

Minutes

Partnership Development Group

25th November 2020



Present

Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
J Baugh	Yes	Mrs J Pell	Yes
G Courtauld	Yes	I Pritchard	Yes
A Hensman	Yes	Mrs J Sandum	Apologies
Mrs M Cunningham (Chairman)	Yes	P Thorogood	Apologies
T McArdle	Yes		

6 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

INFORMATION: There were no interests declared.

7 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

INFORMATION: There were no questions asked, or statements made.

8 **MINUTES**

DECISION: The Minutes of the meeting of the Partnership Development Group held on 23rd September 2020 were approved as a correct record; however, there was one typographical error noted in respect of “Recommendation 8” within the Minutes, under page 3, whereby the word “when” had been repeated twice. Officers agreed to amend this.

9 **SCRUTINY REVIEW INTO LEISURE PROVISION AND ACCESS TO SPORT IN THE DISTRICT – FINAL REPORT**

INFORMATION: Prior to the report, the Chairman welcomed Councillor A Hensman to the meeting as the most recently appointed Member of the Partnership Development Group. Members then gave consideration to the final version of the report for the Scrutiny Review into Leisure Provision and Access to Sport in the Braintree District. The key questions that Members sought to answer as part of their Review were listed as follows:-

- What was the picture of sports availability and groups?
- What partnerships were there to support the sports groups?
- What involvement did the Council have directly/through Fusion?
- What was the accessibility of facilities for groups? E.g. Availability, cost

- What impact could the Council have with partners to support groups and engagement for residents?

The Chairman expressed her gratitude towards officers within the organisation and external parties that had attended meetings of the Group throughout the course of the Scrutiny Review in order to support the evidence gathering. It was also noted that during the Review, Members extended their research to Parish and Town Councils by conducting a survey, which requested details as to what leisure facilities and resources were available within more localised areas of the District.

Members were reminded that the final Scrutiny Review report was in its final stages and due for referral to the meeting of Full Council on 7th December 2020; therefore, only minor amendments to the contents of the report would be accepted, as opposed to any additional recommendations.

There followed a brief discussion by Members of the Group on the final report. A number of Members wished to thank the Chairman for her hard work in directing research and ensuring that the content of discussions remained pertinent to the overall aims of the Scrutiny Review. Members also commented that they had found the Review to be highly interesting and useful, as it was apparent that there was a myriad of leisure and sport activities taking place across the District (e.g. Park Run), many of which Members had not previously been aware of.

It was acknowledged that the Scrutiny Review into Leisure Provision and Access to Sport was undertaken before the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. Although it was accepted that the pandemic had had a negative impact on leisure provision (e.g. gyms and local sport groups), Members agreed that there had also been some positive impacts as well, with many residents inspired to take part in other forms of sport and leisure activities, such as walking or running.

There were a small number of typographical errors identified within the final report; the first of these was in respect of 'Recommendation 8,' under the 'Executive Summary,' where the word "the" had been included in error. The second error was identified on page 18 of the report, under section 9, 'Minutes and Agendas of Meeting,' where a few of the meeting dates were listed incorrectly. Officers subsequently agreed to amend the report prior to its submission to Full Council.

In concluding the discussion, the Chairman thanked all Members for their participation and positive engagement in the Scrutiny Review, and was looking forward to the start of the Group's next Scrutiny Review in the New Year. Lastly, the Chairman also wished to thank officers within the Governance and Members Team for their help and support throughout the course of the Review.

Further to a query received from a Member, the Governance and Members Manager briefly explained the topic selection process for Scrutiny Reviews. It was confirmed that the topic of 'Enforcement' had been selected for the Group's next Review; however, it was stressed that although the Review would be meaningful, officer resources and availability across the organisation were currently limited due to the effects of the pandemic. Furthermore, in order to allow Members to focus on key, specific areas when conducting their Review, there was a need to refine the selected topic due to its large scope. The Terms of Reference for the new topic were also under development, and would be circulated to the Group once complete.

DECISION: The Partnership Development Group considered the final Scrutiny Review Report and approved the recommendations for referral to Full Council and Cabinet.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Scrutiny Review Report to be referred to Full Council and Cabinet in accordance with the Procedure Rules for Scrutiny.

The meeting commenced at 7.15pm and closed at 7.40pm.

Councillor Mrs M Cunningham
(Chairman)