

Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Thursday, 1st March, 2012.

Present:- Councillors Minhas (Chair), Carter, Dar, Munawar, Plenty, Sohal, Strutton and A S Wright (Vice-Chair)

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Buchanan

Non-Voting Co-optees Sandra Malik (Slough Federation of Tenants and Residents) and Darren Morris (Customer Senate)

PART 1

40. Declarations of Interest

- 1) Prior to consideration of minute no. 45, Councillor Dar declared a personal interest as he holds an operator/driver licence. He remained in the room and spoke.
- 2) Prior to consideration of minute no. 45, Councillor Munawar declared a personal interest as he holds a personal licence to sell alcohol. He remained in the room and spoke.

41. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on the 16 January 2012 were approved as a correct record.

42. Member Questions

No questions had been received.

43. Olympics and Paralympics Update

Andrew Stevens (Assistant Director, Culture and Skills) and Gillian Ralphs (Assistant Director, Transport and Planning) presented an update on the preparations for the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012, which highlighted the issues and opportunities arising from the Slough's proximity to the rowing venue at Dorney Lake.

The Panel noted that the busy period, for the events which were scheduled for the mornings, would be up to 10 a.m. and there would be up to 20 buses an hour from Slough Station to Windsor Racecourse during this peak time. In addition, it was anticipated that the Park and Ride at Upton Court Park would deal with 2000+ cars each day, with a free shuttle bus to the Racecourse. The latter of these arrangements was subject to agreement of an acceptable traffic management plan.

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Officers informed the Panel that the Torch Relay, which was due to travel through Slough on the 10 July 2012, was considered to be the more disrupting event for the Borough, which a severe impact for approximately three hours. Officers stressed that work was being done to ensure that disruption was minimised, and there was ongoing liaison with Thames Valley Police and the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) to manage the event.

The Panel was asked to consider how the Borough could best build on the core programme of events, particularly with a strong schools programme, that had been planned to ensure that the opportunity to celebrate during this exciting period was taken up.

The Panel was particularly concerned with the traffic management of the Games events, whether from Upton Court Park or Slough Station. The primary concern was around the contingency plans should there be an accident on the Windsor Relief Road, which would block the area and be very difficult to clear. Officers informed the Panel that they could not guarantee there would be no accidents, but that the Police and other emergency services would be on high alert during this period and would react to any accidents of this nature, and that diversions had been prepared and were ready to be implemented if the need arose. Officers stressed that while there would be a heightened level of traffic during the peak periods, that it was not anticipated that it would be unmanageable.

In addition to emergency services, Regulatory Services within the Council, and other key departments, would experience increase pressure during the summer, and this would also impact on Councillors who would be involved in potential licensing hearings.

The Panel also raised the issue of communication with residents, particularly those in the Upton Court Park area. Officers confirmed that residents in the impacted areas had been sent letters informing them of the arrangements, and there would be further communication over the coming months. There would be an extended no parking zone around the Park and those attending the Games must have a Park and Ride ticket in order to use the free shuttle bus to the venue. In addition, the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) would be communicating with residents in the area once they had signed the lease for the Park and Ride. The Panel also suggested the use of the Slough Citizen to publicise the arrangements.

In response to further Panel questions around arrangements, officers confirmed that the use of rendezvous points and additional facilities at Slough Station would be undertaken in conjunction with advice from the ODA, as they controlled the logistical management of the event overall.

Officers raised the question of whether Councillors would be interested in playing a role during the Torch Relay, such as providing a welcome to the Borough. The Panel agreed that this was a good idea if an appropriate point could be identified.

Resolved:

- 1) to note the update on the preparations for the Olympic and Paralympic Games; and
- 2) to support to involvement of Councillors in the Torch Relay plans.

44. Highway Engineering Programme of Works for 2012/13

Gillian Ralphs (Assistant Director, Transport and Planning) and Sing-Wai Yu (Principal Engineer, Highways) presented the Panel with the proposed programme of works for 2012/13 to be carried out by the Council's Highways Engineering Service.

Officers explained that the process followed in reaching decisions on which works would be undertaken, involved a series of technical assessments which evaluated the condition of individual highways so that the limited funding could be targeted at those areas most in need, and produce priority lists. These lists were then sent out for consultation with Councillors on whether there were any additional highways they were aware of within their individual wards that should be reviewed. One response had been received from Councillors during this consultation. Councillors were urged to contact the Highways Team if there were aware of any concerning highways in their wards which had not been listed for works, as the list was flexible.

The Panel noted that the technology used to evaluate the condition of the highways was sound, but expressed concern at the state of footways. Officers confirmed that there had been a focus on the highways, but that the next phased would focus on footways, and these could be prioritised taking into account the usage such as areas near sheltered accommodation. In response to a question, Officers also informed the Panel that there was a move to developing a single standard for footways across the Borough, which would look to improve all council-owned land, not just public footways.

Resolved – to note the report.

45. Public Protection Services Enforcement Policy

Pat Kelleher (Assistant Director, Public Protection) introduced the draft Public Protection Services Enforcement Policy which had been revised to ensure that the Council's policies and procedures met the legislative requirements, covered all enforcement work and set out the decision-making process for taking action in a consistent and transparent way.

In response to Member questions, it was confirmed that there were a number of initiatives being undertaken to ensure that business were kept informed of process and were supported in translating policies into their

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working practices. Members were invited to input any ideas they might have in this regard to Public Protection Services.

Resolved:

- 1) to recommend approval of the draft Enforcement Policy by Cabinet; and
- 2) that a report looking at Penalty Notices be proposed for the work programme for the new municipal year.

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46. Prostitution - Update and Future Actions

The Panel received a presentation from Louise Asby (Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour Manager) updating on the action taken to tackle prostitution in Slough since October 2011. The Panel noted that the numbers of prostitutes had fallen since October and that the Police were continuing to monitor the situation and take action when necessary.

The Panel discussed whether action was being taken against brothels in the area, and was informed that on-street prostitution had been the priority, but the Police did make visits to brothels in order to check on safeguarding concerns, and that the number of brothels had not increased. The Panel noted that there had been few anti-social behaviour (ASB) complaints relating to brothels and that the closure of these premises took place where ASB was an issue.

The Panel questioned how the public was being engaged in dealing with this issue, and officers stressed the need to contact the Police and allowing them to deal with it. The public working in partnership with the Police was seen as the best visible deterrent, and the Police recognised the potential of producing leaflets for the public giving guidance on what to do.

Resolved:

- 1) to note the report; and
- 2) that a further report on progress would be included in the Panels 2012/13 work programme.

47. Consideration of reports marked to be noted/for information

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Details of the following information reports were noted:

- *Ten Pin and Salt Hill Park Tennis Update*: with a further information report to be submitted to the Panel in December 2012/January 2013 in order to monitor progress.

48. Forward Work Programme

The Panel discussed the Work Programme for the coming municipal year.

Resolved – that the following items be considered for inclusion in the Work Programme for the 2012/13 municipal year:

- Pavement Parking and Enforcement
- Customer Senate Housing Review (Customer Complaints)
- Customer Senate Housing Review (Customer Service)
- Customer Senate Housing Review (Repairs and Maintenance Service)

49. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 21 June 2012.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 9.40 pm)