
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SERVICE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2016 AT 7.30 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES, WEELEY

- Present:** Councillors Griffiths (Chairman), V E Guglielmi (Vice-Chairman), Fowler, Hones, Pemberton, Miles, M J Skeels Jnr and Yallop
- Also Present:** Councillor Ferguson (Tourism and Culture Portfolio Holder) (item 31 (part) – 33 only)
- In Attendance:** Head of Customer & Commercial Services (Mark Westall), Head of Sport and Leisure (Mike Carran), Licensing Manager (Simon Harvey) (items 26 – 31 only) and Committee Services Officer (Janey Nice)

26. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting and explained how he wished the order of business on the agenda to be considered.

27. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

There were none.

28. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on Monday 24 October 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The Chairman informed the Committee that an over-arching report on Spendalls House and Honeycroft would be presented to the Committee in February 2017. A more detailed report would be presented to the Committee in May 2017 in order for a feasibility study and consultation to be undertaken with outside bodies on the future of Spendalls House and Honeycroft.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor John Hones declared an interest in respect of the Testing Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles item insofar as he was a Taxi Driver licensed with the Council.

31. TESTING TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

Further to its meeting held on 1 June 2016 (Minute 5 referred) on the possibility of extending the days available to the taxi and private hire trades for vehicle testing at the Northbourne Road depot.

The Licensing Manager detailed the days and times available for taxi testing and informed the Committee that each test took around 45 minutes to complete and testing was done for approximately 48 weeks of the year. He gave further details of the number of taxis and the number of slots available for testing, taking into account where taxi proprietors had changed their vehicles during the year and that this left approximately 199 slots still available throughout the 48 week testing period.

Mr Harvey said that he had met with the Council's Open Spaces and Transport Manager (Trevor Mills) to discuss the possibility of extending the number of days that vehicle testing could be offered to the taxi trade in order to allow the taxi trade some flexibility and choice of appointment times and days. However, Mr Mills had informed Mr Harvey that he was unable to offer any alternative arrangements as he did not have the staff available to do so.

Mr Harvey confirmed that he was not aware of any complaints about the lack of time slots available for taxi testing and, in fact, in most weeks, not all, there were free slots available.

A Member at the meeting, who had declared a personal interest as he worked as a taxi driver, said that he was unaware of there being any problems with taxi owners booking in for mechanical tests and he also was not aware of anyone being delayed or taken off the road because they could not get a test booked. He said that he was unsure where it had come from in the taxi trade that there was a problem getting booked in for a mechanical test or who was saying it, but that no-one had made him aware of any problems and that personally he was very happy with the service and had had no problems with it.

When asked by a Member about if a taxi testing booking was cancelled was there a way the drivers could be informed to perhaps take up that time slot, Mr Harvey said that he was investigating putting the bookings online with the possibility of an alert being sent out by text, or by email, so as much as possible the taxi drivers could be in control of their own bookings.

Mr Westall (Head of Customer & Commercial Services) said the Channel Shift Plan report that was due to go to Cabinet in December 2016 would seek for a budget for a portal for residents to use to search all of the different Council services and that the taxi testing bookings could be part of that. The service could include sending out reminders for bookings the day before. When asked by the Chairman when this would roll-out Mr Westall said that this would probably start with the Revenues and Benefits section as they were the busiest department, but it did depend on the budget granted by Cabinet.

After discussion by the Committee it was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee notes the report of the Corporate Director (Operational Services) regarding taxi testing and private hire vehicles and that the Committee believes that there is sufficient capacity within the Northbourne Road Garage and that therefore there is no need for further taxi testing days to be offered; and

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

- (b) Further consideration be given to putting the booking of taxi testing online as part of the Channel Shift agenda.

The Chairman thanked Mr Harvey for his comprehensive report.

32. CLACTON AIR SHOW 2016 – DE-BRIEF

The Portfolio Holder for Tourism and Culture (Councillor Ferguson) introduced the Head of Sport and Leisure (Mike Carran) for him to de-brief the Committee on the Clacton Air Show 2016.

Mr Carran gave the following presentation with a brief statement under each heading:

- (1) Objectives
 - Maximise Tourist Opportunities through Events; and
 - You Tube website

- (2) This Year's Key Challenges
 - CAA Guidance – following the Shoreham Air Disaster;
 - Managing visitor Safety;
 - Traveller Incursion;
 - Rising costs; and
 - Sea Mist
- (3) This Year's Success Stories
 - Night Flights;
 - Increasing Visitor Numbers;
 - Managing Visitor Numbers; and
 - Partnership Working to address key challenges
- (4) The Big Issues
 - Spectator Numbers'
 - Income;
 - Cost of Air Show; and
 - Economic Benefit
- (5) What Was Said? - Details of reviews on social media including Twitter
- (6) Learning Points for 2017
 - High Court Injunction;
 - Reinforcing the message about financial sustainability of the Air Show; and
 - Continuity between Night Flights and Fireworks

During the discussion with Members they raised the issue about the poor catering arrangements for the 2016 Airshow and Mr Carran and Councillor Ferguson agreed that they could have been a lot better and the catering company that had been used had not really stepped up to expectations.

The Committee extended their thanks to Mr Carran and his small team and gave special praise to Jo Needham and Sarah Daniells.

33. SEA AND BEACH FESTIVAL

Mr Carran gave a presentation on the Sea and Beach Festival which included the following:

- (1) Objectives
 - Maximise Tourist Opportunities through Events; and
 - "Book-end" the summer season with Clacton Airshow
- (2) The Event
 - Traditional Family Entertainment;
 - Traditional Seaside Entertainment;
 - Pleasure Boat Rides;
 - 'Have a Go' Activities;
 - Water Sports; and
 - Interactive Events

- (3) The Big Issues
- Attendance;
 - Cost of the Event;
 - Economic Impact; and
 - Weather
 -
- (4) Learning Points for 2017
- Hone the event;
 - Roll out to other parts of the District;
 - Work towards financial sustainability; and
 - Possibility of Linking-in with other events

The Chairman suggested a large marquee on the Greensward which had proved effective at Aldburgh which could contain some sort of entertainment and Mr Carran said he had already been talking to a promoter who was experienced at huge outdoor events and was very professional. Last year they had piloted a four-day marquee event and the model was similar to a Radio One Roadshow. Mr Carran added that the Council wanted high quality events without having to pay for them, however that promoter liked Clacton and it was looking promising working with them.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Ferguson and Mr Carran for their two excellent presentations and said that their staff should be commended for the very hard work from such a small team, especially mentioning the hard work of Sarah Daniels and Jo Needham.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chairman confirmed that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee was to be held on Wednesday 25 January 2017, subject to the availability of agenda items and as that meeting was the last of 2016 he wished all present a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and thanked the Committee for all of their support over the last year.

The meeting was declared closed at 9.00 p.m.

Chairman