

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Meeting held 20 October 2016

PRESENT: Councillors Tony Damms (Chair), Nasima Akther, Sue Auckland, Michelle Cook, Dawn Dale, Keith Davis, Tony Downing, Adam Hanrahan, Mark Jones, Magid Magid, Anne Murphy, Zoe Sykes, Karen McGowan (Substitute Member - From Item 7 Onwards) and Bob Pullin (Substitute Member)

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received and substitutes attended the meeting as follows:-

Apology

Councillor Richard Crowther
Councillor Richard Shaw

Substitute

Councillor Karen McGowan
Councillor Bob Pullin

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 In relation to Agenda Item 7 (Call-in of Cabinet Member Decision: Asset of Community Value Nomination – The University Arms, Brook Hill), Councillor Mark Jones declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, as his wife was an employee of the University of Sheffield, and left the meeting during consideration of that item. In addition Councillor Adam Hanrahan declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7, as he was a current student at the University of Sheffield.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22nd September 2016, were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 In response to questions from Alan Kewley, relating to public engagement with the Safer and Sustainable Communities Partnership, the Chair, Councillor Tony Damms, indicated that a written response would be provided.

5.2 In response to questions from Martin Brighton, relating to policy, procedure and training with regard to Hate Crimes, the Chair indicated that a full written response would be provided.

6. CALL-IN OF CABINET MEMBER DECISION: ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE NOMINATION - THE UNIVERSITY ARMS, BROOK HILL

6.1 The Committee considered the decision of the Cabinet Member for Community Services and Libraries, made on 27th September 2016, to refuse the registration of The University Arms, 197 Brook Hill, Sheffield, S3 7HG, as an Asset of Community Value.

6.2 Signatories

The Lead Signatory to the call-in was Councillor Adam Hanrahan, and the other signatories were Councillors Sue Auckland, Steve Ayris, Penny Baker and Shaffaq Mohammed.

6.3 Reasons for the Call-in

The signatories had confirmed that they wished to further scrutinize the decision and the definition of 'community'.

6.4 Attendees

- Councillor Jack Scott (Cabinet Member for Community Services and Libraries)
- Victoria Clayton (Planning and Highways Lawyer)
- Dawn Shaw (Head of Libraries and Community Services)

6.5 Councillor Adam Hanrahan, addressing the Committee as Lead Signatory, explained that a definition of 'community' was required so that there was more certainty for groups applying for Asset of Community Value (ACV) status. He further remarked on the arbitrary nature of ACV status and wanted the Committee to discuss the definition of 'community' and refer the decision back for further consideration by the Cabinet Member.

6.6 Dave Pickersgill, representing the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), who had submitted the nomination for The University Arms to be given ACV status, then directed the Committee to the circulated letter from CAMRA which contained approximately 50 questions regarding the refusal to register The University Arms as an ACV. It had been agreed prior to the meeting that these questions would be answered in writing.

6.7 In response, Councillor Jack Scott indicated that the decision had been taken at the end of a long process and after careful consideration, but did concede that the legislation had been poorly drafted and that there was insufficient guidance available. He added that he understood the importance of the beer industry to the local economy. Councillor Scott went on to define "community" as "a distinct group of individuals or agencies who come together for a common interest". He also indicated that the questions posed by CAMRA would receive a written response and that he planned to send this by the end of the following week and that this response would be shared with the Policy and Improvement Officer for inclusion on the next meeting agenda. Commenting on the main questions posed by CAMRA, Councillor Scott stated that he had read all the appropriate documentation prior to

making his decision, adding that the Council's approach, whilst it might be different from that of other authorities, had been supported by Counsel's advice as being robust and proportionate. He considered that The University Arms was a public house which was predominantly used by students and staff of the University and had seen no evidence to the contrary. In conclusion, Councillor Scott expressed his willingness to meet with representatives of CAMRA in the near future to see if anything could be done to improve the process, adding that a possible way forward for The University Arms was for a further application to be submitted, which included additional evidence.

6.8 Questions from Members of the Committee

Members made various comments and asked a number of questions, to which responses were provided as follows:-

- A review of the process of registering ACVs was ongoing.
- The Sheffield Tap had been granted ACV status because the information supplied supported that decision. In the case of The University Arms application, there had been an objection from the landowner, which had been supported by good evidence, whilst less robust information had been provided by the applicant.
- The University Arms had stopped being a members club in January 2007.
- In this case there was a lack of evidence, not an evidence of a lack of demand for what The University Arms was providing. The decision had been based on the information submitted.
- It should be borne in mind that the decision had been made on the statements and evidence provided, but any future application would be viewed with haste.
- The Cabinet Member had deliberately not visited The University Arms in order to keep detached and maintain an objective approach. It was thought that Council officers had also not attended The University Arms, as this was important to ensure a fair hearing. However, site visits might be an area for consideration.

