

Minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at 5.30pm

### **P R E S E N T**

Councillor David Ambrose Smith (Chairman)  
Councillor Allen Alderson  
Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith  
Councillor Lavinia Edwards  
Councillor Lis Every  
Councillor Mark Hugo  
Councillor Dan Schumann  
Councillor Stuart Smith  
Councillor Christine Whelan

### **OFFICERS**

Lewis Bage – Communities & Partnerships Manager  
Michelle Burrell-Barnett – Communities & Partnerships Support Officer  
Spencer Clark – Open Spaces & Facilities Manager  
Emma Grima – Director, Commercial  
Victor Le Grand – Senior Leisure Services Officer  
Tracey Harding – Tourism, Town Centres & Events Service Manager  
Janis Murfet – Democratic Services Officer  
Ian Smith – Finance Manager  
John Steel – Management Accountant  
Hetty Thornton – Performance Management Officer

### **I N A T T E N D A N C E**

Councillor Richard Hobbs (for Agenda Item No. 8)

#### **36. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

#### **37. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

It was noted that Councillor Edwards was expected to attend the meeting and would arrive shortly.

There were no apologies for absence.

### **38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Lis Every declared an interest in Agenda Item No. 12 (Grants to Voluntary Organisations), being Chairman of the Trustees of Voluntary & Community Action East Cambridgeshire.

### **39. MINUTES**

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **40. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- The agenda order would be changed to take the Leisure Centre Update as the next item of business. All other items would be taken in their published order;
- The Parish Conference on Health & Wellbeing would be taking place on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018 in Burwell. If Members required more information, they should contact Lewis Bage, Communities & Partnerships Manager, or Michelle Burrell-Barnett, Communities & Partnerships Support Officer.

*Councillors Allen Alderson and Lavinia Edwards joined the meeting at 5.33pm.*

### **41. LEISURE CENTRE UPDATE**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Richard Hobbs, Service Delivery Champion for Leisure & Community Services, gave an update on progress with the new leisure centre and illustrated his presentation with a number of photographs.

The photographs showed the leisure centre in various stages of fitting out and included views of the cardiovascular room, the main swimming pool (taken from upstairs), the training pool, the two dance studios, the changing rooms in the wet and dry areas, and the plant room.

One of the photographs was of the SLM team (currently running the Paradise Pool) visiting the building. They were being TUPE'd over to the new leisure centre and had expressed their excitement at the prospect of working in such a 'fabulous place'.

The dance studios were separated into two rooms in order to keep down noise levels and there was also an extra room which could be used for

meetings and other events such as seminars. All changing rooms were being finished to the very highest standards.

Referring to the area around the exterior of The Hive, Councillor Hobbs said there was still much work to be done to improve the appearance of the groundworks.

However, work was two weeks ahead of schedule and to give Members a flavour of how close the project was close to completion, Councillor Hobbs said the centre would be handed over to the Council in April and then on to GLL within 24 hours. The official opening was scheduled for 11<sup>th</sup> May and invitations to the opening would be issued in the next week.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Senior Leisure Services Officer confirmed the dimensions of the small swimming pool and stated that the main pool was large enough for 2 or 3 teaching groups.

Councillor Hugo said he could not believe that Ely was going to have such a facility because many bigger places did not have one. The Authority had been working on this project for many years and he wished to place on record his appreciation of Councillor Hobbs' enthusiasm in helping to bringing it to fruition.

Councillor Hobbs responded, saying that a great deal of work had gone into the Leisure Village and wherever possible, local people had been sourced to carry out that work. This had resulted in a lot of income being generated within the District.

Councillor Alderson recalled that when a leisure centre was first spoken of, many thought it would be too costly and out of our reach. Now it was almost completed and would be self-supporting and for the whole of the District.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Hobbs for his presentation, and asked that the business plan for the leisure centre be added to the Forward Agenda Plan for June.

#### **42. PRESENTATION: CITIZENS ADVICE RURAL CAMBS**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Dr Batul Dungarwalla, Chief Executive, Rural Cambs Citizens Advice, gave a brief presentation.

