

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at the Council Offices, Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury on Tuesday, 16 January 2024 commencing at 4:30 pm

Present:

Chair
Vice Chair

Councillor M Dimond-Brown
Councillor C L J Carter

and Councillors:

N D Adcock, C Agg, H J Bowman, P A Godwin, G C Madle, H C McLain, G M Porter, E C Skelt, P N Workman and I Yates

OS.54 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 54.1 The evacuation procedure, as noted on the Agenda, was advised to those present.
- 54.2 The Chair welcomed the representatives from Gloucestershire Constabulary and Active Gloucestershire to the meeting.
- 54.3 In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2 of the Council's Constitution, the Chair indicated that he had exercised his discretion to vary the order of business so that Agenda Item 7 - Aston Project Presentation and Agenda Item 8 – Active Gloucestershire 'We Can Move' Project Progress Report would be taken after Agenda Item 4 – Minutes.

OS.55 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

- 55.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C E Mills and M J Williams. There were no substitutes for the meeting.

OS.56 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 56.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 26 June 2012 and took effect from 1 July 2012.
- 56.2 There were no declarations made on this occasion.

OS.57 MINUTES

- 57.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2023, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

OS.58 ASTON PROJECT PRESENTATION

- 58.1 The Chair invited the representative from Gloucestershire Constabulary to address the Committee.

- 58.2 The representative from Gloucestershire Constabulary gave the presentation, circulated separately, which explained more about the Aston Project which was based on prevention and early intervention; who ran it; the type of activities the young people who were involved with the project engaged in; and how success was measured. Members were also shown a short video about the project.
- 58.3 A Member queried whether behavioural issues among young people was linked to poverty and if these problems were increasing due to the cost of living crisis. The representative from Gloucestershire Constabulary advised that a background check was undertaken when a young person was referred to them – it was rare that someone was referred without already having received some sort of support or having had experience of things such as domestic abuse or parental drug and alcohol abuse. Whilst it was not necessarily increasing, it was common to find that the young people on the project did not have the right kit for the activities they were undertaking e.g. wellington boots or waterproof shoes and it was also evident there were problems in terms of them accessing healthy food. A Member sought clarification of the referral process and was advised that it was voluntary so the young person had to want to engage and do the activities and they required parental consent to participate.
- 58.4 A Member sought an explanation of ‘time banking’ and was advised that the young people carried out tasks, for instance, litter picking or handing out water at a half marathon, which they received credits for to use towards activities such as going to the cinema. A Member asked if there was any data available on the progress of young people in the project and was advised that, although data was kept, it was a long term project and there were inevitably ups and downs so consideration was being given as to how that could be turned into realistic figures going forward. The Member noted that the presentation had referenced an ‘outcome star’ system which measured young people’s perceptions on a radar scale and she felt that would be a nice graphical representation to evidence progress. The representative from Gloucestershire Constabulary agreed with this point but explained that the outcome stars were not converted into usable data and that was something they had been looking at recently. It was noted that if the behaviour of any young person on the programme escalated, they would be referred on for more intensive support.
- 58.5 A Member asked whether the Aston Project was available across Gloucestershire or just within Tewkesbury Borough and was informed the project was countywide; however, its operation and success was linked with the ability to recruit PCSOs and it was not easy work. For instance, a PCSO had left their role in Cirencester and it had not been possible to recruit back to that area. Tewkesbury Borough was very fortunate to have two PCSOs. The Member expressed the view that rural deprivation at the fringes of the community was often hidden and the representative from Gloucestershire Constabulary agreed with this point. The Member went on to indicate that she would like Parish Councils to be able to make referrals, or mention areas where problems were occurring with young people causing antisocial behaviour, but also to receive feedback on those individuals. Members were advised that PCSOs were embedded in their neighbourhood teams and able to pick up hotspot areas where young people congregated; they had particular ways to approach the families about referrals into the project.
- 58.6 In response to a query as to the relationship between the Aston Project and Tewkesbury Borough Council and its Members, the representative from Gloucestershire Constabulary indicated that she would like to have a free-flowing two-way relationship – more involvement was better for the young person and she had seen positive results from PCSOs working closely with social workers. Members would know their community concerns and received reports from their residents so it would be beneficial if they knew how to refer into the project. The Director: Communities advised that he had previously sat on the Aston Project

Steering Group but there had been a change in the way it was managed and Tewkesbury Borough Council had lost touch when the project had been more integrated into the Constabulary; this was a great opportunity to rekindle the relationship and he undertook to include the Aston Project as an Agenda Item at the next Community Safety Partnership meeting to update on its work.

