

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING

Monday, 12 September 2016

PRESENT: Councillor P Dillon (Chair)

Councillor(s): T Graham, P Craig, D Davidson, S Dickie,
M Hood, H Hughes, K McCartney, J McClurey, J Turnbull
and A Wheeler

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): L Caffrey, K Dodds, D Duggan and J Graham

CPL8 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held 20 June 2016 were approved as a correct record.

CPL9 FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - CONSULTATION

The Committee considered a report that informed of the draft Flood Risk Management Strategy and the intended consultation for the document.

The Strategy is a statutory document that the Council is required to produce and keep up to date in its role as Lead Local Flood Authority for the area.

The Strategy was prepared in consultation with a number of bodies with an interest in flood risk, including other council services, the Environment Agency and Northumbrian Water. An Advisory Group for councillors was also held to consider the Strategy.

The Committee were informed that there will be a consultation period of three months, primarily through the Council website and social media, the Council News and/or local press (where possible). Due to the strategic nature of the document, with only limited information, a more extensive public consultation exercise is not proposed. The Strategy will however be presented to the Gateshead Strategic Partnership, specifically the Economic, Environment and Culture Board.

It is proposed that following the consultation exercise the final Strategy will be put to Cabinet and Council for approval and that progress in implementing the Strategy will be reported to this OSC as part of the annual review of flooding issues.

RESOLVED - That the proposals for the consultation were noted

CPL10 REVIEW OF THE IMPACT OF GAMBLING ON THE BOROUGH - EVIDENCE GATHERING

The Committee undertook its first evidence gathering session for the review, the focus of which was to inform of the legal framework in place for the regulation of gambling and the types and number of premises licensed for gambling in the borough of Gateshead.

The following information was presented:

The Gambling Act 2005 – The Act came into force at the end of 2007 and established the Gambling Commission and local licensing authorities - The Gambling Commission sets the overall direction at a national level while local licensing authorities lead locally.

The Act places a legal duty on both the Commission and licensing authorities to aim to permit gambling and use their powers to moderate its impact on the licensing objectives rather than by starting out to prevent it altogether.

There are three licensing objectives which guide the way that the Gambling Commission and licensing authorities perform their functions and the way that gambling businesses carry on their activities:

- Preventing gambling from being a source of crime and disorder, being associated with crime or disorder, or being used to support crime
- Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way
- Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling

The Role and Responsibilities of Licensing Authorities – Licensing authorities are given wide ranging powers and regulatory functions in relation to gambling

The Statement of Licensing Policy – Licensing authorities are required to develop, consult on, and publish a statement for their licensing policy setting out the principles that they propose to apply in exercising their functions under the Gambling Act 2005. The Council's currently policy came into effect on 18 January 2016

The Licensing Framework – The Gambling Commission has responsibility for granting operation and personal licenses for commercial gambling operators and personnel working in the industry.

Licensing authorities have responsibility for licensing gambling premises within their area, and for authorising the temporary use of premises for gambling, for issuing permits for a range of gambling activity and machines registering small society lotteries.

Premises Licences – granted by licensing authorities to existing operating licence holders and may authorise the provision of facilities on:

- Casino premises (0 in Gateshead)
- Bingo premises (3 in Gateshead)
- Betting premises (42 in Gateshead)

- Adult gaming centres (11 in Gateshead)
- Family entertainment centres (1 in Gateshead)

Gaming machines in gambling premises and other premises – the legislation defines four categories of gaming machine (A, B, C and D) according to the maximum amount that can be paid for playing the machine and the maximum prize it can deliver and describes number and categories of machine that are permitted in each type of gambling premises.

Small Society Lotteries – society lotteries are promoted for the benefit of a non-commercial society. They do not require a licence but must be registered with the local authority in the area where the principal office of the society is located. Details of registration requirements and procedures should be available from the licensing department of the relevant local authority. There are currently 82 registered small society lotteries in Gateshead.

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to explore links to safeguarding with the aim to help vulnerable people who may have an addiction to gambling.

The Committee highlighted the possible links to gambling as a result of increased advertising on television of various gambling premises / websites.

The Committee also raised concerns regarding the potential amount of money which goes out of the borough through the sale of national lottery tickets and scratch cards.

The Committee were informed that there is a well-established self-exclusion scheme within Gateshead that can help a person to overcome a gambling addiction.

The Committee suggested that it would be beneficial for a representative of the Gambling Commission to come along to a future evidence gathering session.

RESOLVED - That the comments of the Committee be noted.