She commenced by thanking the Council for its support, adding that funding to 31<sup>st</sup> September 2017 had supported 1,504 clients and helped in dealing with 7,000 issues. By the end of the year over 2,000 clients would have been helped.

The Ely office was manned by 2 full time staff and 31 volunteers and assistance was also received from solicitors on a pro bono basis. People were seeking help for a wide range of issues including benefits, debt, relationship problems, employment matters and housing. Of the queries received, 80% were resolved at the point of contact.

Clients could seek help by a number of means such as face to face contact, by email or webchat. The new website directed people to find help and there was a seamless movement through most of the delivery channels.

With regard to outcomes, the charity had helped East Cambridgeshire residents maximise their income, as a result of which 137 families did not become homeless. Assistance had also been given in negotiating unmanageable debt and 227 clients had received help with financial skills. In relation to the latter, financial skills were now being incorporated into every client intervention. Thanks to the funding from the District Council, 2 out of every 3 East Cambs clients had their problems resolved.

It was noted that the organisation had 24:7 live data and could demonstrate the impact using a Treasury approved model.

Dr Dungarwalla continued, speaking of a particular client who had been referred by a support worker. She explained the circumstances of the referral and the steps taken to help resolve the client's problem. The outcome was that the client's financial issues were being resolved, he was now in a position to apply for permanent accommodation and was looking for work.

Looking to the future, it would be important to maximise funding and have cost effective premises. It was acknowledged that not all clients were comfortable contacting Citizens Advice on-line and the aspiration was to have 8 community hubs across East Cambridgeshire, co-located where possible in places such as libraries and health centres. Staff from a number of bodies would be on hand to help people and give advice.

Funding was uncertain and scarce, and the roll out of Universal Credit was likely to accelerate demand for advice and assistance.

Dr Dungarwalla concluded by asking how the organisation could work together with the District Council, using the 24:7 data to work smarter, and how they could support ECDC with the issues surrounding homelessness.

The Chairman thanked Dr Dungarwalla for her presentation, saying it was important that her organisation remained sustainable. Her questions would be put to Officers for a response. He said the community hubs were important and he believed the District Council should work with Citizens Advice.

#### **43. PRESENTATION – NEWMARKET CITIZENS ADVICE**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Lynne Rawlings, Manager of Newmarket Citizens Advice, gave a short presentation.

The Newmarket Branch had been established in 1976 and like Ely, operated under the Advice Quality Standard with casework; she had been manager for the last 8 years.

There were 3,000 clients with ongoing issues, of which 25% came from East Cambridgeshire and help was offered by a number of means: face to face

drop in, a limited email service, telephone consultations, via their website, casework and specialist appointments. The most important links were with community groups and Mrs Rawlings said that great work was being done with other groups such as 'Steelbones'. There was also to be an open day at the Chicken Shed in Fordham.

With regard to value to the community in 2016/17, the fiscal benefit amounted to £478,625 and comprised a reduction in health service demand, local authority homelessness and out-of-work benefits. The public value amounted to £2,339,989; for every £1 invested, it generated £3.96 in fiscal benefits, £19.35 in public value and £19.15 to the people being helped.

The value to East Cambridgeshire was an integrated service that supported clients with issues across the board. The 'hard outcome' was £322,230 in benefits to individuals as income gained through benefits, debts written off and consumer problems resolved.

Mrs Rawlings next drew Members' attention to two slides which illustrated the Year on Year Trend information for 2016/17 and 2017/18, and more specifically for Burwell, as it had one of the biggest number of clients. In both instances the largest trend was benefits and tax credits. In the case of Burwell, there had been a big drop in in benefits, but those seeking advice regarding debt had increased. She was keeping an eye on statistics and treating the figures with caution.

Members were next told of some case histories where clients had presented with financial problems. Various measures were taken to ensure that each received the appropriate help and advice, and in one case, that help included extending advice to a family member.

It was noted that the Quality Assured Integrated Services were delivered by highly trained staff who were closely supervised and heavily audited; this resulted a trusted, reliable and accessible service.

Mrs Rawlings concluded by thanking Members for their support, saying that it was needed to help Citizens Advice keep a roof over their head; the funding from East Cambridgeshire District Council meant the world to them.