58.7 A Member queried how many of the 21 young people currently involved with the scheme were from Tewkesbury and was informed that the majority were from Tewkesbury Town with a couple from Bishop's Cleeve and one from Winchcombe. In response to a query as to how the project was funded, Members were advised it was funded by Gloucestershire Constabulary and the Police and Crime Commissioner. The Midlands County Co-Op had also provided funding and it was intended to approach others going forward.

58.8 The Chair thanked the representative from Gloucestershire Constabulary for attending the meeting and expressed the view that Members certainly had a role to play in helping to identify people for referral into the project and he felt there was a broader question about how this integrated with the Community Safety Partnership and the role that Tewkesbury Borough Council played in that which was a discussion that needed to be taken forward.

58.9 It was

RESOLVED That the Aston Project presentation be **NOTED**.

OS.59 ACTIVE GLOUCESTERSHIRE 'WE CAN MOVE' PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

59.1 The Director: Communities advised that a Community Support seminar was in the process of being arranged for all Members and Active Gloucestershire was one of the partners which would be presenting at that session along with the Citizens' Advice Bureau and Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC). The Chair reminded Members that the Committee's job was to report back to the Executive Committee as to whether the £10,000 which Tewkesbury Borough Council contributed to the 'We Can Move' project was money well spent so he encouraged them to save any Ward specific queries for the Community Support seminar.

59.2 The representative from Active Gloucestershire gave the presentation, circulated separately, which outlined the ambitions of the 'We Can Move' project, highlights from across the county in 2023 and what that meant for Tewkesbury Borough along with plans for 2024.

59.3 A Member felt the aspiration to halve inactivity rates in Gloucestershire by 2023 was commendable but he questioned how that would be achieved and measured. In response, the representative from Active Gloucestershire advised that the 'We Can Move' project was a county approach and this was a county ambition in which Active Gloucestershire played a role but there were many external factors. The goal had been set pre-pandemic and before the cost of living crisis so, whilst the intention remained, it would not be easy to achieve. The most effective method for measuring success was a longitudinal survey called the Active Life Survey carried out by 300 people in each district on an annual basis to provide a baseline of their physical activity and how it increased or decreased. Another Member asked how the achievements of the various partners were measured and was advised that a project management approach was taken with a 'We Can Move' evaluation for each project and every period. The University of Bristol was undertaking a two year evaluation, the results of which would be in the public domain. It was intended to carry out another project level evaluation later in the year, subject to affordability. The Member asked whether the onus was on each partner to report their successes and the representative from Active Gloucestershire confirmed that was the case, for example, a yoga programme evaluation looked at the number of people taking part,

their ages, the number of unintended consequences etc. and, as a rule of thumb, 5-10% of each programme went to evaluation.

- 59.4 A Member raised concern that although there was an awful lot of information within the presentation, there was very little data for the Committee to assess whether value for money was being achieved. In response, the representative from Active Gloucestershire advised that he had given a brief overview rather than evidence to take forward and, as set out in the presentation, impact reports had been produced with two currently in the public domain. All activity was reported to Tewkesbury Borough Council and Sports England with an annual report delivered to the Health and Wellbeing Board. He indicated that he would be happy to provide any additional information Members felt they may need; however, he pointed out that reporting was not always the best use of money so that was a decision for the Borough Council to make.
- 59.5 In response to a query regarding the amount of money brought into organisations in the borough through the project, Members were advised that £1.2m turnover was a relatively small amount but the project also had the ability to take advantage of funding opportunities and provide support to clubs and organisations which was not always tangible. In terms of obtaining grant funding, the organisations completed the forms and did the work themselves, Active Gloucestershire simply assisted with the process and was not named in terms of any of the documentation or databases required to be completed.
- 59.6 In response to a query as to whether Active Gloucestershire was able to reach all parts of Tewkesbury Borough given its size and rural and widespread nature, the representative from Active Gloucestershire advised that, although it did its best, it was not able to reach every area and that was one of the reasons for presenting to Members in order to find out where people needed support. Another Member asked what Active Gloucestershire 'We Can Move' was doing to help with safe swimming amongst children as she was aware of the challenges facing schools in terms of getting children to swimming lessons and lack of available slots at leisure centres. The representative from Active Gloucestershire indicated that he had seen the impact in terms of challenges elsewhere in the county which had been exacerbated by the temporary closure of GL1 – this had resulted in people going to neighbouring boroughs which had further reduced available slots. Active Gloucestershire worked at a national level and partnered with Swim England to find and maintain opportunities to be physically active via swimming; schools had a statutory responsibility to provide swimming but that was not possible if facilities were unavailable. A lot of work was being done by Sports England to support local authority leisure.
- 59.7 In terms of benefits to Tewkesbury Borough in 2023, a Member expressed the view that, on face value it seemed that the Council was getting a lot from its £10,000 investment but he felt it was lacking in terms of outcomes other than supporting with funding opportunities and he asked whether the benefits could still have been provided without the Council's investment, or if more could have been delivered with a greater amount. In response, the representative from Active Gloucestershire advised that the majority of the money was spent on staffing and, whilst it was possible that the outcomes would have been achieved without the investment as Active Gloucestershire would have worked equally hard with less, better and more secure funding would provide increased value for the county. Notwithstanding this, if the Council was looking to invest more heavily in health and wellbeing and physical activity, it did not necessarily need to be directly with Active Gloucestershire 'We Can Move' and he would be happy to advise how it could be best spent. Given that the majority of money was spent on staff, a Member asked whether it was necessary to consider wage information and the representative from Active Gloucestershire indicated that accounts were published but the relationship was based on trust. He was not here today to ask for more money and provided

