

Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Wednesday 27 February 2013 at 2.00 pm

**To be held at the Town Hall, Pinstone
Street, Sheffield, S1 2HH**

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillors Helen Mirfin-Boukouris (Chair), Ian Auckland (Deputy Chair), Roger Davison, Terry Fox, Neale Gibson, Bob Johnson, Steve Jones, Alf Meade, Robert Murphy, Joe Otten, Sioned-Mair Richards and Steve Wilson

Substitute Members

In accordance with the Constitution, Substitute Members may be provided for the above Committee Members as and when required.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

The Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Committee exercises an overview and scrutiny function in respect of the planning, development and monitoring of service performance and other issues in respect of the area of Council activity relating to planning and economic development, wider environmental issues, culture, leisure, skills and training, and the quality of life in the City.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at www.sheffield.gov.uk. You can also see the reports to be discussed at the meeting if you call at the First Point Reception, Town Hall, Pinstone Street entrance. The Reception is open between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm, Monday to Thursday and between 9.00 am and 4.45 pm. on Friday, or you can ring on telephone no. 2734552. You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked * on the agenda.

Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Scrutiny Committee meetings. Please see the Council's website or contact Democratic Services for further information.

Scrutiny Committee meetings are normally open to the public but sometimes the Committee may have to discuss an item in private. If this happens, you will be asked to leave. Any private items are normally left until last. If you would like to attend the meeting please report to the First Point Reception desk where you will be directed to the meeting room.

If you require any further information about this Scrutiny Committee, please contact Emily Standbrook-Shaw, Scrutiny Policy Officer on 0114 27 35065 or email emily.standbrook-shaw@sheffield.gov.uk.

FACILITIES

There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall. Induction loop facilities are available in meeting rooms.

Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

**ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING SCRUTINY AND POLICY
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA
27 FEBRUARY 2013**

Order of Business

- 1. Welcome and Housekeeping Arrangements**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Exclusion of Public and Press**
To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public
- 4. Declarations of Interest**
Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting
- 5. Public Questions and Petitions**
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public
- 6. Petitions Referred from Cabinet on 13 February 2013**
To consider the following petitions referred from the Cabinet meeting held on 13 February 2013 and a presentation from Paul Billington (Director of Culture and Environment) thereon:-

(a) Keep Staff at Pitsmoor Adventure Playground and Verdon Recreation Centre

‘We the undersigned petition the Council to keep staff at Pitsmoor Adventure Playground and Verdon Recreation Centre and also allow time for local residents and users of the facilities to discuss the future of them with the Council before any changes are made and to seriously consider alternatives to current proposals, working with local people and organisations, so that the future of these important facilities can be secured’.

(b) Save Highfield Adventure Playground

‘We the undersigned, believe that Highfield Adventure Playground is a unique and valuable resource in Sharrow, not only for the children and parents that use it but also for the wider community and for Mount Pleasant Park. We feel that the proposal to remove the staff and some play equipment, from April, will have many negative social consequences for local children and our local community. We want the Council to show more support to keeping the playground open.’
- 7. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 21 March 2013.

ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

New standards arrangements were introduced by the Localism Act 2011. The new regime made changes to the way that members' interests are registered and declared.

If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its executive or any committee of the executive, or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** (DPI) relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you must not:

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business, or
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

You **must**:

- leave the room (in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct)
- make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.
- declare it to the meeting and notify the Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days, if the DPI is not already registered.

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your **disclosable pecuniary interests** under the new national rules. You have a pecuniary interest if you, or your spouse or civil partner, have a pecuniary interest.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner, undertakes.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period* in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

*The relevant period is the 12 months ending on the day when you tell the Monitoring Officer about your disclosable pecuniary interests.

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority -
 - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - which has not been fully discharged.
- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.
- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) -
 - the landlord is your council or authority; and
 - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -
 - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
 - (b) either
 - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Under the Council's Code of Conduct, members must act in accordance with the Seven Principles of Public Life (selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership), including the principle of honesty, which says that 'holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest'.

If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a **personal interest** in the matter which does not amount to a DPI, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. You should leave the room if your continued presence is incompatible with the 7 Principles of Public Life.

You have a personal interest where –

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or
- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.

Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously, and has been published on the Council's website as a downloadable document at [-http://councillors.sheffield.gov.uk/councillors/register-of-councillors-interests](http://councillors.sheffield.gov.uk/councillors/register-of-councillors-interests)

You should identify any potential interest you may have relating to business to be considered at the meeting. This will help you and anyone that you ask for advice to fully consider all the circumstances before deciding what action you should take.

In certain circumstances the Council may grant a **dispensation** to permit a Member to take part in the business of the Authority even if the member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest relating to that business.

