CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURAL SERVICES AND SPORT
Tuesday, 15th June, 2010

Present:- Councillor St. John (in the Chair) and Councillor Falvey.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor License.

F8. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 1ST JUNE, 2010

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet Member held on 1st June, 2010 be signed as a true record.

F9. NOMINATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODIES/MEMBERSHIP OF PANELS AND SUB-GROUPS ETC. 2010/11

Consideration was given to the appointment of members to various Working Groups, Panels and Outside Bodies for the 2010/11 Municipal Year.

Discussion ensued on the memberships on various outside bodies and sub-groups, particularly relating to South Yorkshire Forest, South Yorkshire Joint Committee on Archaeology, South Yorkshire Sports Partnership, Play Pathfinder Project Board, Rother Valley Country Park Members' Steering Group

Resolved:- (1) That the following appointments be made:-

ROTHERHAM ARTS CHARITY/ROTHERHAM ARTS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Trustees:- Councillors Smith and Walker (Cabinet Member, Economic Development, Planning and Transportation and Senior Adviser);
Councillor St. John (Cabinet Member for Cultural Services and Sport);
Councillor Swift (from Regeneration Scrutiny Panel);
together with Elenore Fisher, Cultural Services Manager and Lizzy Alageswaran, Principal Officer, Community Arts.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FOREST

Members' Steering Committee:- Councillor Sangster and Wyatt.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FOREST ENVIRONMENT TRUST LTD.

Councillor Sangster.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE JOINT COMMITTEE ON ARCHAEOLOGY

Councillors St. John and Falvey.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE JOINT COMMITTEE ON ARCHIVES

Councillors St. John and Falvey and the Cultural Services Manager (or an officer from Archives and Local Studies).

SOUTH YORKSHIRE SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

Councillor St. John (plus support from Mr. Steve Hallsworth, Acting Director of Culture and Leisure Services).

SWINTON LOCK ACTIVITY CENTRE

Councillor Doyle (Ward 16 (Swinton)).

TREETON COMMUNITY CENTRE, PLAYING FIELDS AND MEMORIAL SCHEME COMMITTEE

Councillors Littleboy and Swift.

YORKSHIRE LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION

Councillor St. John, Cabinet Member, together with Elenore Fisher, Cultural Services Manager and Bernard Murphy, Manager, Library & Information Service.

BOSTON CASTLE PROJECT BOARD

Cabinet Member for Cultural Services and Sport, Councillor St. John (Chair);
Advisers, Cultural Services and Sport, Councillors Falvey and License;
Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Transportation Councillor Smith;
Senior Adviser, Economic Development, Planning and Transportation, Councillor Walker;
Councillors Hussain, McNeely and Wootton (Ward No. 2 (Boston Castle)).

CLIFTON PARK RESTORATION PROJECT BOARD

Cabinet Member for Cultural Services and Sport, Councillor St. John – (Chair);
Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Transportation, Councillor Smith;
Senior Adviser, Economic Development, Planning and Transportation, Councillor Walker;
Advisers, Cultural Services and Sport, Councillors Falvey and License;
Cabinet Member for Children & Young People's Services, Councillor Lakin;
Cabinet Member for Community Development & Engagement (also Ward 2 Boston Castle), Councillor Hussain;

Ward Members from Ward No. 2 (Boston Castle) and Ward No. 12 (Rotherham East) – Councillors Ali, Dodson, Kirk, McNeely and Wootton.

PLAY PATHFINDER PROJECT BOARD

Cabinet Member for Cultural Services and Sport, Councillor St. John (Chair);
Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Transportation, Councillor G. Smith;
Councillor Atkin, Chair, Wentworth North Area Assembly;
Councillor Dodson, Chair, Rotherham South Area Assembly;
Councillor Johnston, Chair, Rotherham North Area Assembly;
Councillor Parker, Wentworth Valley Area Assembly;
Councillor G. A. Russell, Wentworth South Area Assembly;
Councillor Swift, Chair, Rother Valley West Area Assembly;
Councillor Havenhand, Chair, (Substitute Councillor Falvey), Rother Valley South Area Assembly;
Councillor Whysall, Chair, Regeneration Scrutiny Panel.

