

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19 JULY 2022

PRESENT:

Councillors M Wilcox (Chair), Norman (Vice-Chair), Cross, Evans, Grange, Leytham, Robertson and Silvester-Hall

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Eagland, Gwilt, Ho, A. Little, Tranter, A. Yeates.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Subject to amendments made as agreed at Council on the 12 July 2022, the minutes were agreed as a correct record.

4 HEALTH MATTERS

The Chair reported that as he had been on leave for the Staffordshire County Council's (SCC) Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on the 11 July 2022, the Vice Chair attended in his place. Councillor Norman, Vice-Chair then gave his report of proceedings of that meeting to the Committee.

The areas discussed at the SCC meeting included

- Integrated Care Systems
- Primary Care Update
- Update on Maternity Services

The Committee was pleased to note that the facility at Samuel Johnson Hospital would reopen although noted that it would be reviewed. Councillor Silvester-Hall stated that as a fellow serving member on the SCC Committee, she had requested that any changes to the service be reported back.

- Health Watch Staffordshire

It was noted that that the Vice-Chair's suggestion of training to aid effective questioning had been welcomed and would be actioned by SCC.

- District Council's Reports

It was reported that why the Robert Peel and Samuel Johnson items could be considered by the County Health Scrutiny Committee and not the replacement of the so-called temporary Burntwood Health and Wellbeing Centre. Each of these facilities catered for more than one local authority area. When this was raised previously, we were told that "it was a locality issue that should be dealt with via the Joint Code of Conduct at local level". It was noted that the Chair of the SCC Committee would get back to Councillor Norman after receiving more detail.

The work programme for the Staffordshire County Council's Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee was then presented and it was requested that a date to consider Mental Health Matters including CAMHS be pushed for as it needed to be discussed sooner rather than later and preferably before the new School Year. It was noted that there would be discussions in at a SCC meeting in August and outcomes shared at the September O&S meeting.

RESOLVED: That the information received be noted.

5 BURNTWOOD TOWN DEAL UPDATE

The Committee received a verbal report from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Development on progress of the Burntwood Town Deal. It was reported that it was a partnership between Staffordshire County Council, Lichfield District Council and Burntwood Town Council and it was noted that membership was made up of Councillors and Officers from all tiers. The purpose of the Deal was to provide guidance and coordination to a number of strategic projects to the District's second settlement including retail and health provision. It was reported that the partnership did not have a set meeting calendar but did meet regularly and included site visits to the area. It was also reported that the partnership engage with external agencies, land owners and developers to ensure suitable development is relevant and identified in the District's Local Plan as well as the Burntwood Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that the partnership also investigated funding opportunities and mention was given to Councillor D Ennis and his work with LDC Officers to look at creating a Burntwood BID. It was also reported that the County and District Councils were looking into a joint venture.

The following views were given

- That O&S should keep an oversight and receive updates on the Town Deal
- That the Action Plan seems vague and all show medium to long timeframes.
- There has been a history of bad planning in Burntwood which has led to difficulties now especially with trying to create a town centre.
- Current input of funding seems low for the higher tier authorities and on a par to what the Town Council is providing.
- That the Leader and Deputy Leader put pressure on SCC to move projects forward.

The following questions were asked

- Had the MP been contacted regarding a possible second application of the Levelling up Fund? It was noted that he would be asked to support a second bid. It was also stated that consideration would be given on how the UK Shared Prosperity Fund would be spent as this was a known source of funding as long as deemed acceptable.
- Would other routes of funding not be considered until the UK Shared Prosperity Fund had been dealt with? It was reported that the Council would not at this time as there would be £3.2m coming so would look at using that money.
- When will there be firm proposals for development of Sankey's Corner as it had been promised to residents for a long time and seems to have stagnated? It was reported that the Highway's scheme was being dealt with by SCC as the relevant authority. It was recognised that there was frustration at the lack of progress but there was still commitment by the District Council and partnership. It was also reported that it had been recognised that the Town Council had not been kept in the loop with some developments as well as they could have been and lessons had been learnt.
- It was asked how negotiations on the vacant public house at Sankey's Corner and how much of a barrier that had been on development. It was reported that the Town Council had led on these discussions. It was noted that there was a need for a community space in the area and with funding, this building could be viable although it was noted that it was not in the District Council's ownership.

RESOLVED: That further updates be given to the Committee when appropriate.

