

Committee: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 7th January 2016

Agenda item: 5

Wards: All

Subject: Commercial Services Task Group - update

Lead officer: Stella Akintan Scrutiny Officer

Lead member: Councillor Abigail Jones, Chair of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Contact officers: Stella Akintan, Scrutiny Officer, stella.akintan@merton.gov.uk, 020 8545 3390

Recommendations:

That Members consider the progress of the Commercial Services task group review .

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To make proposals to Members for the commercial services task group review, and to seek agreement on the proposed Terms of Reference, timescales, sources of evidence and witnesses for the review.

2. DETAILS

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 2nd September 2015, it was agreed to conduct a task group review of Commercial Services.
- 2.2 The following Members were nominated to sit on the Task Group: Cllr Russell Makin (Chair), Cllr John Sargeant, Cllr Najeeb Latif and Cllr James Holmes

3. AIM OF REVIEW

- 3.1 To explore the council's approach to commercialisation and opportunities within the Environment and Regeneration Department to increase income from services delivered, with a particular focus on the following services:
- Green Spaces
 - Leisure and Cultural Services
 - Development and Building control
 - Future Merton
 - Property

4. Progress to date:

- 4.1 The task group recently met with the Head of Sustainable Communities and the Future Merton Manager. The following issues were discussed:
 - 4.2 The Sustainable Communities team are working towards a strategy to manage the risks and opportunities that arise from council owned land.
 - 4.3 Officers are already pursuing many of the suggestions put forward by task group such as maximising opportunities from existing land however the council has an important role in balancing the needs of the local community alongside income maximisation.
 - 4.4 The task group will be meeting with the Chief Executive at the next meeting to consider the council's approach to risk management.
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- 5.1 The Chair will also be meeting with neighbouring boroughs to discuss their approach to income maximisation.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1 The Panel may choose to agree a different scope and terms of reference to those proposed in this scoping report.

8. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 8.1 Members are asked to give consideration to if, and how, they would like to engage witnesses in this review.

9. TIMETABLE

- 9.1 It is envisaged that the Task Group will undertake and complete its review within 6 months.

10. CO-OPTION

- 10.1 Members are asked to give consideration to co-opting representatives onto the Task Group for part, or the duration, of the review to assist the Task Group. In accordance with the Constitution any representative co-opted onto the Panel or Task Group will be a non-voting member of the Task Group and will be required to adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.

11. PUBLICITY

- 11.1 Members can publicise the review to encourage and facilitate resident and partner engagement and to promote the outcomes of the review upon completion. The following mechanisms for promotion/publication may be utilised throughout the review: -
 - Press release in local press;
 - My Merton;
 - Community Forums;

- Merton council website;
- Ward councillors;
- Posters/materials in libraries and Merton Link;
- Staff bulletin board and plasma screens in civic centre; and
- Residents' panel and Centre for Public Scrutiny (outcomes)

12. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are none specific to this report. Any financial, resource and property implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

13. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 None for the purposes of this report. Any legal and statutory implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

14. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 None specific to this report. Any human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

15. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 None specific to this report. Any crime and disorder implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

16. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 16.1 None for the purposes of this report. Any risk management and health and safety implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

17. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- 17.1 None

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 18.1 None

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