The Chairman said that the trends information would be useful for Members, especially if it could be broken down. He also asked if 'door step' lending caused problems. Mrs Rawlings replied that these days, people were often approached at the school gates. There were some very unscrupulous people about, but they could be reported to Trading Standards.

In response to a further question from the Chairman about internet use, Mrs Rawlings said that a computer and access to the internet was essential if people were to be able to access the correct websites.

Councillor Hugo asked about other sources of funding and the Committee noted that it was received from Suffolk County Council, Forest Heath District Council, and Newmarket Town Council as well as from local businesses and as

a result of legacies. She was happy to be able to report that at present they had very healthy reserves.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Rawlings for her attendance and for giving Members an informative presentation.

*Councillor Schumann joined the meeting at 5.55pm.*

#### **44. TOURISM, TOWN CENTRES & EVENTS SERVICE UPDATE**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Tracey Harding, Tourism, Town Centres & Events Service Manager, gave Members a comprehensive presentation on the work of her service.

She commenced by saying that with the forthcoming transfer of the service to the City of Ely of Council, putting together her presentation had been a time of reflection. She had been involved in an amazing number of events and projects over the past 20 years.

Oliver Cromwell's House was not just a tourist information centre; it was also a visitor attraction which provided a highly valued service. There was a gift shop and a function room, the use of which had really grown.

The Tourism Development Service was an important 'back shop' function and staff attended travel and trade shows to promote Ely and the District, worked with new tourism related businesses to offer and advice and support as well as encourage and facilitate journalist visits in order to maximise coverage for our area and support our tourism partners.

Traditional methods were still used for marketing but digital marketing had taken the service by storm. The Service had finally got a website and much work had gone into developing a new brand which translated into a new style Visitor Guide. The bookability of tickets on-line resulted in 700 bookings in its first 6 months.

Social media had provided the opportunity to support local business and national campaigns and it was good to have such a wide reach and provide a human face to the business.

Mrs Harding said it had been a proud moment when Full Council resolved to include 'Events' as part of the Service's title. This was in recognition of the hard work the team put into running high profile events as well as offering a comprehensive advice service for organisers wishing to put their own events on in our District.

Speaking next of specific events, she informed Members of the success achieved with the Apple Festival, the Eel Festival weekend (including the Food Safari and the Food & Drink Festival). Due to reducing the bottom line and attracting sponsors these events now turned a profit of £10K where previously they had run at a significant cost to the council. Networking to attract sponsors

was very hard work, but the aim was to make people feel that they were truly a part of the events.

With regard to the commercial agenda, the team had managed to reduce its cost to the Council by a staggering 60% within three years. This was a combination of reducing expenditure but also looking at new income opportunities. For example, the Lord Protector's Historical Fayre made a profit of approximately £2,000 in 2018, and the ghost walks were so successful that they were now held all year round. A new leisure venture for Ely and area, which was proving to be popular, was the 'Escape Room' at Oliver Cromwell's House. People were coming to Ely to take part and this activity was worth approximately £10,000 per annum.

The Town Centre teams had been relaunched. Littleport had a great group of traders and this had resulted in the establishment of a monthly community market. Soham had proved to be a little harder but the shops had embraced the dressing of their windows to support the annual Pumpkin Fair as well as running a children's trail for Christmas.

Looking to the future, the Service would be moving over to the City of Ely Council but it would be very much business as usual and it would still continue to work with its existing partners across the District as the visitor is not aware of political or geographic boundaries. It is also Visit England's mission for all tourist destinations to encourage travel from place to place. Mrs Harding said she was very lucky to have such a forward looking fantastic team and she declared that she had had 'such a ball' during her time at the District Council. She concluded by saying that it was most unfortunate that during her time there had been no money for tourism and yet pending the service's departure there appeared to be a significant amount of money available. She therefore made a plea that her service could make the best use of this money.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Harding for her update and paid tribute to her enthusiasm.

Councillor Every concurred, saying that she had worked with Mrs Harding for 5 years and considered her to 'absolutely brilliant'. She wished to place on record her thanks on behalf of the Committee; whilst the transfer of the Service would be a huge loss to the District Council, she was delighted that it was coming to the City Council. In response to a request from Councillor Every, Members and Officers stood and gave Mrs Harding a round of applause.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Mrs Harding for looking after the Littleport and Soham town centres, saying they were in good hands.

