



# **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 30th NOVEMBER 2021**

**PRESENT:** Councillors D Maycock (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), P Brindley, M J Greatorex, J Harper, R Rogers, J Wade and Dr S People

The following officers were present: Sarah McGrandle (Assistant Director Operations and Leisure) and Jo Hutchison (Democratic Services, Scrutiny and Elections Officer)

## **41 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rosey Claymore, Sheree People, Jason Jones and County Councillor Thomas Jay.

Councillor Daniel Maycock chaired the meeting in Councillor Claymore's absence and Councillor Dr Simon People attended as Councillor Sheree People's substitute.

## **42 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021 were approved as a correct record.

*(Moved by Councillor P Brindley and seconded by Councillor J Harper)*

## **43 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **44 UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR**

The Chair reported that Councillor Claymore, and the two other Scrutiny Chairs, Councillors Goodall and Jay had met with the Executive Director, Communities to discuss the Recovery & Reset project and in particular the proposal for consideration of work stream areas by the three scrutiny committees.

The Chair reported that the proposal was that three workstreams; SMART working, Third Sector & Vulnerability and Customer Service Offer workstreams, were considered at the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee. Further it was reported that an overall Recovery & Reset work plan for the next 12-24 months would be populated and shared so that the scrutiny committees would have visibility of key decision points in respect of each workstream which could support activities being planned into each scrutiny committee's work plan (as required).

Councillor J Wade joined the meeting at 6.04pm.

## **45 LEISURE SERVICES AND OPEN SPACES OVERVIEW**

The Chair welcomed the Assistant Director, Operations and Leisure, Ms S McGrandle, to the meeting to provide an overview of the work undertaken in respect of leisure services and open spaces and to receive any feedback on further areas of focus which the Committee would like to consider.

The Assistant Director updated the Committee on the recent tender opportunity to appoint consultants to undertake the following work:

1. to renew the Council's open spaces assessment
2. to complete a new indoor and outdoor sports assessment
3. to undertake a leisure feasibility study for the new Gungate proposal

She reported that whilst there were several expressions of interest there were no returns to the tender and feedback was being sought as to the reasons for this. The tendered work would inform the Local Plan and planning decisions. It was reported that the Council was engaging with the companies who had expressed interest, but had not tendered, to understand the reasons, and following that the Council would consider whether to retender the work with different timescales, or whether to pursue other options to deliver the Council's requirements.

The Assistant Director reported on the impact of COVID on leisure services and open spaces, which was heavily impacted by indoor leisure facilities being closed and resulted in all Tamworth open spaces being heavily used. It was reported that street scene staff were impacted by requirements to isolate during the first lockdown, as well as revised working practices. Many volunteers supported at this time and worked with the Council. Following the gradual re-opening over the summer it was reported that there was still a heavier use of outside spaces and facilities than previously and accordingly work had been undertaken and was ongoing to ensure outside spaces were fit for purpose, including installing additional outdoor gym equipment in the Castle Grounds as well as providing additional information to support its use, installing table tennis tables, and additional picnic benches and benches and further the tennis courts in the Castle Grounds would be refurbished in the new year.

The volunteers at the seven local nature reserves in Tamworth had restarted activities from September 2021 and the Council was fully supporting these together with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust.

The cycle path networks in Tamworth, which was part of Staffordshire County Council highways network, was reported to be one of the most extensive in Staffordshire which was largely linked up throughout the town and it was reported that the County Council had offered to complete the missing links.

The Assistant Director reported that more events had been held outdoors over the last 12 months or so, including drive through cinema screening, outdoor theatre, food festivals and food markets, with a temporary outdoor roller rink planned for a week pre-Christmas.

The Assistant Director reported that Tamworth in Bloom would be back for 2022 and that this involved significant community involvement and that this planned to link in with the Commonwealth Games being held in the midlands in 2022.

The Assembly Rooms now had a cinema screen installed which would show daytime Christmas films and would be capable of delivering live screenings.

Overall, the work of the team had looked to adapt to what the local population wanted. The Assistant Director reported that the work being tendered would support looking at what the revised demographic in Tamworth wanted in terms of leisure and open spaces services and it was expected that the impact of COVID would be clear and this would help shape services locally.

