



Rutland County Council

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP

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Record of a meeting of the **PLACES SCRUTINY PANEL** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham at 7.00 pm on **Thursday 29 January 2015**

PRESENT: Mr J T Dale (Chairman, in the Chair)
Mr M E Baines
Mrs C Cartwright
Mr W Cross
Mr D Hollis
Mr J Lammie
Mr M Oxley
Mrs C L Vernon

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr D Brown Director for Places (Environment, Planning & Transport)
Mr R Clayton Senior Culture & Leisure Manager and Proper Officer for Registration Services
Mr J Frieland Business Manager – Oakham Enterprise Park
Mr P Phillipson Director for Places (Development and Economy)
Miss M Gamston Corporate Support Officer

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr M D A Pocock Portfolio Holder for Places (Environment & Transport) and Resources

APOLOGIES: Mr Richardson and Mr Walters.
Mr Baines had indicated that he would be late arriving.

The Chairman, Mr Dale, informed the meeting that he had received an email from Mr Richardson which he would respond to outside of the meeting.

682 RECORD OF MEETING

The Record of the Meeting of the Places Scrutiny Panel held on 27 November 2014, copies of which had been previously circulated, was confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

683 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Oxley declared in relation to item 7, Places Fees and Charges as he was a civil funeral celebrant sometimes requested by local funeral directors. Mr Oxley

stated that he would leave the meeting for this item.

684 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

No petitions, deputation or questions had been received.

685 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS

No Questions with Notice had been received from members.

686 NOTICES OF MOTION FROM MEMBERS

No Notices of Motion had been received from members.

687 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE PANEL FOR A DECISION IN RELATION TO CALL IN OF A DECISION

No matter had been referred to the Panel for a decision in relation to call-in of a decision in accordance with Procedure Rule 206.

688 OAKHAM ENTERPRISE PARK VERBAL UPDATE

A verbal update from the Business Manager – Oakham Enterprise Park, Mr Frieland, was received.

Mr Frieland informed the meeting that 63 of the 70 units available had been let; that there was firm interest in a further 2 units and 5 units, including 3 larger units, were vacant without any interest being shown at present. Innes England had been engaged as marketing support and was confident that the larger units would be let this year.

There were 18 new office suites above the new Rutland Adult Learning Service (RALS) Hub; the units were out for tender with tenants being lined up for over half; expected to add £40,000 in revenue.

Jobs created included 45 directors/traders and 120 employees, some yet to relocate. Apprenticeships were being promoted through RALS. 35% were new businesses and a further 41% were relocating from outside Rutland. The staff base was expected to increase by 40% over the next 12 months.

Income was projected at £212,000 for this year plus additional income from filming and miscellaneous income.

Outgoings had been slightly higher than normal due to site improvement, including the removal of asbestos, health and safety and compliance works. Expenses of £230,000 against an income of £238,000. Revenue for the next financial year was expected to be £285,000 giving a surplus of £57,000.

The Active Rutland Hub was scheduled to open on 20 April 2015.

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7.16pm Mr Baines joined the meeting

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The following points were noted during discussion:

- i) Members requested a written copy of the verbal update.
- ii) That once the site was fully occupied and settled the council would be in a position to define how the park should be developed, this would include soft landscaping and developing the centre of the site.
- iii) That there was a low turnover in tenants.
- iv) That a quote had been received to re-commission the on-site generator.
- v) That most tenants had specific contracts.
- vi) That most leases were five to seven years.

Members praised Mr Frieland for his contribution to the well organised running of this project.

689 SPORTS VERBAL UPDATE

A verbal update from the Senior Culture & Leisure Manager, Mr Clayton, was received. A number of areas were covered.

Catmose Sports Centre: Members were advised that when the pool reopened membership stood at approximately 840, this had grown to over 1,100 active memberships with over 300 people on the swimming programme. The pool had reopened with 822 sessions which had now grown to 2,700 sessions per month; 27,000 sessions since the pool had reopened. During 2012/13 there had been 64,000 sessions across the site and 128,000 sessions last year. Members were informed that there was no cost to the Council in terms of a monthly direct payment.

S106 Grant and Loan Scheme: During the initial one page outline application stage 52 applications had been received. The closing date for full applications was 30 January 2015 and to date 22 applications had been received with more expected.