#### **45. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee received a report, S257, previously circulated, which provided Members with details of the financial position for services within the remit of the Community Services Committee.

The Finance Manager introduced John Steel, Management Accountant, saying that Mr Steel would present the report this evening and at future meetings.

This was the third report for the 2017/18 financial year and detailed the actual expenditure incurred as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 and current projections as to the yearend position.

It was noted that the current forecast was that capital spending would be £15,455,680 at yearend. This was an overspend compared to the revised budget as it was now forecast that the East Cambs Trading Company would require the full £5 million that the Council had agreed to loan it in this financial year.

Referring to the variances shown on page 2 of the Officer's report, the Chairman asked for clarification regarding the profiled overspend being taken from S106 funding. The Finance Manager replied that this was due to the way the money was allocated as part of the year end process. It appeared on the ledger as expenditure, but at yearend it would show as no cost and would not be a variance. The Director, Commercial added that where S106 money was available, it would be utilised. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

- 1) To note that this Committee is projected to end the year with a saving on its approved revenue budget of £15,000, this is a combination of underspends on expenditure budgets and additional income on income budgets;
- 2) To note that the Committee has a projected capital programme outturn of £15,455,680.

#### **46. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT – END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORTS & NEW SERVICE DELIVERY PLANS**

The Committee received a report, S258, previously circulated, which provided Members with the end of year performance outputs for 2017/18 and the new Service Delivery Plans for Open Spaces, Leisure Services, and Communities & Partnership Services.

The Performance Management Officer said that she would invite each Service Lead to present the information for their service area.

##### Open Spaces

The Open Spaces & Facilities Manager said time had been spent on building good relationships and making contact with schools and parishes across Cambridgeshire to help gain additional grounds maintenance services. Contracts this year had so far brought in £412,316 to the end of December 2017. The Council had retained its Green Flag accreditation for the Country Park and Jubilee Gardens and work would continue within the required standards on all parks and open spaces within the District.

He worked with the Health & Safety Officer to regularly review the risks associated with Open Spaces. A number of health and safety documents were completed during 2017/18; these were set out in the appendix to the report and included Accident/Near Miss Reporting Code of Practice (COP), Control of Hand, Arm and Vibration at Work COP, Security Threats COP, and a Smoke Free Workplace COP.

Referring to the Service Delivery Plan for 2018/19, the Open Spaces & Facilities Manager said he and his team would continue to build on their strengths.

Councillor Every commented that not only were Officers hardworking, but Members also found them to be very accessible. Their support was hugely appreciated by residents and Councillors alike.

The Chairman concurred and thanked the Open Spaces & Facilities Manager for a 'marvellous' report.

### Leisure Services

The Senior Leisure Services Officer said he would encompass the end of year report with the Service Delivery Plan and highlight some key points.

A lot of work had been carried out in respect of the Mepal Outdoor Centre and he was hopeful that a potential resolution was in sight. If successful, the Centre would be restored to health and his focus could then shift back to other aspects of the leisure centre.

The construction of the new leisure centre in Ely was reaching completion and attention would then be concentrated on its operation. The work in the coming year would be to ensure that the centre delivered services as well as possible.

The 'Let's Get Moving' initiative was making good progress with an increase in participation and a walking netball club was one of the new activities on offer. The potential of this programme was huge and the Physical Activity Co-ordinator was doing a great deal to encourage participation.

Speaking of specific facilities, the Senior Leisure Services Officer said that the new centre at Littleport was operational and the roofing works at Burwell were impending. The Ross Peers Centre in Soham was old and needed attention, and options were currently under examination.

The Chairman said he wished to offer his personal thanks to the Senior Leisure Services Officer, because he believed him to be an unsung hero in all that he did. His support at Littleport had been incredible and was greatly appreciated.

*Councillors Hugo and Smith left the meeting at 7.03pm.*

## Communities & Partnerships

It was noted that this service continued to achieve over and above its targets.