CPL11 REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS - PROGRESS UPDATE

The Committee were provided with an update report on the initiatives to reduce carbon emissions within the Council and Community and also an update on cost and carbon savings 2015/16.

Updates were provided on current schemes along with the issues and challenges for the future which include:

Issues and challenges for reducing Council emissions

- Energy efficiency works in schools continue to be offered, but take up by schools is challenging and availability of interest free loan financing is reducing particularly for academies
- 2016/17 will see further work on progressing connections of more Council buildings to the Town Centre District Energy scheme, in particular for Park Road, Shearlegs Road, Gateshead Leisure Centre, Central Library and

Prince Consort Road.

- The Council had allocated up to £11m to invest on solar PV on Council buildings, schools and Council homes. From January 2016, Feed in Tariffs were significantly reduced by Government, making the case for installing solar PV less viable. The Council are continuing to explore potential further solar PV installations, but installation costs need to reduce considerably before they become viable again.

Issues and challenges for reducing community emissions

- High-cost home energy efficiency measures, such as solid wall insulation, still remains a challenge to deliver
- The challenge going forward is seek more innovative ways to tackle the hard-to-heat property types – tower blocks, and solid wall housing – which still require gap-funding. Funding bids have been made to ERDF for tower block schemes, but these are yet to be confirmed, and still subject to developments regarding the UK's exit from the EU
- It remains challenging for the Council to require new developments to reach energy standards higher than building regulations

Opportunities

- 2016/17 will see the start of operation of the District Energy Scheme that will further reduce carbon emissions whilst providing cost savings to private, public and domestic customers
- The opportunity to deliver, and potentially expand, other energy schemes at Team Valley, Metrocentre and new battery storage technologies, to continue to reduce carbon emissions, save energy costs whilst generating income for the Council and attracting new businesses and sustainable housing to Gateshead, boosting economic and housing growth

Queries were raised regarding cavity wall insulation and whether any incentives were being offered by the Council. The Committee were informed that grant funding has now dropped to a level which is not viable and therefore the Council are currently unable to offer incentives to local residents. It was however noted that new methods for insulation, via internal works, that could be more viable are coming onto the market and could be explored.

The Committee made reference to the new street lighting and street lighting columns. The Committee were advised that illumination in some areas had been reduced to 50%. Councillors were informed that if they become aware of problems within their ward as a result of the reduced illumination, officers should be made aware of the problems so that lighting in a specific area can be reviewed.

RESOLVED -

- i) That the comments of the Committee be noted
- ii) That a further update report be presented to a future meeting

CPL12 REVIEW OF OPPORTUNITIES TO PROMOTE RURAL GATESHEAD - MONITORING REPORT

The Committee considered a report that updated on the actions arising from the review of opportunities to promote rural Gateshead.

The Committee were reminded that the review examined the promotion of rural Gateshead as both a tourism and business location. The scope of the review was:

- **Business Growth** – to review services that supported economic growth in the rural areas examining the potential for new businesses based around key assets. It also reviewed the partnerships approach to rural economic growth and the potential for new business and visitor accommodation to help improve economic performance
- **Emerging Places** – to review the services that deliver enhanced visitor potential eg tourism activities, environmental sustainability and volunteering opportunities. It also explored better use of key assets for economic purposes such as the Angel of the North.

The Committee were informed on progress to date on each of the agreed recommendations/actions as follows:

Appointment of Cultural Tourism Project Manager – the appointment will deliver cultural tourism based initiatives in rural areas and has been funded through the re-designation of resources.

Land of Oak and Iron Landscape Partnership – now fully established working with Groundwork NE & Cumbria and progress has been made on a number of aspects of the project.

Angel of the North site – initial work has started to gather an information pack regarding the site by working with officers across the Council. Tenders for a feasibility study are to be sent to potential consultants in the new year.

Promoting rural Gateshead – further discussions have taken place with NGI with the aim of developing a marketing campaign to promote the rural area. The marketing campaign will be launched in Spring 2017.

Funding Opportunities – the Council has identified funding opportunities/timelines to support the development of rural assets and attract additional visitors.

Investment – work has continued with the private sector to maximise the investment in the tourism business infrastructure in Gateshead and support the development of affordable business space in rural areas.

It was suggested that promotion/advertisement via display monitors in public areas at the Civic Centre be explored. The Committee were informed that officers recognise the need to look at various methods of advertising including through partnerships such as with Nexus and enterprise hubs.

The Committee highlighted the need to ensure joined up working across services within the Council, in particular when work to support business start up/expansion has been provided.

RESOLVED - That the Committee is satisfied that sufficient progress has been achieved to date in the implementation of the view of opportunities to promote rural Gateshead