ROTHER VALLEY COUNTRY PARK MEMBERS' STEERING GROUP

Cabinet Member Economic Development, Planning and Transportation, Councillor Smith together with Karl Battersby, Strategic Director of Environment and Development Services, and Steve Hallsworth, Acting Director of Culture and Leisure Services, plus three representatives from Oak Holdings.

ROTHERHAM LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK MEMBERS' STEERING GROUP

Cabinet Member for Cultural Services and Sport, Councillor St. John

TOWN CENTRE EVENTS GROUP

It was proposed that this group would merge with the Town Centre Marketing Group and become the Town Centre and Events Marketing Group. Membership and Terms of Reference were yet to be confirmed. A report was to be brought to Cabinet Member in the near future.

2012 LEGACY PROJECT BOARD

The Mayor, Councillor R. McNeely (2010/11)
Cabinet Member for Cultural Services and Sport, Councillor St. John (Chair)
Advisers, Cultural Services and Sport, Councillors Falvey and License
Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Transportation, Councillor Smith
Senior Adviser for Economic Development, Planning and Transportation, Councillor Walker
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Councillor Lakin

Advisers for Children and Young People, Councillors Havenhand and Currie
Councillor Fenoughty

(2) That membership of the South Yorkshire Forest and South Yorkshire Forest Environment Trust Ltd. stay the same at the present time and that the position and advice regarding the appointment of members to the Boards be received in due course.

(3) That clarification be sought on the membership of the Rother Valley Country Park Members' Steering Group and whether this could be extended to include the Cabinet Member for Cultural Services and Sport.

F10. CUSTOMER CARE – 1ST JANUARY TO 31ST MARCH, 2010

Consideration was given to a report presented by Emma Hill, Customer Services Standards Co-ordinator, which detailed performance statistics for Quarter 4 (January to March, 2010), against the Customer First Charter and suggested recommendations for improvement where necessary.

A brief summary was provided on performance statistics which were considered positive within Culture and Leisure showing a 100% target for letters acknowledged and responded to from the public within three working days and 95.4% of telephone calls being answered within seven rings, as opposed to 94% for the Directorate overall.

It was also noted that all complaints, comments and compliments for Environment and Development Services were monitored through the Siebel system and which saw an increase in the number of complaints received during this time period predominantly due to the inclement weather conditions experienced at the beginning of 2010. The rise in complaints was mainly around missed waste collections and missed theatre performances.

Resolved;- That the current performance be noted.

F11. CLOSED CEMETERY MEMORIAL MANAGEMENT

Consideration was given to a report presented by Jim Staveley, Development Officer (Land and Communities), which sought approval of the proposed new Closed Cemetery Memorial Safety Policy and the associated programme of safety inspections in Council maintained Closed Cemeteries.

'Closed' cemeteries or churchyards were those which have been closed by an Order in Council and were no longer used for burials. As a closed cemetery operator and manager, Culture and Leisure Services was required to have systems in place to control the risks to their employees, contractors, volunteers and members of the public from cemetery memorials such as headstones and from other elements like trees, walls

and paths. Responsibilities were set out in the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order, 1977 (LACO), Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 (HSWA74), and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999.

The main element in closed cemeteries requiring assessment and management were memorials such as headstones. Other cemetery buildings were not the Council's responsibility, but remained the responsibility of the churches. This report focused on memorials because of the potential severity of the risk of unsafe headstones. Other assets that Culture and Leisure Services were responsible for included trees, boundary walls, footpaths and grass and these were to be considered in a separate policy.

Culture and Leisure Services have consulted with neighbouring local authorities, including Doncaster and Barnsley, to examine how they managed their closed cemeteries. Poor execution of testing by some local authorities in the past highlighted the need to ensure that memorial testing was done in a sensitive way and was well communicated.

Ownership of memorials such as headstones remained with the family of the deceased and so there was a requirement to communicate with memorial owners and the community where memorials were found to require maintenance. Reasonable effort should be made to contact the family of the deceased. This may be difficult in the case of closed cemeteries where monuments typically dated from between 1750 and 1950. Only when there was an identified immediate risk of serious injury should action be taken without this step.