The Communities & Partnerships Manager took Members through the end of year report and Service Delivery Plan for 2018/19, highlighting key points. He also reminded the Committee that he and his team worked in conjunction with the Open Spaces Team.

Councillor Every remarked that the Council's Mooring Management Scheme had been a real success, with 100% of enforcement timescales and procedures having been adhered to. As a result, the Council was now being approached by other local authorities for advice.

With regard to the Country Park, Councillor Every asked for Officers to look at the footfall outside of the summer months. She wondered if the Park could maybe have its own temporary toilets or the cost of building toilets could be investigated. The Chairman responded, saying that the Authority would benefit from spending some time on a feasibility study to look at the options available. The Director, Commercial said there would be a study, but it was not necessary to do it straight away; it would be carried out in a timely fashion.

Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith suggested that the oval 'cabin' type of public convenience should also be investigated. Councillor Whelan made the point that coinage could potentially be a problem; someone would have to collect the money from the conveniences and there would also have to be somebody available to help if coins got stuck in the slot.

Councillor Whelan next asked if it would be possible to have an enclosed area in the Country Park where people could let their dogs off the lead. The Chairman replied that being a dog walker, he knew the Park worked extremely well with the provision of dog waste bins. He believed there were very few irresponsible owners.

The Chairman thanked the Communities & Partnerships Manager for his presentation.

There being no further comments or questions,

It was resolved unanimously:

That the end of year performance outputs and the new Service Delivery Plans be approved for the following services:

- Open Spaces & Facilities;
- Leisure Services; and
- Communities & Partnerships.

#### **47. GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS**

The Committee received a report, S259, previously circulated, from which Members were asked to note the performance and emerging issues identified by three of the voluntary organisations funded by East Cambridgeshire District Council, and to agree their funding allocations for the 2018/19 financial year.

The Communities & Partnerships Manager drew Members' attention to paragraphs 3.1 – 3.3 of the report, which set out key figures in respect of Citizens Advice Newmarket, Citizens Advice Rural Cambs, and Voluntary & Community Action East Cambridgeshire.

It was noted that Citizens Advice Newmarket had been contacted with a total of 244 new issues in the first 6 months of 2017/18 that had arisen from 189 residents of East Cambridgeshire. The main communities of concern were Burwell, Cheveley, Soham South and Fordham, and 117 of the 189 unique clients supported were from these areas.

Citizens Advice Rural Cambs saw a total of 5,644 issues presented by 1,216 East Cambridgeshire residents in the first 6 months of 2017/18. The top issues were debt, benefit advice, relationships and families, and employment advice. A specialist debt advisor continued to be employed for 29 hours per week, funded by the Money Advice Service; support was given to clients with unmanageable debt, to prevent homelessness or non-payment of priority bills such as Council Tax. The Transformation Strategy was launched in September 2017 which saw the introduction of webchat and a new website. The service could also be accessed by telephone, email and face to face drop in.

VCAEC had provided training for 20 people on issues including brand awareness, safeguarding adults and child protection. 30 volunteers had been placed into local projects and businesses, and the organisation itself had benefitted from 1,780 hours of volunteer time. The total added value of volunteering time in the VCAEC office amounted to £19,812 up to the end of September 2017. The Social Car Scheme and Helping Hands service remained in great demand with both supporting the work of the East Cambridgeshire Health & Wellbeing Partnership.

Speaking next of the emerging issues, the Communities & Partnerships Manager said that debt and benefits advice continued to be the most frequent issues raised at Citizens Advice Newmarket. Demand for advice and support in relation to Personal Independence Payment claims was increasing as the scheme entered its third year cycle for renewals from clients who had previously claimed Disability Living Allowance. Universal Credit was being extended to all claimants in East Cambridgeshire in September 2018 and those already in receipt of the benefit had reported problems with the late receipt of payments. There was some concern that similar problems would occur when the scheme was introduced to families. There also was some anxiety that an additional demand for services would arise as a result of various local charities having recently lost funding from other external sources.

