

Council

Monday, 17th December, 2012
2.30 - 6.40 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Colin Hay (Chair), Wendy Flynn (Vice-Chair), Andrew Chard, Garth Barnes, Ian Bickerton, Nigel Britter, Chris Coleman, Barbara Driver, Jacky Fletcher, Rob Garnham, Les Godwin, Penny Hall, Tim Harman, Rowena Hay, Diane Hibbert, Sandra Holliday, Peter Jeffries, Steve Jordan, Andrew Lansley, Paul Massey, Helena McCloskey, Andrew McKinlay, Paul McLain, John Rawson, Anne Regan, Rob Reid, Diggory Seacome, Charles Stewart, Klara Sudbury, Jo Teakle, Pat Thornton, Jon Walklett, Simon Wheeler and Roger Whyborn

Extract from the Minutes

1. **SCRUTINY TASK GROUP REVIEW - EVENTS SUBMISSION**

Councillor Klara Sudbury, introduced the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the scrutiny task group - Events Submission, as the vice-chair of that committee. She commended Councillor Penny Hall for her excellent work as chair of the scrutiny task group and explained that the report had been brought to Council so that all members would have an opportunity to comment on the findings. She felt that the recommendations set out in 2. needed clarification and suggested the following amendment:

That Rec 2 reads – “to request that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet take note of the comments raised by Council when they consider the report of the task group”

This amendment was agreed.

Councillor Sudbury invited Councillor Penny Hall to introduce the report of the scrutiny task group.

Councillor Hall explained that she was very pleased to bring this report to Council as it was such an important issue and she would welcome any proactive suggestions from members. In her introduction she explained the background to the review and why the task group had been initiated. The review had highlighted that currently there was a lack of any coherent process in the procedures for dealing with event requests in the town and there was often no notification to members or the public at an early stage. To tackle these issues, the scrutiny task group had come up with a number of recommendations based around an Events Advisory Group and a Safety Advisory Group. She acknowledged that the review had been challenging at times and commended the efforts of Saira Malin and Rosalind Reeves from Democratic Services who had supported the review along with Grahame Lewis, Louis Krog and other

officers from Parks and Gardens, One Legal, Integrated Transport and Public Protection.

In responding to the report, members commended the working group and acknowledged the great deal of work that had gone into producing their final report and recommendations.

A member asked how the council should prioritise events where more than one applicant was interested in holding an event at the same location at the same time and suggested the task group should give this further consideration.

Another member requested clarity on whether a local street party would fall under category A or B. The guidelines suggested a category B event was over 500 people but this would be difficult to assess.

Members had some discussion about the reference in para 6.4 that ward councillors involved in the ECG could keep the public and local interest groups informed of any potential events and represent their views. One member was concerned that the onus should not be on the local councillors to inform their residents as they did not have the tools available to the authority for communicating with residents and local interest groups on a mass scale. Councillor Hibbert, as a member of the working group, advised that the use of the word "could" was deliberate highlighting that this stage in the process provided an opportunity for the ward councillors to update their residents but it was not negating the council's responsibility to keep the public informed. Another member highlighted the difficulty of consulting with relevant members of the public for a town centre event as the users of the town centre were very wide.

Councillor Jeffries, as the Cabinet Member Housing and Safety, welcomed the report whilst acknowledging that there were still details to be worked out and looked forward to receiving the report at Cabinet.

Councillor Seacome, as a member of the task group, reminded Council that the impetus for this task group had been the announcement of a major event in the town. His concern was that there was a presumption in favour of an event and there was no veto if an event was considered unsuitable for the town. He acknowledged that under the new proposals the organisers may listen to the views of the ECG or SAG if they felt an event was unsuitable, but he personally was disappointed that there was still no mechanism for an outright veto of an event.

In her summing up, Councillor Sudbury thanked members for their comments and commended the recommendations which would introduce a more transparent process and ensure ward members were kept informed of events at an early stage.

Upon a vote, the recommendations as amended were agreed unanimously.

Resolved that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet be requested to take note of the comments raised by Council when they consider the task group report.