

MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Board held on Monday, 19 December 2016 in the Council Chamber at Mendip District Council, Shepton Mallet commencing at 6.30 pm.

COUNCILLORS PRESENT:

Damon Hooton (Chair), Eve Berry, Dick Skidmore, Terry Napper, Graham Noel, Shane Collins and Roy Mackenzie, Edward Drewe (substitute for Steve Henderson).

OTHER COUNCILLORS PRESENT:

Peter Bradshaw, Alan Townsend, John Greenhalgh, Nigel Hewitt-Cooper, Nigel Taylor, John Parham, Philip Ham, Danny Unwin.

OFFICERS:

Tracy Aarons	Lead Officer of the Scrutiny Board
Claire Malcolmson	Group Manager – Community Health Services
Steve Shrimplin	Principal Revenues, Benefit and Fraud Officer
Caroline M ^c Cafferty	Committee Officer

OTHERS PRESENT:

Chris Edwards	Glastonbury Festivals Ltd
Robert Richards	Glastonbury Festivals Ltd
Adrian Coombs	Glastonbury Festivals Ltd

Agenda Item	Subject	Actioned By
1	<p>Chair's Announcements</p> <p>The Chair explained the procedures in the case of an emergency and asked that all mobile devices be switched to silent. Hearing aid users were asked to switch their devices to position 'T'.</p>	
2	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from Councillors Mike Pullin and Steve Henderson.</p>	
3	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>None.</p>	
4	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>Items on the agenda: None</p>	

	<p>Items not on the agenda:</p> <p>None.</p>	
5	<p>Previous Minutes</p> <p>The minutes of the Scrutiny Board meeting held on 28 November 2016 were accepted as an accurate record.</p>	Caroline M^cCafferty
6	<p>RIPA Update</p> <p>The purpose of this report was to update Members on the Council's Corporate Policies and Procedures on RIPA following the last audit by the Surveillance Commissioners in November 2015.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Members noted the report.</p>	Lesley Dolan
7	<p>Council Tax Reduction Review and Plans 2017/18</p> <p>Each year Central Government (DCLG) requires local authorities to approve a Policy for helping those in need to claim a reduction in council tax. Whilst central government determine the level for pension age claimants, the Policy for working age claimants is discretionary. Since this Policy started in April 2013 Mendip has retained the same Policy, currently helping 6,712 households and reducing council tax by over £5.5m. Following a review by the Council Tax Reduction Members Panel in August 2016, it is recommended that the Policy remain unchanged for 2017/18.</p> <p>The Chair stated that this item was robustly discussed at Full Council on 12 December 2016. He added that the Council should be proud of its achievement.</p> <p>Members wished for thanks to be recorded to Steve Shrimplin for his hard work.</p> <p>One Member queried whether the hardship budget should be reduced to be used elsewhere in the future. The Chair explained that Full Council had voted to leave the budget the same and that unused funds would be channelled back in for the following year.</p> <p>Another Member queried whether we could look to other Somerset Councils to see if there were improvements to be taken from their procedures.</p>	Steve Shrimplin

	<p>Steve Shrimplin stated that feedback and information sharing would be requested from other Councils in Somerset and the 5 Councils when Universal Credit came into force.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Members noted and endorsed the recommendation of “no change” in our Council Tax Reduction Policy 2017/18.</p>	
8	<p>Glastonbury Festival Summary Report 2016</p> <p>The Group Manager for Community Health Services presented a report on Glastonbury Festival 2016 in relation to statutory duties of Mendip District Council and matters covered by the Premises Licence issued by the Council.</p> <p>The Group Manager for Community Health Services wished for thanks to be recorded for staff and volunteers for their hard work. She also stated that as a small licensing authority, it was important to continue to work closely with other agencies.</p> <p>She stated that in summary, the primary issues moving forward were traffic management, night time noise, development of contingency planning, and the welfare of staff, volunteers and contractors.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood and Community Health Services expressed special gratitude to Claire Malcolmson, Group Manager for Community Health Services and other officers, Councillors Roy Mackenzie and Danny Unwin, and personally thanked Glastonbury Festivals Ltd. He stated that with regard to the traffic issues due to the adverse weather conditions, he was aware that GFL had put out radio notices that festival goers should not travel on the Wednesday but that this had been ignored by the public.</p> <p>The Ward member for Croscombe and Pilton stated that the major issue reported from residents in his ward was traffic though residents were generally happy with other aspects of the festival.</p> <p>The Ward Member for The Pennards stated that the majority of offsite camping areas were in his ward. He queried whether the traffic management policy could include the control and stewarding of these camping areas. A particular concern in his ward was the access for emergency vehicles.</p> <p>The Group Manager for Community Health Services explained that as offsite camping areas were not required to be licensed and therefore not enforceable, support had</p>	<p>Claire Malcolmson</p>