6 PROPOSAL FOR A YOUTH COUNCIL

The Committee received a draft report on proposals to establish a Lichfield District Youth Council. It was reported that the proposal was part of the approved Community Power Strategy to develop reciprocal relationships and combine institutional and community expertise' with a traditionally 'hard to reach' part of our community. The proposals and draft constitution of a potential Youth Council were presented to the Committee by the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement. The Chair of the Committee reported that during a recent visit to the Council House, he met with a student undertaking work experience with the Governance team and that this student gave their opinion and thoughts on the proposals.

The following views were given

- That largely, the Committee were supportive of the proposal of a District Youth Council
- That there needed to be clear definitions of the role of the Youth Council
- That updates be reported to the Committee during the pilot scheme.
- That some pupils leave school at year 11 to attend college and so needs to be considered.
- That other authorities be looked to for best practice ideas to help.
- That local youth debating groups also be considered as possible members although it needs to ensure that all types of young people and not just those higher performing academics are included.
- That also the age range of 11-18 would be inclusive, there would be risk of the younger children being fearful of speaking up in front of their older peers.
- That using SCC's School planning areas may help to define what schools to consider as some Lichfield resident pupils may attend Tamworth or Rugeley schools.
- Ensure Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils are elected.
- Ensure there is enough support from Officers including outreach work.
- That inclusion of special educational needs schools be considered.

The following questions were asked

- Was there a risk of missing the views of young people that are home schooled? It was agreed to look at this further as it was a good point.
- How safeguarding issues would be dealt with? There was no mention of DBS checks or similar. It was reported that as it was proposed to be dealt with via schools, safeguarding would be dealt with via those organisations
- Which schools would be the founding ones as mentioned in the report? It was reported that it would be an initial pilot scheme of two schools with the hope of rolling out quickly. It was envisioned that it would one school from Lichfield and one from Burntwood and it was noted that there was an interested school from Burntwood already.
- Was 6 pupils from each school correct and representative?
- What controls would be in place for the proposed allocated budget to protect the young people from allegations of inappropriate use of funds as it is public money and cannot afford to expose them to those risks. It was reported that Officers would keep a close eye on the budget and finances. It was noted that the budget would start at £10k and increase if required. One key need from that budget would be to provide transport for those who would not be able to attend otherwise to ensure no one was disenfranchised. It was confirmed that this would be contracted out.
- How will they get involved in the first instance? Will the school do elections
- How will success of the pilot be measured? It was reported that it would be developed over time and would be reported back to O&S. It was noted that Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services had and would provide support and training would be imperative. It was noted that expectations would have to be managed as not all wishes and views of the Youth Council would be deliverable.

- Why has a youth council been considered first as part of the Community Power Strategy? It was reported that the youth was a largely under representative section of the community who could not be elected as Councillors to give views.
- What services is it envisioned would be improved by the introduction of a Youth Council? It was reported that all services of the Council affected young people if not now but in the future.

RESOLVED: That the views of the Committee be considered by Cabinet the item return to the Committee for review when required.

7 COMMUNITY POWER STRATEGY PROPOSAL FOR AREA PANELS

The Leader of the Council gave a presentation introducing the idea of Area Panels. It was reported that there were no firm proposals as yet but it asked if consideration should be given to allocate some budget to allow Ward Councillors to make decisions with their communities that directly affect them. It was reported that these panels would include Ward Councillors supported by Officers would work within a well-defined framework with local community organisations and stakeholders.

The Committee gave the following views

- Any work of the panels would have to be fair and transparent.

The Committee asked the following questions

- How would it be different and compliment the work of Parish Councils? It was reported that communities could be smaller than the serving Parish Council especially in the Burntwood and Lichfield areas. It was also reported that it would be giving existing District Council budgets to those areas to meet its commitments, not creating something new.
- Is there an idea of what budget would be available and what would be Revenue and what Capital as both would be important? It was reported that this had not be finalised as yet but would be Revenue with a view of drawing from Capital fund avenues if required.

RESOLVED: That a Task Group be established to consider a forthcoming Framework.

8 WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme was considered. It was noted that there would be a special meeting in December to consider budget proposals. When asked, it was noted that Task Group meetings were arranged at request of those Task Group Chairs.

RESOLVED: That the work programme be noted.

(The Meeting closed at 7.45 pm)

CHAIRMAN