The Committee commented and sought and received clarification in the following areas:

- the importance of promoting and supporting Tamworth by focussing on activities around hospitality, leisure and heritage, and the importance of installing benches to support the use of the outside space.
- the importance of publicity when organising live events.
- the Committee welcomed the work to connect the cycle paths and highlighted that it would be important to ensure that all users, cyclists and pedestrians, considered other users on the networks. Clarification was sought any consultation which had taken place with local cycle groups and it was confirmed that this would be undertaken as part of the sports assessment activities.
- The work of the outdoor team was praised, including the implementation of the new initiatives.
- It was agreed that the work which had been put out to tender would be likely to play an important role in shaping the strategic leisure offer locally and as such the Committee would welcome a further update from the Assistant Director on how this work would be taken forward following the lack of any tenders being received.
- Whether consideration had been given to seeking Green Flag status for parks in the town to help support leisure tourism. It was reported that this had been applied for this previously, and that it could be reconsidered, although the local nature reserves were already designated and if correctly marketed, these would support the leisure offer significantly.
- Whether consideration could be given to re-introducing trim tracks to Tamworth's parks. The Assistant Director reported that there were

conversations with local clubs to support schemes such as this, and similar schemes were planned as part of work around the community woodland, on open space on the former golf course.

- It was highlighted that as a borough Tamworth's obesity levels were the highest in Staffordshire and activities to address this would be important. It was noted that the risk assessments undertaken for the cardiac gym had highlighted that the current building and the vulnerability of the users indicated that this could not re-open in its current format.
- What events and activities were planned for the Jubilee and Commonwealth Games where it was confirmed that events were planned which would tie in to the Tamworth in Bloom work and engaging and working with local communities.
- In terms of the local nature reserves it was reported that the council works with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, and in certain areas additional volunteers were sought, as some volunteers had not returned following the pandemic. However, a new initiative involving younger people as Wildlife Rangers had been launched.
- Further details were sought on Tamworth in Bloom campaign and the long term vision for this given the changing demographic for Tamworth. The Assistant Director reported that Tamworth in Bloom was not all about the flowers and whilst the planting did aim to ensure that the town looked attractive for visitors, there was significant community engagement as part of Tamworth in Bloom and the judging route extended outside the town centre and involved the Community Fire Station and other community groups. There would be sustainable planting in many areas. Work on the nature reserves was a key part, including river re-profiling projects, boardwalk improvements, meadow creation, and this supported the town's success in the campaign. The evolution going forwards would be into what would be more sustainable.
- Requested that consideration be given for the future evolution of the town centre planting, in particular the Castle Ground beds, to include more sustainable planting and engaging with the public around this.
- Whether planting could be considered for additional areas of Tamworth, where it was reported that for all additional planting there were additional maintenance requirements and to extend into areas could be possible with community support from the areas.

The Committee thanked the Assistant Director for her attendance.

## **46 MENTAL WELLBEING THEME**

The Chair reminded members that the Committee had identified mental wellbeing as a theme which it wished to consider through its work plan and accordingly many of the reports and presentations considered so far this year had related to this theme. They included including presentations / reports from:

- the Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust, in respect of the delivery of local mental health services,
- the Assistant Director Partnerships covering the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership plan and other partnership activities to address health inequalities,

- the Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods on homelessness,
- the Assistant Director, Operations and Leisure on leisure and open spaces; and
- the Members Seminar in October 2021 where members received presentations from various local voluntary sector organisations including:
  - Staffordshire Council of Youth Voluntary Services (SCYVS)
  - Support Staffordshire
  - Community Together CIC
  - Heart of Tamworth
  - Tamworth Samaritans
  - Places of Welcome
  - Citizens Advice Mid Mercia
  - Tamworth's Befriending Service
  - And others.

The Chair reported that the Staffordshire County Council Health & Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee had an Inquiry day identified to consider further the Wider Determinants of Health across Staffordshire, and whilst details on the coverage of this Inquiry day were not yet available, it was possible that this could provide further information relevant for the Committee's consideration of the mental wellbeing theme.

This agenda item had been included to provide members with an opportunity to scope out further and identify any additional areas where the Committee wanted to focus further, through working groups or otherwise.