The testing of headstones could be an emotive activity if not properly communicated and the rationale explained. To avoid this and to ensure the work was done in a sensitive way, Culture and Leisure Services proposed to adopt the protocols used by Dignity plc for communication and inspections in Rotherham's open cemeteries. These protocols were formulated by the Council's Cemeteries Service prior to out-sourcing and were tested in 2005 by the Local Government Ombudsman, who deemed them to be fair and reasonable.

Due to the number of sites and headstones and the lack of specialist skills and machinery/equipment in-house, it was proposed that that Glendale Countryside, who maintained Rotherham's open cemeteries, operated by Dignity for Rotherham Council, would be appointed to do this. The estimated cost of this work was below the threshold set by Council Standing Orders requiring competitive quotations to be obtained. Glendale's operatives were experienced in all aspects of cemetery management and have particular experience in headstone testing in Rotherham. It was proposed that they would be contracted to test all headstones in the closed cemeteries, and also to make safe any headstone found to be 'immediately dangerous' (Priority 1) at the time of inspection, which would typically mean laying the headstone down.

Memorials identified as not an immediate danger to the public, but not fully stable may need action to make them stable in the longer term (Priority 2). Notices would then be fixed to such monuments and the grave owner requested to contact Culture and Leisure Services to arrange repairs. A follow-up inspection would be made within 12 months. If no contact had been made or repairs carried out on re-inspection, then the headstone would be made safe by laying down or dismantling. Memorials found to be stable (Priority 3) would require no action. After initial testing and follow up inspections, all headstones would need to be tested again in five years time.

Laying down or dismantling of headstones had been identified as the most affordable means of making memorials safe and mirrored management on Rotherham's open cemeteries, where grave owners (or other interested parties) did not present themselves to pay for repairs.

Discussion ensued on the sites of closed cemeteries and clarification sought on the one on Constable Lane. Its status could not be confirmed and would be investigated further.

It was noted that those headstones that required attention following inspection could only be repaired by an accredited stone mason.

Reference was also made to the publicity material and press releases about closed cemetery inspections and it was suggested that the most appropriate local media notifications be considered for each cemetery in turn in consultation with the appropriate Area Assembly.

Resolved:- (1) That the proposed new Closed Cemetery Memorial Safety Policy be approved for implementation by Culture and Leisure Services.

(2) That officers in Culture and Leisure Services be instructed to proceed with the commissioning of memorial testing in Rotherham Council-maintained Closed Cemeteries.

F12. REVENUE OUTTURN REPORT FOR 2009/2010

Consideration was given to a report presented by Nichola Stretton, Finance Manager, which detailed the performance against budget for the Environment and Development Services Directorate revenue accounts for the 2009/10 financial year.

The unaudited outturn position showed a balanced budget. This was a £246,000 improvement on the reported February, 2010 budget monitoring position.

At the close of the 2009/10 financial year the Environment and Development Services Directorate produced an outturn which showed a

balanced budget against a net revenue budget of £45,557,837.

The under spend position on Culture and Leisure Services had been achieved by:-

- The moratorium on non-essential spend and managed staff vacancies throughout the Service.
- The late opening of Aston Library and under spends on the Libraries Materials fund contributed towards containing pressures within Library Services.

The Service also managed to contain pressures within the following areas:-

- Costs associated with the Clifton Park contract which remained incomplete as a result of UCS Civils going into administration (£60k site security and fees).
- Reported pressures on the Theatre budget due to staff cover costs.
- Costs associated with membership of South Yorkshire Archives.

The under spend (£24,270) on WREN funded Third Party Payments was requested to be carried forward to ensure committed projects could be completed.

A carry forward of £10,000 was also requested to cover the expected, but delayed legal costs in relation to Bar Park transfer.

Discussion ensued on the proposals to transfer Bar Park to Rotherham and the need for a further report on the liabilities and annual maintenance/upkeep of this asset and on the future of WREN funding.

The hard work of staff in the profiling of budgets across the Culture and Leisure Service was acknowledged as was how the service had been managed within the resources available.

Discussion ensued on the operational costs for the mobile lending libraries and information provided on the current situation where one driver had left and the discussions taking place with Streetpride to ascertain if there was a way forward in order to deliver this service.

