

**CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE AND TOURISM
19th November, 2013**

Present:- Councillor Rushforth (in the Chair); Councillors Andrews and Dalton.

Councillor Whelbourn was in attendance for item F25.

There were no apologies for absence to record.

F20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

No Declarations of Interest were made.

**F21. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 17TH
SEPTEMBER, 2013.**

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism held on 17th September, 2013, were considered.

Resolved: - That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as an accurate record.

F22. RECEIPT OF PETITION - TRUEMAN GREEN, MALTBY.

The Cabinet Member noted receipt of the petition containing 163 signatures that was headed 'Save our Green Space. Say no to proposed play area on Truman (*sic*) Green Field' and 'Petition against proposed Trueman Green Play Park'.

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism inspected the petition documents that had been received.

The Leisure and Community Services Manager (Streetpride, Environment and Development Services Directorate) spoke about how the Department was currently co-ordinating information received from the petitioners and the community group that was proposing to create a play park on Trueman Green, Maltby. The Department was working with Maltby Town Council to decide how things might move forward.

Resolved: - (1) That receipt of the petition be noted.

(2) That the petition be referred to the relevant Departments within Environment and Development Services for investigation and research, and a report outlining the findings be presented to a future meeting.

F23. REPRESENTATIVE TO OUTSIDE BODY.

The Cabinet Member referred to a request that had been received inviting representation of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council on the Board of the National Coal Mining Museum.

Resolved: - (1) That Councillor A. Rushforth, Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism, be Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's representative on the Board of the National Coal Mining Museum.

(2) That Councillor J. Dalton, Adviser, Culture and Tourism, be her substitute.

F24. DIFFERENTIAL ALLOTMENT FEES AND CHARGES.

Consideration was given to the report presented by the Leisure and Community Services Manager (Streetpride, Economic and Development Services Directorate) that outlined a recent review that had been undertaken on allotment rents taking into account the different facilities available at each site.

Minute No. F31, (Fees and Charges, 2014-2015) of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism held on 15th January, 2013, recorded the decision to approve the Services' charges for the 2014-2015 financial year, which included allotment rents for that year. In order to achieve an agreed budget saving, allotment rents were increasing above inflation over a three-year period. The intention of the increase was to bring the Service to a cost neutral position.

A request had been received to review the allotment rent policy given that different sites provided different facilities.

The review had been completed and three proposals were put forward to the Cabinet Member, as outlined in the submitted report.

- **Option One:** - maintain current policy of charging all allotment holders the same amount per square metre and implement the proposed rent increase as previously agreed;
- **Option Two:** - classify sites A, B or C relating to the number of facilities that they have available. Class C sites would see a reduction on the proposed rent increase of 5%, Class B sites would see an increase on the proposed rent of a further 10%, and Class A sites an increase of a further 20%;
- **Option Three:** - classify allotment sites A (having both a toilet and a secure boundary) or B (does not have a toilet or a secure boundary). Class B sites would see a reduction on the proposed rent increase of 10%, and Class A sites would see an increase on the proposed rent of a further 5%.

The submitted report considered the potential risks and uncertainties of each proposed Option. These included tenants potentially asking for facilities to be removed from their allotment, or resist future development plans, as this may lead to an increased rent.

The Leisure and Community Services Manager confirmed that, historically, Rotherham's allotment rents were low compared to regional neighbours. At the end of the three-year period, the increases would mean that Rotherham was more in-line with regional comparators.

It was noted that any changes agreed today would require a twelve-month notice period and would be implemented from November, 2014.

Discussion ensued and the following points were raised: -

- Consideration of the actual cost increases resulting from Options Two and Three;
- The legal challenges that were being tested nationally in relation to allotment charges/rent increases being higher than other leisure service cost increases.

Resolved: - That Option Three be approved.

F25. THE FUTURE OF TOURISM AND THE VISITOR ECONOMY IN ROTHERHAM.

Further to Minute No. F12 (Communications Update) of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism meeting held on 9th July, 2013, the Cabinet Member welcomed the Head of Corporate Communications and Marketing (Environment and Development Services Directorate) and the Regeneration Manager (Planning and Regeneration, Environment and Development Services Directorate) to the meeting to present a report relating to the future of tourism and the visitor economy in Rotherham. The Cabinet Member had been receiving regular updates on the Local Authority's subscription to Welcome to Yorkshire under the communication updates section of her agendas.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (Minute No. 73; The Future of Tourism and the Visitor Economy in Rotherham), had considered this matter, which was part of their work programme, at their meeting on 15th November, 2013. The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, and the Scrutiny Services Manager, were also in attendance to report on the issues discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

As background to this issue, the report noted that, on 14th December, 2010, the Former Cabinet Member for Culture, Lifestyle, Sport and Tourism agreed to formally withdraw the council's tourism provision (including subscription to British Resorts and Destinations). However, it was agreed that the Council would continue its subscription to Welcome

to Yorkshire, the official destination management organisation for the region (Minute No. D44; Review of Tourism Service Provision refers).

The submitted report included the anticipated benefits of the Council's subscription that Welcome to Yorkshire brought to Rotherham. Following the decision on 14th December, 2010, the Local Authority did not have a dedicated Tourism Officer or team within its Service structure. It had become apparent through the on-going refresh of the Rotherham Growth Plan that a much wider tourism offer was required to support the functions including business tourism, sports and cultural events and leisure activities.

Tourism, in all of its forms, was an important part of the Borough's economy. The existing Growth Plan estimated that tourism was worth £225million to Rotherham each year.

The Local Authority's Service Level Agreement with Welcome to Yorkshire relating to the annual subscription was considered.

Discussion ensued on the known benefits to Rotherham of the subscription, and where potential improvements could be made to develop an increased Rotherham-based offer along with the measures that could be introduced to ensure that full value for money was achieved from the subscription to Welcome to Yorkshire. The existing Service Level Agreement was heavily marketing-based and appeared to be relatively generic, and it was believed that a more specific approach was required to allow benefits to be maximised for Rotherham. A number of practical steps were suggested to improve the support available for tourism, including an audit of all of the tourism assets in the Borough.

Resolved: - (1) That the report be received and its content noted.

(2) That efforts be made to determine the infrastructure existing within the sub-region relating to tourism and, in particular, maximising the Welcome to Yorkshire subscription, and the potential to increase this infrastructure.

(3) That Welcome to Yorkshire be invited to attend a forthcoming meeting of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism to outline the full provision available to Rotherham and to discuss possible changes to the existing Service Level Agreement

(4) That efforts be made to determine the viability of offering a placement to a Higher Education student in relation to Rotherham's tourism function.

F26. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING: -

Resolved: - That the next meeting of the Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism take place on Tuesday 17th December, 2013, to start at 10.00 a.m. in the Rotherham Town Hall.