Councillor R Rogers left the meeting at 7.20pm

The Committee revisited suggestions raised at earlier Committee meetings and commented on the following:

- The benefits of encouraging all councillors to complete mental health first aid training to enable councillors to support residents.
- Food security, and also more broadly debt and insecurity issues, which local charities had highlighted were areas where local advice was being sought.
- To build on the experience of the work during the pandemic to support the vulnerable by further co-ordination of the relevant voluntary groups to support mental wellbeing in a focussed way through the partnerships team, by supporting and enabling local organisations to sign post to the relevant local group in Tamworth, and by utilising local support to help local residents access support whether in Tamworth or beyond.
- The benefits of further visible sign-posting in the borough to where mental health support can be accessed. The Committee requested that the Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust (MPFT) be invited back to the next Committee meeting to provide an update on the communication plan for Tamworth of the services available. The Chair agreed to liaise with County Councillor T Jay for his support in engaging Staffordshire County Council in seeking to ensure the delivery of mental health services locally

and to support in the communication to Tamworth residents of the MPFT services which were available.

**RESOLVED** that the Committee recommend to Cabinet that Cabinet's attention be drawn to mental health service delivery in Tamworth and request that Cabinet make it a priority for their time and concern.

*(Moved by Councillor Dr S Peuple and seconded by Councillor P Brindley)*

**47 RESPONSES TO REPORTS OF THE HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

There were no items to report to the Committee.

**48 CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS REFERRED TO THE HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FROM CABINET OR COUNCIL**

There were no matters referred to the Committee

**49 UPDATE ON HEALTH RELATED MATTERS CONSIDERED BY STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

The Chair reported that there was a written update of the 25 October 2021 County meeting.

In addition the Chair reported that he had attended the Staffordshire County Council Health & Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 29 November 2021 which had received an update on Public Health matters in Staffordshire, where broadly speaking there was improvement, in terms of sexual health.

The Chair reported that he had raised two local issues at that meeting:

- in terms of smoking cessation clinics, he had sought clarification in respect of the provision of both pharmacological and behavioural interventions where it was confirmed that both interventions should be available.
- in terms of the re-opening of a local GP surgery and responses which had been sought from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in that regard, where the chair of the Staffordshire County Committee had agreed to provide his support in communicating with the CCG.

**50 FORWARD PLAN**

No additional items were identified from the Forward Plan at this time.

**51 HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY WORK PLAN - 2021/22**

The Committee considered its Work Plan and updated it as follows:

## Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Work Plan

Work Plan 2021 – 2022		
Work Area Themes for the Year		
<b>1. Mental Wellbeing</b>		
Topics	Target Meeting	Additional information
Community mental health services transformation – pathways to care in Tamworth	Target – 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	New invitation to be extended to relevant Officer(s) & representative of Midland Partnership Foundation Trust
Leisure Services & Open Spaces	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2021 & 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	Invitation to be extended to Assistant Director Operations & Leisure
Substance abuse / addition		
Young people’s experiences in Tamworth		To capture the working groups learnings
Loneliness / isolation		
<b>2. Homelessness</b>		
Topics	Target Meeting	Additional information
Overview of services available to rough sleepers / homeless people in Tamworth		Suggested invitation to representatives of Heart of Tamworth and/ or other relevant voluntary organisations
Housing Allocations Policy – post implementation review		Suggested invitation to Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods
Homelessness Winter Relief Update	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2021	Invitation to Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods

<b>Other suggested topics for Committee consideration</b>		
Green and open spaces		
Attainment and Skills in Tamworth		
Safeguarding updates (2 per year)	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2021 & 29 <sup>th</sup> March 2022	Invitation to Portfolio Holder and Officers
<b>Specific topics to feed in to Staffordshire County Council (separate from main Themes)</b>		
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Date of planned Staffs consideration</b>	<b>Additional information</b>
Wider determinants of health in Tamworth, including diet / food vulnerability / healthy eating / social prescribing		Extend an invitation to voluntary sector to understand current initiatives eg Community Together CIC
Strategic Transformation Programme (STP)		To tie in with County consideration when dates for County consideration known
<b>Possible Working Group topics</b>		
Armed Forces Covenant		Understand the current Staffordshire wide and Tamworth position

<b>Upcoming Health &amp; Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Meetings</b>
25 <sup>th</sup> January 2022
29 <sup>th</sup> March 2022



<b>Upcoming Relevant County Council Meetings</b>
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<b>Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Staffordshire County Council</b>
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- 13 December 2021
- 31 January 2022
- 15 March 2022
- 19 April 2022

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Chair