been requested from the Offsite Traffic Manager to engage with the offsite camping areas and involve them in the wider traffic management. She also clarified that safe routes were identified for emergency vehicular access.

One Member observed that the increase in numbers attending the festival was disproportionate to the resulting problems caused.

Another Member stated that the increase to the local economy from offsite camping was beneficial. He queried whether a £1 deposit for plastic mugs could be introduced to reduce waste at the bars inside the festival. He further queried the problems with internal traffic on the Tuesday.

A Shepton Mallet Town and District Councillor stated that he had received over 100 complaints from residents with regard to the impact of the traffic congestion; local people were unable to attend the doctors, get to work, attend school and examinations and to receive essential care in their homes. There were no toilets on the routes, no information available to the drivers and Glastonbury Festival Ltd were slow to react to the problem. He queried whether holding areas could be created for camper vans far enough away from the site to avoid future issues.

Other Members queried what procedures were in place for the cancellation of the festival. It was stated that a new impact assessment was required. It was also felt that road signage for local drivers could have been better. Could there be a fund for compensation. What economic effect if the festival moves. Could hard or metalled roadways be used to get traffic into the site.

Councillor Skidmore stated that the 20,000 extra festival tickets available in the past few years and the 30 – 40,000 vehicles travelling to the site had a huge impact locally. He added that of the £35million taken by the festival yearly, very little remained in the area. He further stated that the impact was felt locally for 3 months of the year due to the extensive fencing erected and dismantled. He felt that an aerial picture of the site was necessary as the festival had encouraged too much growth. He queried whether the sewage tanker had been hauled out, and where the abandoned tents had been disposed of. He added that the festival disrupted the work of the Council yearly, and felt that it should be a licensing exception with a higher charge levied. He concluded by saying that the blue arm bands and Pilton passes may have been copied.

The Chair informed Members that queries would be addressed either in writing or at a further update in the Spring of 2017.

	<p>Councillor Edward Drewe left the meeting at 8.02pm.</p> <p>One Member stated that it was essential that contractors working on site complied with personal safety equipment requirements.</p> <p>Adrian Coombs, the Event Operations Lead for Glastonbury Festivals Ltd stated that all points raised would be taken forward. He added that the contingencies which were in place such as opening the Bath and West Showground should have been activated earlier. He informed Members that the traffic sub group had met and agreed actions, including contingency parking for cars and camper vans. He also stated that opening and closing dates to the site would be extended to ease congestion. He concluded by saying that all points would be in the revised traffic plan presented at the multi-agency partner group meeting. He thanked Members for Mendip's involvement in the festival.</p> <p>Councillor Terry Napper was warned by the Chair for interruption and left the meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Scrutiny noted the report and supported officer recommendations in appendix 2. The Group Manager for Community Health Services was to advise a date for a further briefing, probably in May 2017.</p>	
9	<p>Forward Plans</p> <p>The Council's Forward Plan was noted.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Forward Plan was noted.</p>	Caroline M^cCafferty
10	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>Councillor Nigel Taylor was offered a big thank you for his involvement with the Glastonbury Festival from Cabinet and Scrutiny and presented with a gift</p> <p>Nigel thanked the responsible party for his adult Santa suit.</p>	

The meeting finished at approximately 8.19 pm.