assurance that the budget had been balanced for the next 12-15 months.

- 59.8 A Member asked how Members could have a closer relationship with Active Gloucestershire and how it might play a part in the development of the Joint Strategic and Local Plan (SLP) in terms of achieving aspirations for health and wellbeing. In response, the representative from Active Gloucestershire advised that it was difficult to find people with the right skills but Active Gloucestershire worked closely with Sports England nationally. In terms of active design, it was involved with the supplementary planning design consultation work in Gloucestershire around housing regeneration and was also invited to Active Travel England.
- 59.9 A Member asked what was being done to reduce inequalities and the representative from Active Gloucestershire advised that one example was the work to support disabled people and their carers to encourage them to do more physical activity. The behaviour change model identified that those with the greatest influence over disabled people were their carers so those were the ones who needed to be targeted – disabled people tended to think that physical activity could do harm but the benefits far outweighed the risks and carers needed to be armed with this information so they could have the right conversations with the disabled person and change behaviour.
- 59.10 The Chair thanked the representative from Active Gloucestershire for their presentation and asked Members if they felt they had received enough information to be able to report back to the Executive Committee. A Member expressed the view that he was comfortable to recommend that the Council should continue with its investment; however, he had concerns about the data that was available and felt the report had been largely aspirational rather than factual. The Chair questioned whether the representative from Active Gloucestershire had been adequately briefed on what was required prior to the meeting and felt there was a need to give more specific direction to presenters. A Member noted that a comment had been made about data being provided to Officers by Active Gloucestershire which Members had not seen and it was agreed it was necessary to find out what that information looked like to establish whether it was in a format which Members could use to aid future discussions. A Member expressed the view that it seemed to be quite a laborious process based on the relatively small amount of funding and questioned whether this level of scrutiny was required. The Chair advised that the Executive Committee had specifically resolved that this project be scrutinised on an annual basis by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee but he would be happy to make that point when reporting back.
- 59.11 It was subsequently
- RESOLVED** That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee advise the Executive Committee that it was satisfied that the Active Gloucestershire 'We Can Move' Project was providing value for money for the Council's contribution.

OS.60 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

- 60.1 Attention was drawn to the Executive Committee Forward Plan, circulated at Pages No. 31-40. Members were asked to determine whether there were any questions for the relevant Lead Members and what support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could give to the work contained within the plan.
- 60.2 The Director: Corporate Services noted there were still several items in the 'pending' section of the report and he indicated that he would establish when they were likely to come forward and report back to a future meeting. The Chair acknowledged that he had an outstanding action from the last meeting to speak to the Executive Committee regarding the Equalities and Diversity Policy which had

been in the pending items section for over a year.

- 60.3 A Member drew attention to Page No. 32 of the report and noted that the Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefits Overpayments Debt Recovery Policy had been moved from the meeting on 29 November 2023 for 'further Member engagement' and she asked what that entailed. In response, the Director: Corporate Resources advised that the Head of Service: Revenues and Benefits had attended the informal Executive/COG meeting to outline the background to the policy which would now be taken to the Executive Committee meeting on 7 February 2024. Another Member noted that ICT Strategy was dependent on the appointment of a new ICT Manager and asked if any progress had been made in relation to that. The Director: Corporate Resources explained that it was intended to bring together the Business Transformation and IT teams and create a new post to oversee the two; this had not been advertised yet so it was unlikely that the ICT Strategy would come to the March meeting as whoever was appointed to that role would want to scour the IT environment and form an opinion before setting a strategy for the direction of travel. A Member indicated that they had been told last month that the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy would be coming forward before the end of the financial year and she asked what date it would be taken to Executive Committee. The Director: Corporate Services undertook to find out and advise Members following the meeting.