6.9 In summing up, Councillor Adam Hanrahan remarked that whilst the responses to Members' questions had been useful, there had been no real answer to his request for a definition of 'community'. He went on to refer to the community of students who used The University Arms and pointed out the similarities between The Sheffield Tap and The Bath Hotel, which had both been granted ACV status. Furthermore, The University Arms was included in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide. He went on to emphasise that a proper definition of 'community' was required so that groups could work out what needed to be included in any application. In conclusion, he requested that the decision be referred back to the Cabinet Member for reconsideration and so that a proper definition of 'community' could be determined.

6.10 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the report together with the comments made and the responses provided;
- (b) notes the decision of the Cabinet Member for Community Services and Libraries, taken on 27th September 2016, to refuse the registration of The University Arms, 197 Brook Hill, Sheffield, S3 7HG, as an Asset of Community Value; and
- (c) recommends that no action be taken in relation to the called-in decision.

(NOTE 1: Prior to the passing of the above resolution, an alternative motion, moved by Councillor Adam Hanrahan and seconded by Councillor Sue Auckland, namely to 'refer the decision back to the Cabinet Member for Community Services and Libraries for reconsideration and so that an appropriate definition of 'community' could be arrived at.', was put to the vote and negated.

NOTE 2: At this point, Councillor Mark Jones rejoined the meeting.)

7. LIBRARY REVIEW 2016 - FUTURE SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS FOR VOLUNTEER RUN LIBRARIES

- 7.1 The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Communities, which looked at what support was needed after 31st March 2017, when the existing support package was due to end, to enable the volunteer run libraries to be viable and stable into the future. The report identified the need for Associate and Co-delivered Libraries to have continued support from the City Council, looking at benefit and risk. The Committee was asked to consider the report, which summarised the issues that would be contained in a report to be submitted to Cabinet on 23rd November 2016.
- 7.2 In attendance for this item were Councillor Jack Scott (Cabinet Member for Community Services and Libraries), Dawn Shaw (Head of Libraries and Community Services), Nick Partridge (Libraries, Archives and Information Manager) and Darrell Porter (Volunteer Co-ordinator, Libraries, Archives and Information Service).
- 7.3 Councillor Jack Scott introduced the report, indicating that the current model was working well and also expressing the Council's indebtedness to the 800 volunteers who had made this possible. He also referred to the two public questions which had been submitted for this item regarding the re-staffing of the Walkley Library/Broomhill Library and a request for the Council to make representations to the Government to request funding to rescue and re-staff Sheffield libraries and added that a written response would be provided to these.
- 7.4 Members made various comments and asked a number of questions, to which responses were provided as follows:-
 - The surveys which had been undertaken did not consider any closures.

- The reported decline in visitor numbers did not only apply to the volunteer libraries, and was a trend nationally, and the numbers of loans referred to in a recent response to a Freedom of Information(FOI) request only referred to books issued from the Council's system, which all groups still offered . In addition to these loans, most volunteer run libraries had their own systems for loaning donated books, so the full picture was not reflected in the FOI data requested.
- It was important to stick to the current model which appeared to be working well.
- The volunteer groups had been involved in the production of this report through a survey and meetings with the Cabinet Member for Community Services and Libraries, and their experiences had been taken into account. Surveys had also been undertaken with customers and library staff asking for feedback on all library services in the City and the findings from these had been included in the proposals.
- Facilities were provided for the volunteers in terms of networking opportunities, meeting resources and training.
- In order to provide extra support, it was expected that the Council run hub libraries and staff would work closer with the volunteer run libraries.
- If at all possible, consideration would be given to directing funding to libraries in the budgetary process. However, it was expected that issues such as Safeguarding and Adult Social Care needs would take priority.
- There was a risk that individual libraries with low attendance figures might not get as many new books, so it was important to ensure that the existing stock was well circulated. There was also a provision in the proposal to resource the inclusion of donated books from the volunteer sector into the Council system.
- Over 800 volunteers had been trained in using the library systems and, initially, volunteers had shadowed library staff in the libraries that they were going to run.
- Consideration had not been given to having theme based libraries, such as science or by community heritage, but it could be something to consider for the future.
- The Library Service should be ensuring that the volunteer groups found out why any volunteers had stopped volunteering, to ensure that any mistakes did not happen again, leading to better retention of volunteers in the future.
- Work was undertaken with voluntary sector partners, such as Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS), to assist in upskilling the volunteers in such matters as fundraising and governance.

- Monthly meetings, which were supported by officers, enabled volunteer groups to share best practice and work together with the Council to maintain a healthy network of libraries in the City.

