

**CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL**

A meeting of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel was held on 18 June 2018.

**PRESENT:** Councillors R Arundale, D J Branson, D Davison, S Dean, J Goodchild, L Lewis and Z Uddin

**OFFICERS:** A Allen, S Blood, C Nicol, D Johnson and A Pain

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Councillor S Biswas.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None declared

18/1 **MINUTES OF THE CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 23 APRIL 2018**

Item deferred.

18/2 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE - CHAIR**

Nominations were sought for the appointment of Vice-Chair of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel. Councillor Goodchild was nominated and seconded and, therefore, appointed as Vice-Chair of the scrutiny panel until amended by the panel.

**AGREED** as follows:

That Councillor Goodchild be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel until amended by the scrutiny panel.

18/3 **SETTING THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Democratic Services Officer presented a report that invited the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel to consider its work programme for 2018/19.

A list of potential topics, which were anticipated to be of particular interest to the scrutiny panel, and the suggestions received in respect of the scrutiny panel's remit were contained in the submitted report.

Members were advised that the topical issues and suggestions outlined in the report were merely proposals and the content of the work programme was entirely a decision for the panel to make.

It was highlighted that the Panel had a responsibility to address certain issues each year and to request updates in relation to the following:

- Community Safety Partnership.
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA).
- Domestic Abuse.
- Preventing Terrorism.

In addition to any agreed work programme topics, the Panel had previously requested update reports in respect of the following previous scrutiny topics, which would be considered at future meetings of the panel:-

- Reoffending and Rehabilitation.
- Selective Landlord Licensing

The scrutiny panel was encouraged to select two topics where scrutiny could make an impact, add value or contribute to policy development. In addition to the two topics, the panel expressed a need to receive update in relation to the topics mentioned above.

To assist with in determining possible Work Programme topics, the Director for Culture, Communities and Communications, Adam Allen was in attendance to provide an overview of the main services within the panel's remit and an outline of priorities, key issues and challenges for the year ahead. The panel had further invited Charlotte Nicol, Head of Culture to the meeting to be formally introduced.

The Director of Culture, Communities and Communications advised that he has recently joined the Authority and had been in post for 6 weeks, however held 18 years of experience mainly in the Greater Manchester area.

He outlined that the services within his area were key to delivering both the Physical Regeneration Strategy for Middlesbrough and the evolving Social Regeneration Strategy. As the panel were aware, Culture was key in cementing Middlesbrough's position as the city centre of the Tees Valley.

Although the Director advised that he was extremely impressed with the strong existing infrastructure in Middlesbrough, including for example, MIMA, the Theatre, the Captain Cook museum and major events such as the Middlesbrough Mela.

The Director discussed the following areas within Culture, Communities and Communications:

- Culture
- Stronger Communities
- Cohesive Communities and Migration through the North East Migration Partnership
- Community Learning
- Telling the story of Middlesbrough through Marketing and Communications

## **CULTURE**

In June 2018, the newly refurbished Town Hall opened to the public. The Town Hall would raise the cultural offer of the Town, attracting a wider audience both demographically and geographically. The approach to the Town Hall was making it a Town Hall for the 21st Century and for the people of Middlesbrough. The Town Hall team would ensure it had a community focus to ensure the public see it as 'their' Town Hall. The Council would like to see Middlesbrough as the central venue for the Tees Valley in the future. The Arts Council, which was the major funder would allow the Town Hall to provide a high quality programme.

Whilst the major Cultural focus would be on the Town Hall, the panel were made aware that the Council would be looking at development plans for the Middlesbrough Theatre, the Dorman Museum and Central Library.

A member also raised the Captain Cook museum and the preparations underway for the 250th year anniversary. The member outlined that the museum must be seen as a key focus due to its historical context.

## **STRONGER COMMUNITIES**

The Director outlined that Stronger Communities continues to focus on those issues most important to residents, namely feeling safe in their communities.

The panel were thanked for their contribution and review on Selective Landlord Licensing and

they were advised that it has made the service rethink and consider different ways of working. The Council were currently looking to expand the scheme to another area of the Town, however as yet, the area was not confirmed. The panel had asked for regular updates on any expansion and the Democratic Services Officer outlined she would keep in regular contact with the Head of Stronger Communities to receive updates.

A member questioned the staffing fees of the Selective Landlord Licensing Team. The member was under the impression that the scheme was self-funding however the Democratic Services Officer outlined that the cost of the licence was based on the administration of the scheme and any income generated was reinvested into the scheme. Additional funding had been needed for the Neighbourhood Safety Officer, Legal Caseworker and Environmental Health Officer. However, the Head of Stronger Communities would be contacted to provide further clarity on this point.

The Council was also looking to expand the Integrated enforcement teams from the Town Centre to across the Borough. The Council would expand the approach to focus more heavily on prevention by including colleagues from Public Health, Children's and Adults services. This approach had been adopted in Greater Manchester and had outstanding results.

### **COHESIVE COMMUNITIES**

The panel were advised that cohesive communities was a key focus, both for existing diverse communities but also for those new arrivals such as Asylum Seekers.

Middlesbrough was host to the North East Migration Partnership and has had major influence in the national policy for Asylum Seekers. The Director outlined that this had benefited Middlesbrough in discussions with the Home Office to effectively manage the placement of those asylum seekers on bail. The Director further added that balancing Middlesbrough's social responsibility in this area whilst minimising any negative impacts was essential. Middlesbrough had been consulted upon the Integrated Communities Green Paper.

