independent domestic abuse services, refuges, perpetrators and other providers.

8.3 Members gave comments and asked questions. Responses were provided surrounding work with student unions, a spiking working group, support for older women and developing healthy attitudes.

## **9. ALLOTMENT SERVICE BRIEFING**

- 9.1 The Allotments Manager introduced this item. A presentation was given which outlined an overview, staffing structure, demand, waiting lists across LAC areas, waiting list lengths, occupancy, budget overview, rents, rent payment options, factors impacting rent structures, creating new sites, clearing plots. Challenges ahead, engagement, historic culture, allotment societies, review of strategies, policy on burning on sites and links to local authorities.
- 9.2 Members gave comments and asked questions. Responses were provided around bonfires on sites, tenants handbook, individual plot ownerships, authority comparative prices and fires policy review. It was suggested to look at the land registry regarding plot ownership.

## **10. PUBLIC HEALTH PARKS INVESTMENT**

10.1 The Service Manager for Parks and Countryside introduced the report where the Committee were asked to approve an extension of the existing spending principles for Parks & Countryside's Public Health. The funding is used to support sustaining and improving the quality of Sheffield's green and open spaces in areas of Sheffield with the greatest health inequalities. The report also provides context relating to the use and value of green space public health funding.

10.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the **Communities, Parks and Leisure** Policy Committee:-

1. Approve the extension of the spending principles for Parks & Countryside's Public Health funding as described in this report to enable continued investment and renewal of Sheffield's Parks and Countryside sites.
2. Approve the spend profile for the funding as described in this report.
3. Request an annual brief to the committee on the investment plan as specific projects and opportunities are identified.

### **10.3 Reasons for Decision**

10.3.1 The reason for the recommendation is to ensure public health funding for Sheffield's parks and green spaces continues to be focused on the priority needs of targeted communities – as defined by the spending principles and that specific project proposals will be discussed with local ward councillors and brought to committee in an annual brief. This will enable the continuation of the work of the Parks and Countryside Service's green space investment supported by public health funding to tackle green space quality and access to quality outdoor leisure facilities for communities in the most deprived areas of Sheffield. The recommendations will allow the Parks and Countryside Service to be targeted in the use of public health investment, ensuring, where possible, that return on investment is maximised, and that investments are sustainable, and consequently that benefits such as the improved health and wellbeing of communities endure for years to come.

**10.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 10.4.1 There is an option to not revise these principles, however, with a changing green space landscape, it is prudent to refresh these, particularly post pandemic.

**11. PARTICIPATION IN THE NORTH-WEST AND YORKSHIRE BOOK CONSORTIUM**

- 11.1 The Interim Head of Libraries, Archives and Information Service introduced the report which sought authority to continue to commission library books and other materials, for Sheffield Libraries Archives and Information Service, for the next 3 years until 2026/2027 via a joint arrangement with the North-West and Yorkshire Book Consortium (NW&YBC).

- 11.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the **Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee:-**

1. Approve the commissioning and purchase of library books and other materials for the next 3 years until 2026/2027 through a joint arrangement with the North-West and Yorkshire Book Consortium (NW&YBC).

**11.3 Reasons for Decision**

- 11.3.1 Joining together with the 36 Authorities in the consortium, will ensure that we obtain optimum discounts and efficiencies leading to best value.
- 11.3.2 Options for the Council to purchase books and materials outside of the consortium are unlikely to secure the terms and discounts that would be on offer as part of a wider collaborative group. Additional costs would be incurred in resourcing any process and significant officer time would also be required.
- 11.3.3 It is essential that the Library Service continues to be able to provide a regular supply of new library books and other materials to our customers, both adult and children. Not having a mechanism for purchasing books and materials is not an option due to our statutory duty.
- 11.3.4 The current contracts run out on 31st May 2023. Usual practice is to order books 3 months in advance, so new orders must be placed promptly to avoid delay and meet the expectations of our customers.

**11.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

- 11.4.1 A separate independent process by SCC would involve additional workload and costs and the likelihood of less favourable prices and terms. In previous exercises, the terms/costs achieved by the consortium framework were possible because of the number of participating authorities and the economies of scale in tendering.
- 11.4.2 Not having a mechanism for purchasing books and materials is not an Page 57  
Page 6 of 6 option due to our statutory duty.

**12. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - MONTH 8**

- 12.1 The Head of Accounting introduced the report which brought the Committee up to date with the Council's financial position as at Month 8 2022/23 General Fund revenue position.
- 12.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the **Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee:-**
1. Note the Council's financial position as at the end of November 2022 (month 8)
- 12.3 **Reasons for Decision**
- 12.3.1 The paper was to bring the committee up to date with the Council's current financial position as at Month 8 2022/23.
- 12.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**
- 12.4.1 The Council is required to both set a balance budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.