The timetable was as follows:

30 January – closing date for submissions

20 February – Assessment Panel

3 March – Decision Panel

4 March – Provisional awards announced, 14 day standstill period starts

18 March – Standstill period ends

20 March – Awards formally announced

Sports Facilities Strategy: An overview of facilities in the county had been undertaken in 2014. Following the checking of all sites identified in the county, including the comments received when Scrutiny reviewed the sports reports last year, there was much better coverage of village and town halls and an assessment of playing pitch sites being fed in to the strategy. The Panel was informed that the £500,000 S106 grant fund would be informed by the strategy to ensure funds would be directed to where there was the greatest need. The draft strategy would be taken to Scrutiny, the Local Sports Alliance and Sport England for comment prior to going to Cabinet for adoption; this was likely to be after the May elections.

Active Rutland Hub: On schedule with an estimated opening date of 20 April 2015. Members were reminded that Vale Judo was already operating from the Hub. Members were advised that the Authority was in advanced discussions with a gymnastics club, Rutland County College, health professionals and Rutland County Council's (RCC) Inclusion Team to support their work in getting people back to being active.

Exercise on Referral: This was operated by Stevenage Leisure Limited and looked to improve people's lifestyles through physical activity.

Meetings had been held with Anglian Water to discuss the Cycling Festival and Rutland Day.

The Workplace Challenge promotion was running. This was a national scheme that RCC had signed up to.

The new Sports Development Manager, Mark Croston, was in post.

The following points were noted during discussion:

- i) Members requested a written copy of the verbal report.
- ii) Members voiced concern over the surface and colour of the new cycle path between Uppingham and Preston. Officers advised that the material used was the same as used by the Forestry Commission for mountain trails and was self binding over an 8 week period. The surface was being trialled to ensure that it was fit for purpose and could cope with vehicular traffic, for example, hedge cutting. Members were also advised that the track at the back of the council office grounds was of a similar material if they wished to see how officers expected the pathway between Uppingham and Preston to bed down.
- iii) In response to a question concerning the lifespan of the repairs to the swimming pool and whether it would be necessary to build a new pool at some stage the Panel was advised that the repairs had a limited lifespan of approximately four years. A future decision on whether to extend the

life of the existing facility or replace would be a decision for the new council.

- iv) Officers assured Members that RCC would not be locked into a contract based on the deemed life of the pool.

The Chair thanked Mr Clayton for his report.

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8.00pm Mr Oxley left the meeting and did not return.

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690 PLACES DIRECTORATE FEES AND CHARGES 2015/16

Report No. 32/2015 from the Director of Resource was received. Mr Pocock, Portfolio Holder for Places (Environment & Transport) and Resources introduced the report the purpose of which was to enable the Panel to consider the Places Directorate fees and charges for 2015/16.

The following points were noted during discussion:

- i) That some pest control fees were being increased to reflect the actual cost of delivering the service. Charges covered up to three visits.
- ii) Many of the charges for pest control services were statutory fees. The cost to RCC to provide the services was £70,000 which by charging fees could be subsidised by £12,500.
- iii) That many of the reduced charges for official searches related to Land Registry charges. The Panel was advised that where private search companies requested information under an Environment Information Regulations (EIR) 2004 the Authority had to provide the information free of charge. Following a legal challenge to all authorities; all authorities had been required to reset charges based on actual cost.
- iv) That charges relating to abandoned vehicles were nationally set charges.
- v) That interment charges related to Oakham cemetery and were charged to the funeral director.
- vi) Review of the Rutland Registration Service Fees November 2014 – Following concerns raised that the service was being heavily subsidised at a time of cuts Members were advised that some areas had to be subsidised as nationally set costs; that the Authority was proposing to increase charges by 1.99% and would continue to review; that officers continued to look at income streams and that income would fluctuate with the temporary closure of Oakham Castle.

Members agreed to move into exempt session so that the Portfolio Holder could explain in greater detail the context of the reason to continue with the subsidising of some fees in light of a recent complaint.

AGREED:

1. That Cabinet be recommended to approve the fees and charges for the Places Directorate set out in Appendix 1 to Report No. 32/2015 Places Directorate Fees and Charges 2015/16.

691 SCRUTINY PROGRAMME 2014/15 & REVIEW OF FORWARD PLAN

The Chairman, Mr Dale, requested that Members advise him of any items.

692 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There was no other urgent business.

693 DATE AND PREVIEW OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 26 March 2015 at 7.00pm.

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The Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.45pm

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