7.5 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks Councillor Jack Scott, Cabinet Member for Community Services and Libraries, and the attending officers for their contribution to the meeting;
- (b) notes the contents of the report and responses to questions: and
- (c) notes that a report on the Library Review 2016 was to be submitted to Cabinet in the near future.

8. SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL'S DRAFT COHESION AND INTEGRATION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

8.1 The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Communities, which explained what the Council's new Cohesion and Integration Strategy and Action Plan was, why it was necessary and what it would do.

8.2 The report, which summarised the issues that would be contained in a report to be submitted to Cabinet on 23rd November 2016, was introduced by Angela Greenwood (Locality Manager - Cohesion). Also in attendance for this item were Councillor Jack Scott (Cabinet Member for Community Services and Libraries) and Maxine Stavrianakos (Head of Neighbourhood Intervention and Tenant Support).

8.3 Angela Greenwood indicated that the Strategy adopted a local approach taking account of issues such as age, ability, class, race and religion, and setting out what the Council could do to enhance cohesion.

8.4 Members made various comments and asked a number of questions, to which responses were provided as follows:-

- Councillor Jack Scott, together with Councillors Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families) and Jayne Dunn (Cabinet Member for Housing) were members of the Cohesion, Migration and Integration Strategic Group.
- The PREVENT Strategy was linked to safeguarding and focused on those at risk of radicalisation and, as a part of this, a PREVENT Working Group had been formed.
- The £30,000 fund for groups to apply for, to undertake prevention work and create new innovative projects that aided cohesion and integration, came out of the Council's main Grant Aid budget. Access to this funding would commence on 1st April 2017.

- Training with regard to the Strategy could be extended to Hate Crime.
- An entire section of the Action Plan related to children, young people and families.
- Work was being undertaken to combine the PREVENT Strategy with cohesion, with some funding being available to such fora as women's groups.
- Suggestions for prioritising areas, having trained and paired mediators and holding ESOL (English as a Second or Other Language) courses in University premises were welcomed as positive suggestions.
- No decision had been made yet as to how the Roma health needs assessment would link with the Roma network, but officers were looking to engage with Roma organisations and local Members.
- The Police were looking at ways to improve the '101' service and the new Anti-Social Behaviour/Community Safety Team would be briefed in November 2016.
- The Anti-Social Behaviour/Community Safety Team would be resourced from the Council's Community Safety Team and it was hoped that efficiencies would be gained from this. Local Members would be kept informed of any developments.

8.5 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks Councillor Jack Scott, Cabinet Member for Community Services and Libraries, and the attending officers for their contribution to the meeting;
- (b) notes the contents of the report and the responses to questions; and
- (c) notes that a report on the Council's Draft Cohesion and Integration Strategy and Action Plan was to be submitted to Cabinet in the near future.

9. HATE CRIME TASK GROUP: UPDATE REPORT

9.1 The Committee viewed a video presentation on Disability Hate Crime which had been produced by Sheffield Voices, a group of people with a learning disability who run a self-advocacy group supported by Disability Sheffield. Members also received a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer, which provided a brief update following the first meeting of its Hate Crime Task Group. In presenting the report, the Policy and Improvement Officer referred to plans for evidence gathering and indicated that the Group would present its final draft report to the Committee for approval at its meeting on 16th February 2017.

9.2 Also present for this item was Maxine Stavrianakos (Head of Neighbourhood Intervention and Tenant Support).

9.3 The Chair, Councillor Tony Damms, indicated that the Task Group would concentrate on the reporting of Hate Crime in order to avoid duplication with other work which was being undertaken in this field. Members felt that the video was very powerful and that it could be used as a training aid. Suggestions were made for the video presentation to be used in connection with restorative justice programmes run by the Probation Service and for it to be viewed by Tenants' and Residents' Associations. Following on from this, it was suggested that a future Committee meeting could consider an item on restorative justice, with the co-ordinator of the Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team in attendance.

9.4 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the information contained in the video presentation and report; and
- (b) requests that an item on restorative justice be added to its Work Programme for consideration at a convenient date.

10. WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

10.1 The Committee received a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer which set out the Committee's Work Programme for 2016/17.

10.2 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the Work Programme 2016/17 as set out in the report and that, as requested earlier at this meeting, an item on restorative justice will be added to the Work Programme for consideration at a convenient date.

11. HATE CRIME AND HATE INCIDENTS 2015/16

11.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the contents of the Hate Crime and Hate Incidents 2015/16 report.

12. THE WORK OF THE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

12.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the contents of the Work of the Police and Crime Panel report.

13. WRITTEN RESPONSES TO PUBLIC QUESTIONS

13.1 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the contents of the Written Responses to Public Questions report.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

14.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday, 8th December 2016, at 4.00 pm, in the Town Hall.