It was also noted that information had still not been received regarding the outcome of the Museum Accreditation Inspection.

Resolved:- (1) That the unaudited outturn position for the Environment and Development Services Directorate Revenue budgets for the 2009/2010 be noted.

(2) That support be given to the recommendations made to the Strategic

Leadership Team and Cabinet to approve the carry forward requests contained in this report

(3) That this report be referred to the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel for information.

(THE CHAIRMAN AUTHORISED CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM IN ORDER TO PROCEED WITH FEEDBACK FROM THE CONSULTATION PROCESS)

F13. ROTHERHAM GREEN SPACE STRATEGY - CONSULTATION AND FINALISATION

Consideration was given to a report present by Phil Gill, Green Spaces Manager, which set out details of the consultation on the Green Space Strategy which had taken place with a range of stakeholders. Principal issues arising from this, along with proposed responses, were set out in the report with changes having been made to the Strategy document as a result. Subject to these being agreed, the Strategy could now be forwarded to Cabinet for formal adoption.

Findings are also presented from a pilot study which explored how sites that could be surplus to requirements might be dealt with.

The consultation draft of the Green Spaces Strategy was approved by Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Development Services on 16th February, 2009. A programme of consultation then started in June, 2009 and continued through to March, 2010. This period was longer than originally planned due to staff shortages through the second half of 2009.

A wide range of stakeholders have been invited to comment on the Strategy, including Elected Members, park friends groups, parish and town councils, activity groups, statutory and non-statutory environmental bodies, local partners, major green space land owners, Council officers, neighbouring local authorities and local residents. A good number of responses were received, with most of the responses being largely supportive of the proposed vision, aims and objectives of the strategy, with a number of suggested amendments. The main issues arising were summarised and were set out in detail as part of the report, but focused on:-

- Improvements in parks should be backed by funding for ongoing maintenance.
- Emphasis on the importance of safety measures in green spaces.
- Concern about possible loss of green space.
- The role of green spaces in adapting to climate change should be more strongly emphasised in the Strategy.
- What more can be done to control dogs in parks?
- Importance to manage green spaces for biodiversity as well as other

functions.

- The Strategy needs to consider more fully possible future green space needs and supply, including for example school sites.
- What approach to take to standards on non-Council owned green spaces?
- Ideas to increase/support working with volunteers and Parks Friends Groups.
- Developing the role and training of Rangers as 'ambassadors' for green spaces.
- Provision for older teenagers.
- Green space access standards.
- Rating of outlying green space sites.
- Site specific comments e.g. new sites, suggested changes to site boundaries, requests that sites be deleted or added to the list of green spaces.

Proposed responses to these issues were provided, but in many cases this included minor revision of the Strategy text to state more clearly how such issues would be addressed. In a very small number of cases, changes have been made to the scope and content of the Strategy in response to comments. For example, some requests were received for specific sites to be added or removed from the Strategy and, where appropriate, these changes have been made. A request was also received for more detail to be given about how to calculate the amount of new green space that should be provided in new housing developments where demand could not be met by existing green spaces. Consequently, a formula had been proposed for creating 16 square metres per person expected to live in new homes.

A pilot study had been undertaken to guide the development of a process for the assessment of candidate sites for possible change of use and to assess their suitability for such treatment. This examined audited sites in Rawmarsh. Further work was undertaken to identify smaller maintained green spaces (i.e. less than 0.2 hectares size). Principal conclusions of this study were:-

- Few of the audited sites could be disposed of without leading to gaps in coverage (based on the proposed five minute walking distance standard)
- However, reduction in the size of certain sites might be an appropriate way forward
- A large number of smaller sites was identified, and a survey methodology proposed for assessing the landscape value of these
- Considerable officer time would be needed to implement the proposed assessment process to green spaces across the borough.

Further thought was being given to how this work might be carried out as part of the implementation of the Green Space Strategy.

Discussion ensued on the uncertainty surrounding the housing targets given the change in Government, public use of school green spaces, green space sizes and provision for older children (post 13).

Resolved:- (1) That the proposed consultation responses be approved and fed back to consultees

(2) That a further report be taken to Cabinet seeking Members' endorsement and adoption of the finalised Green Spaces Strategy.