

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SOCIAL SCRUTINY PANEL

20th March, 2012

A meeting of the Social Scrutiny Panel was held at the Town Hall, Nuneaton, on Tuesday, 20th March, 2012.

Present

Councillor J. Sheppard - Chair

Councillors W.J. Hancox (substituting for Councillor J. Haynes), D.C. Navarro, D. O'Brien, C. Stringer, R.A. Taylor, C.M. Watkins and K.D. Wilson.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M.P. Grant and J. Haynes and Mr. M. Perkins and Mrs. L. Price.

Councillor W.H. Sheppard, Portfolio Holder (Health and Environment) was present for Agenda Item 6 - Designated Public Place Order (DPPO)

471 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 20th February, 2012, be confirmed.

472 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor D.C. Navarro declared a personal interest in any relevant item by reason of him being a non-executive director of George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust.

Councillor C.M. Watkins declared a personal interest in any relevant item by reason of him being a board member of the Nuneaton and Bedworth Leisure Trust.

Councillor K.D. Wilson declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6 - Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) by reason of him being Personal Licence Holder under the Licensing Act 2003, although not currently employed in the Licensing Trade.

473 **Designated Public Place Order (DPPO)**

The Communities Manager submitted a report on Designated Public Place Order (DPPO).

Members asked various questions and the following concerns were raised:

- The health implications of alcohol abuse, particularly for young people

- the amount of alcohol consumption by young people in the Borough's Parks and Open Spaces
- the lack of enforcement using the DPPO powers
- the risk of harm and pregnancy when under the influence of alcohol

RESOLVED that IT BE RECOMMENDED TO CABINET THAT the recommendations of the Panel listed below, be endorsed:

- (a) the Chief Constable be requested to invest PCSO's with enforcement powers under the terms of the DPPO;
- (b) the Home Office be requested to reinstate the incident codes to enable alcohol offences to be monitored effectively;
- (c) the Planning and Licensing Departments should be consulted when applications for permission for alcohol licences were received and should consider the appropriateness of the premises;
- (d) a requirement to contact the Communities Team when considering Temporary Events Licences be introduced;
- (e) a letter be sent to local MP's, the Minister for Health and the Chief Constable outlining the Panel's concerns; and
- (f) a Joint Working Group comprising of Members of the Housing, Health and Communities OSP and the Planning and Environment OSP be established to explore all the issues surrounding DPPO and enforcement in the new Municipal Year.

Speaker: Councillor W.H. Sheppard

474 **Passport to Leisure Update**

The Assistant Director - Assets and Street Services submitted an update report on the Passport to Leisure Scheme following the changes that became effective from April 2011.

RESOLVED that

- (a) it be noted that there had been very little adverse reaction to the new criteria; and
- (b) it be noted that discussions are continuing between the Council and Nuneaton and Bedworth Leisure Trust (NBLT) regarding how take-up of the Passport to Leisure Scheme can be increased;
- (c) IT BE RECOMMENDED TO CABINET THAT the arrangements made to deal with anomalies in the new PTL criteria be formalised and that the list of benefits which residents need to be in receipt of to receive a free PTL card be reviewed; and

(d) representatives of NBLT be invited to attend a meeting in September, 2012 to provide comparative attendance figures after a 12 month period and this to coincide with the presentation of their annual report.

475 **Welfare Reform**

The Panel considered a briefing note on Welfare Reform and the impact it will have on Housing Benefit recipients.

RESOLVED that the proposals within the Welfare Reform Bill 2011 to contain growing housing benefit expenditure; encourage greater mobility within the social rented sector; make best use of available housing stock and improve work incentives for working age claimants be noted.

476 **Responses from Cabinet**

The Panel received the Cabinet's responses to the Panel's recommendations regarding Rent Setting.

RESOLVED that the Cabinets' endorsement of the Panel's recommendations be noted.

477 **Work Programme**

The Principal Democratic Services Officer (Overview and Scrutiny) submitted the amended Work Programme.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme items remaining for 2012 be recommended to the new Housing, Health and Communities OSP for consideration during the Municipal Year 2012/13 including the recommendation in Minute 473 (f) above.

478 **Actions Arising from Meeting**

The Panel considered the updated action plan arising from the meeting held on 20th February 2012.

RESOLVED that the updated action plan from the Panel's meeting held on 20th February, 2012 be noted and the Principal Democratic Services Officer (Overview and Scrutiny) be requested to follow up the outstanding actions with Chief Inspector Musgrove and the Communities Manager and to pursue the reasons why items had been deleted from the risk register.

479 **Any Other Items - Courtesies**

The Chair reported that Mrs C. Grant, Democratic Services Officer, was taking voluntary redundancy/early retirement on 31st March, 2012 and that this was the last meeting of the Social Scrutiny Panel. She also wished to thank the Members and officers, particularly the Principal Democratic Services Officer (Overview and Scrutiny) for all their hard work in the last 12 months.

Councillor Navarro added his personal thanks to Mrs Grant for her assistance during his Mayoral Year.

RESOLVED that

- (a) the Panel record it's thanks to Mrs Grant for her contribution to the work of the Panel and express their best wishes for the future; and
- (b) the Chair recorded her thanks to the Members and Officers for all their hard work during the last 12 months and was pleased to note that the public had demonstrated their interest by attending several meetings.

Chair