To obtain a dispensation, you must write to the Monitoring Officer at least 48 hours before the meeting in question, explaining why a dispensation is sought and desirable, and specifying the period of time for which it is sought. The Monitoring Officer may consult with the Independent Person or the Council's Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from Lynne Bird, Director of Legal Services on 0114 2734018 or email lynne.bird@sheffield.gov.uk

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**Report to Economic and Environmental
Wellbeing Scrutiny & Policy Development
Committee
27th February 2013**

Subject: Petitions – Highfield and Pitsmoor Adventure Playground and Verdon Recreation Centre.

Author of Report: Emily Standbrook-Shaw, Policy Officer (Scrutiny)
emily.standbrook-shaw@sheffield.gov.uk
0114 27 35065

Summary:

As part of the budget setting process for 2013/14, changes are proposed to the way that Highfield and Pitsmoor Adventure Playgrounds, and Verdon recreation centre operate.

Petitions have been received opposing these changes, and have been referred to Scrutiny from Cabinet on the 13th February 2013.

At the meeting, the Committee will have the opportunity to hear from the petitioners, and receive a Powerpoint presentation from the Council's Director of Culture and Environment detailing the proposal and the reasons for it.

Full Council is due to discuss and make a decision on the 2013/14 revenue budget on the 1st March. Any recommendations or comments the Committee make will be passed to the relevant Cabinet Member for consideration in advance of the full Council meeting.

Type of item: The report author should tick the appropriate box

Cabinet request for scrutiny	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

Consider the proposal to change the operation of Highfield and Pitsmoor Adventure Playground and Verdon Recreation Centre; and the petitions opposing the proposals.

Category of Report: OPEN

1. The proposal.

1.1 The Revenue Budget 2013/14 report to Cabinet on the 13th February 2013 set out the following:

Activity Sheffield

Physical activity is important for your health. Being inactive increases your chances of being overweight or obese. You also increase your risk of coronary heart disease, some forms of cancer and other serious conditions.

We will continue to invest in programmes that encourage and support our least active communities to be more physically active.

The scale of the cuts means that we have to find savings from our physical activity programmes so next year we have to save over £400,000 on these programmes, with further cuts likely in future years.

We've prioritised lower cost and flexible services and will seek to shift some of our programmes away from the need for Council subsidy.

We will find £100,000 of the savings needed by reducing costs within Activity Sheffield – this will include reductions to management and administrative staff.

We've analysed all services provided by Activity Sheffield in terms of potential savings and the numbers of people affected. Given the hard choices facing us, we've therefore identified those services which could offer us relatively:

- high levels of saving (i.e. they require high Council subsidy)
- low impact on participation if they were closed (i.e. have low visit levels or serve only a small area of the city)

Currently, Activity Sheffield services range from £5 subsidy per visit down to £1.80 per visit. So for example, closing a service requiring £5 subsidy per visit would save £5 for every visit affected by the closure, as opposed to other services where the saving made for each visit affected would be much lower.

Our assessment has led us to focus first on those services which are delivered from our 3 fixed venues:

- 2 adventure playgrounds at Highfields and Pitsmoor
- Verdon Recreation Centre in Burngreave

All 3 are costly to operate with an average of almost £4.50 subsidy per visit.

They also serve relatively small areas of the city and attract almost all of their visits from the immediate surrounding neighbourhoods.

By comparison an Activity Sheffield frontline worker can operate across the city – using a range of indoor and outdoor venues. As a result, they offer a lower cost and more flexible alternative to our fixed venues. For example, a single worker can help 10,000 people get active at a cost of

only £1.80 per person, compared to our fixed venues which average less than 20,000 visits at around £4.50 of subsidy per person.

We therefore propose to withdraw the year round staffed programmes at the 3 venues and instead make them available to local groups on a for hire basis.

This means that community access can be maintained and local groups will have the opportunity to run their own activities at the venues on a regular or occasional basis.

The outdoor play facilities will remain accessible and free of charge to local people. Any lettings charges for use of the buildings will be consistent with our lettings policy. At the same time, the new approach will save us £200,000

2. The petitions

2.1 2 Petitions have been received opposing the proposed changes:

2.2 *Keep Staff at Pitsmoor Adventure Playground and Verdon Recreation Centre (2410 signatures)*

'We the undersigned petition the Council to keep staff at Pitsmoor Adventure Playground and Verdon Recreation Centre and also allow time for local residents and users of the facilities to discuss the future of them with the Council before any changes are made and to seriously consider alternatives to current proposals, working with local people and organisations, so that the future of these important facilities can be secured'.

2.3 *Save Highfield Adventure Playground (2446 signatures)*

'We the undersigned, believe that Highfield Adventure Playground is a unique and valuable resource in Sharrow, not only for the children and parents that use it but also for the wider community and for Mount Pleasant Park. We feel that the proposal to remove the staff and some play equipment, from April, will have many negative social consequences for local children and our local community. We want the Council to show more support to keeping the playground open.'

3. Recommendation

3.1 The Committee is asked to consider the proposal to change the operation of Highfield and Pitsmoor Adventure Playground and Verdon Recreation Centre; and the petitions opposing the proposals.

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