- 60.4 It was

RESOLVED That the Executive Committee Forward Plan be **NOTED**.

OS.61 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24 AND ACTION LIST

- 61.1 Attention was drawn to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme, circulated at Pages No. 41-46, and the action list setting out the outstanding actions arising from meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee between 17 January 2023 and 24 October 2023, circulated at Pages No. 47-53. Members were asked to consider the Work Programme and action list.
- 61.2 The Director: Corporate Services advised that, whilst the Council Plan Performance Tracker Quarter Three 2023/24 was the only substantial item on the Agenda for the next meeting, he believed this would be adequate given the amount of questions and discussion points which it tended to raise. With regard to the pending items, as referenced under the Aston Project Presentation on today's Agenda, there seemed to be some questions about the role and purpose of the Community Safety Partnership and how it fitted with the Aston Project etc. As such, he undertook to discuss this with the Director: Communities following the meeting to establish what work might be needed to address this. It was noted that a future Agenda item would be in relation to lessons learnt from the recent flood event; this would be brought to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for endorsement once it had been considered by the Flood Risk Management Group and added to pending items until an appropriate date had been established.
- 61.3 In terms of the action list, a Member drew attention to Page No. 51 of the report and the action in relation to more detail on planning complaints being included in the next annual report and raised concern that this had been marked as complete but that could not be confirmed until the next annual report was produced. The Director: Corporate Services advised that it was expected to be included in the next annual report but he was happy for this to be marked as incomplete until that could be evidenced.

61.4 It was
RESOLVED That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023/24 and Action List be **NOTED**.

OS.62 GLOUCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE UPDATE

62.1 It was noted that the Council's representative had been unable to attend the last meeting of the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 January 2024 so no update was available.

The meeting closed at 6:30 pm

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Action List – 16 January 2024

AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
5.	Executive Committee Forward Plan	Items in pending section to be scheduled into main work programme.		Director: Corporate Services	
		Members to be advised why the Equalities and Diversity Policy had been delayed by over a year having originally been due for consideration in October 2022 and remaining in the pending section.	Chair to raise with the Executive Committee – outstanding action from December meeting.	Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
		Members to be advised when the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy would be taken to Executive Committee bearing in mind they had been told it would come forward before the end of the financial year.		Director: Corporate Services	
6.	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2022/23	Pending items – Community Safety Plan Monitoring Report – Clarity needed over the role and purpose of the Community Safety Partnership and how it linked to the Aston Project etc.	Discussion between Director: Corporate Service and Director: Communities.	Director: Corporate Services	

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Action List – 16 January 2024

AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
		Action List – Page No. 51 – 24 October 2023 – Have Your Say 4Cs – Actions in relation to future annual reports to be marked as incomplete to ensure they are not lost ahead of production of the next annual report.		Director: Corporate Services	
		Lessons learnt from the recent flood event to be added to pending items (to be taken to Overview and Scrutiny Committee after consideration by the Flood Risk Management Group).		Head of Service: Democratic and Electoral Services	Yes
7.	Aston Project Presentation	Include the Aston Project as an Agenda Item at the next Community Safety Partnership meeting to update on its work.		Director: Communities	
		Presentation to be circulated to the Committee.	Emailed on 2 February 2024.	Head of Service: Democratic and Electoral Services	Yes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Action List – 16 January 2024

AGENDA ITEM	TITLE	ACTION	COMMENTS	CONTACT OFFICER	ACTION COMPLETE Yes / No (IF NO MUST INCLUDE TARGET DATE)
		Consideration to be given as to the relationship between the Aston Project, Community Safety Partnership and Tewkesbury Borough Council and Members' role.	Chair of Overview and Scrutiny to raise with Lead Member for Communities to have initial conversation.	Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
8.	Active Gloucestershire We Can Move Project Progress Report	Need to establish what data was provided to Officers by Active Gloucestershire and if it is in a format that could be shared with Members.		Director: Corporate Services	
		Executive Committee to be advised that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was satisfied that the Active Gloucestershire 'We Can Move' Project was providing value for money for the Council's contribution; however, concerns had been raised about the lack of quantitative data available and that the process of annual reporting to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee seemed quite laborious given the relatively small amount of money in question.		Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	