A member raised the Middlesbrough Mela and how it demonstrated outstanding community cohesion. It was now in its 28th year and this year would be held in Albert Park.

### **ADULT LEARNING**

The Director informed the panel that the Community Learning Service provided high quality services and was well respected. An Ofsted inspection was due early next year and it was hoped the result would reflect this. The service has expanded to provide learning for excluded school children and also managed the Councils' Apprenticeship scheme and their associated learning. The Director also emphasised that Community Learning was very focused on employability and getting people into work. The Director outlined that a new routes to work programme was at present working with 645 people who were struggling to gain employment. The service was leading on this work.

In terms of Apprenticeships, the Council is hoping to launch an Apprenticeship Strategy in the near future, looking at several aspects, one of which was attracting more young people into apprenticeships.

In terms of Adult Learning, a member outlined that in the past there was extensive adult learning courses available through Middlesbrough College, however this seems to have diminished over the years.

### **TELLING THE STORY OF MIDDLESBROUGH**

Telling the story of Middlesbrough was a vital part of the services which the Council provide. The Director outlined that it was not just Middlesbrough's heritage through museums and archives, but also the future by telling people of Middlesbrough's aspirations and potential. Middlesbrough will be developing, a branding for Middlesbrough this year that will support

investment and tourism to the town.

In terms of Culture, a member congratulated the Head of Culture and the Town Hall team for the amazing effort contributed to the opening of the Town Hall. It was felt the dance company which involved 100 volunteers from Middlesbrough was outstanding and should be commended. The panel were made aware that there was plans to have a regular dance session in the future for this group and they were looking to platform events.

Capacity building was also discussed, in relation to ensuring members of the community from all areas felt part of the town and take an active part in improving communities.

The Director referred to the 'Wigan Deal' , whereby the Council needs to be clear what it can provide and the public are able to contribute.

The Panel were made aware that working in partnership with the Combined Authority would be a key element of this, especially from a Cultural perspective. Middlesbrough wish to be seen at the City Centre of the Tees Valley due to the facilities and infrastructure, whilst working with the other Authorities.

A Member raised the need to ensure the Local Authorities work in partnership with one another, however also raised the issue of transport, which would need to be considered due to the lack of bus services to some parts of the town.

The Director outlined that some of the key challenges for the service for the coming year, were as follows:

- Developing community capacity and working with communities on co-design and coproduction.
- Expanding our integrated working and focusing on complex issues of individuals rather than traditional service constructs.
- Re-Commissioning service to support the vulnerable
- The Introduction of Universal Credit
- Addressing ASB effectively
- The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act
- Resourcing a very ambitious cultural and events programme
- Protecting our historical assets and cultural infrastructure such as the un-refurbished part of the Town Hall, our Archives, Central Library, Middlesbrough Theatre and our Museums.

The Director and Panel went through the suggestions of topics for the service area, these were included within the report, however included for example, Art organisations and Artists, Pilot integrated community safety and prevention model (town centre), Update on roll out of selective landlord licensing to other locations across Middlesbrough, Universal Credit , Homelessness provision and the Council's partnership working with the CVS.

The Panel advised that they would be extremely interested in seeing how Universal Credit effects the people of Middlesbrough and how the Community Voluntary Sector (CVS) could potentially assist with its roll out as residents need to understand the impact it will have. Adult Education would also play a key role in providing training on responsible financing.

The Panel had a discussion regarding housing and the issue of landlords splitting houses into flats (HMO's).

HMO's were 3 or more storeys, two or more households and some element of sharing facilities (toilet, kitchens and bathrooms), and must have 5 or more people living in the building. There was concern from the Panel that landlords were not receiving planning permission to convert these houses and as a consequence , conditions were appalling and anti-social behaviour was on the raise. The Democratic Services officer outlined that in previous meetings of the panel, they were made aware that the regulation of HMO's was

managed by Environmental Protection, however inspections would only be done if a complaint was issued. They raised concern that these were not being licensed and therefore conditions were deteriorating.

In terms of Selective Landlord Licensing, the Panel were conscious that this could not be rolled out Town wide due to cost implications, however as seen in Hartlepool, the streets monitored could potentially be 'hot spotted' depending on the level of need and whether it fit the criteria set out by the Housing Act 2004. The panel were advised that their report on Selective Landlord Licensing would be considered by the Executive in October.

From the Panel's discussions, it was agreed that the Panel would investigate the following topics:

- Adult Education , linking to employability, and
- Council's partnership working with the Community Voluntary Sector (CVS)

The Panel would also receive updates in relation to the following:

- RIPA
- CONTEST
- Reoffending and Rehabilitation.
- Selective Landlord Licensing
- Community Partnership
- Universal Credit

**AGREED** as follows:

That the topics listed below be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Board for approval and inclusion in the scrutiny work programme of the Culture and Communities Panel for 2018/2019:

- Adult Education , linking to employability, and
- Council's partnership working with the Community Voluntary Sector (CVS)

#### 18/4 **PROPOSED MEETING SCHEDULE 2018/19**

A provisional schedule of meeting dates, for the 2018/19 municipal year, was submitted for the scrutiny panel's consideration.

**AGREED** as follows:

That the proposed meeting dates, for 2018/19, be approved

#### 18/5 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD UPDATE**

The Chair presented an update on the matters that were considered at the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 11 May 2018 and 5 June 2018.

**AGREED** as follows:

That the updated be noted.

