

## Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Tuesday 22 October 2019

in Council Chamber, Corby Cube, George Street, Corby

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**Present:** Councillors Watts (Chair), Caine, Brown, Dalziel and Watt

Owen Davison, Parish Councils  
Gloria Ellenton, Corby Business Group  
Kate Booth, Tenants Voice  
Lyn Buckingham, Neighbourhood Associations

### 26. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Beeby, Dady and Reay.

### 27. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal interests they may have in the business to be discussed and/or indicate whether these were prejudicial or non-prejudicial, the nature of the interest, and whether they intended participating in the relevant agenda item. There were no such declarations.

### 28. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Members were asked to approve the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 27 August 2019, copies of which had been circulated.

#### **RESOLVED that:-**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 27 August 2019, copies of which had been circulated to Members, be agreed as a correct record.

### 29. Lead Member/Service Area Update – Community/Culture & Leisure

The Lead Member for Community, Cllr John McGhee and the Head of Culture & Leisure, Chris Stephenson, were present to update Members on their areas of responsibility. A briefing paper had been circulated in advance covering Community & Voluntary Sector, Woodlands, Parks & Open Spaces, Wellbeing, Healthier Lifestyles and Sport & Play.

Following the demise of Kimbolton Fireworks, the new provider for the fireworks display was Fully Fused Ltd who had taken on many of the employees of Kimbolton. It was hoped the event would be as successful as ever.

Preparations for a gold roman coin found locally to be displayed at the Heritage Museum were being finalised with support from grants and the Heritage Forum.

Health referral activities continued to do well and the Council had achieved 'Embedded Status' under the Northamptonshire Healthier Workplace Standards, the first Local Authority to do so. It was also good to have WREN funding back in place with a £60k award to rejuvenate the Stephenson Way play area.

Members congratulated the team on continuing to provide a varied and high standard service. The level of subsidy required for the swimming pool was queried, especially considering how well used it was. The Head of Service confirmed that the pool was doing well on income but such facilities were always high maintenance and staffing costs were also high, particularly as the Council paid the living wage. Utility and business rate costs were also significant and there was very little capacity to increase activity beyond current levels. Efforts to reduce costs where possible were continuing, eg LED lighting would be installed shortly. The Lead Member commented that the facility provided lots of benefit to the town and was well worth the subsidy.

Queries were raised in relation to cycling provision, particularly under S106 for Corby Walk. The path on one side of Oakley Road was very rough with tree routes, etc, and lighting in the underpass had not been working for some time. The Head of Service confirmed a report was going forward to One Corby Policy Committee on the Tesco S106 which provided £535k for a cycle link contribution and £265,000 for the Corby Walk Plaza contribution to support a

pedestrian and cycle route being established from the Station to Corby Town Centre. The proposal was that the work would be undertaken by Northamptonshire Highways as they had both the responsibility and expertise and an appropriate framework contract in place. The original Corby Walk proposal was not feasible so alternative improvements, including pedestrian/cycle crossings, were being considered. The Oakley Road underpass was also a Highway responsibility and the lighting issue would be raised with them.

Comment was made on the need to ensure the funds were used for cycling improvements and it was asked how the pool compared with others and what outcomes it delivered. The Head of Service said some like for like comparison information was available but not for 50m pools in towns of Corby's size. There were a number of 50m pools around/planned but they were all very different. Consideration was being given to getting a 50m pool group together to share experience. It was recognised that the future of the facility was a concern and it was also agreed that the cycle money should go on cycling.

The Parish Representative was keen to see more promotion of services and facilities in the rural areas and it was confirmed that there were some posters and newsletters which could be placed in village shops, etc. Much more promotion was taking place via web pages and social media these days and there were links to the Facebook pages and Twitter feeds from the Council's website under Culture & Leisure - <https://www.corby.gov.uk/home/leisure-culture>. The Love Corby forum and website (<https://www.lovecorby.co.uk>) also promoted local businesses and information related to leisure and tourism.

It was asked if consideration was being given to the future of services/facilities under Unitary arrangements. The Head of Service said there had been little discussion so far but he expected activity to increase in the near future and it was likely there would be two options, either a Town Council or a Trust arrangement. In the case of the pool, grant support would need to continue.

Queries were raised in relation to play facilities in new developments and it was confirmed that S106 bids were put forward wherever possible but there was a lot of competition for this funding. A number of facilities were being improved in the current year, inc Lyveden Way and Glastonbury Road, and £35k was available through S106 for Oundle Way in Weldon. On Priors Hall, larger neighbourhood facilities were being pursued in place of small localised parks and the same approach would be taken on the West Corby development.

Members thanked the Lead Member and Head of Service for their attendance and input.

### **30. Scrutiny Work Plan**

The work plan had been circulated for Members' comments and input.

The motion on recycling/climate change agreed at the previous meeting was still to be submitted and the Chair confirmed she would pursue this for the December Council meeting.

In relation to accommodation outside the Borough, Cllr McGhee did not feel residents were being served well by the current policy and he would be happy to take part in further discussions. The next Housing update was due on 4 February 2020.

### **31. Items from Forward Plan**

The Forward Plan was updated and circulated with the agenda papers for each meeting to enable Members to select items they wished to see brought to the Panel, in addition to key policy items which were brought forward to the Panel automatically.

No items were selected.

### **32. Close of Meeting**

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.