Members noted that the Council had been working closely with Citizens Advice Rural Cambs and had reviewed the Service Level Agreement (SLA) so that services were aligned to ensure that the needs of clients continued to be met, taking into consideration emerging issues such as the roll-out of Universal Credit. The ECDC Housing Team had also ensured that it was well positioned to respond to the full impacts of Universal Credit as well as the Homelessness Act. The reviewed SLA would ensure that the services of both the Council and Citizens Advice Rural Cambs complemented one another and any duplication of services was minimised, thereby achieving better value for money. The impact of Universal Credit would be monitored during 2018/19 and the SLA reviewed accordingly to ensure that clients received the support and advice they required.

The challenge for VCAEC was in improving the sustainability of the organisation in order to plan more effectively in the medium to long term. The priority continued to be ensuring that voluntary groups and volunteers were supported within the community and that in turn, communities were helped to become more resilient. During 2018/19, the Council would work closely with VCAEC to review the SLA so that services aligned with and complemented emerging Council strategies and contributed to emerging action plans.

The Council had historically supported the voluntary and community sector through the provision of funding linked to SLA's with VCAEC and the Citizens Advice services that supported clients living within East Cambridgeshire.

It was therefore recommended that the same level of grant funding be maintained for 2018/19 as was awarded in 2017/18. This could be funded from existing resources in the Communities & Partnerships budget:

- Citizens Advice Rural Cambridgeshire - £47,346.80
- Citizens Advice Newmarket - £23,166.03
- VCAEC - £19,928

During the course of discussion Councillor Schumann made the point that when the Authority first started supporting the Council for Voluntary Services, it was because it wanted to support volunteers and also umbrella organisations that could, in turn, help other organisations. He was keen to know that the provision of core advice was being maintained and he thought that Helping Hands and the Social Car scheme were projects. It was important that the Authority should be paying for core services.

The Chairman replied that VCAEC's presentation to Committee in November 2017 had shown they did far more than was included in the report, and they were equally as good as the Citizens Advice services. The funding they received allowed them to do the best they could.

Councillor Every agreed, adding that from local knowledge, when the various organisations merged to form Support Cambs, the body mentioned by Councillor Schumann disappeared. However, VCAEC continued and its

service was absolutely vital to the area. It had joined with Huntingdon and Peterborough to provide a service so that they could attract and retain volunteers and that function was still present in Ely via VCAEC; it was only funding from the Council that kept their centre open.

Councillor Schumann responded, saying that the Volunteer Centre and the Council for Volunteers were very different. At one time, if someone wanted to set up a group and did not know how to go about it, there was someone they could go to.

The Communities & Partnerships Manager said that service was still paramount; the car scheme and gardening services were additional and this was reflected in the SLA. He worked closely with Granville Hawkes, VCAEC's Project Development Manager to ensure that there was no duplication.

Councillor Schumann felt that the Committee should receive a presentation from the consortium organisation because they had had time to deliver and yet nothing had been heard from them.

There being no further comments,

It was resolved:

- i. That the latest performance information relating to Voluntary & Community Action East Cambridgeshire and the Citizens Advice Organisations be noted;
- ii. That the emerging issues identified by the voluntary organisations be noted; and
- iii. That the annual grant contributions for the 2018/19 Service Level Agreements, as set out in paragraph 6.0 of the report, be approved.

#### **48. DRAFT EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE VULNERABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2018-23 & ACTION PLAN 2018-20**

The Committee received a report, S260, previously circulated, from which Members were asked to note and approve the Draft East Cambridgeshire Vulnerable Community Strategy 2018-23 and Action Plan 2018-20.

The Communities & Partnerships Manager informed Members that the Strategy had been developed to ensure that Council services met the needs of the most vulnerable and at risk members of the community. It aimed to identify and build on the positive work currently being done and recognise what more could be done to continue to improve the lives of everyone in East Cambridgeshire.

The Strategy identified the following four key principles for the Council to adopt in order to address vulnerability:

- Promote a healthy, safe and clean community;
- Provide support to people in need and empower individuals and communities to become more resilient;
- Build a connected community through engagement, growth and investment; and
- Support effective stakeholder and partnership engagement; and a joined-up, multi-agency approach to service delivery for people in need of support.

Members' attention was drawn to paragraph 4.3 of the report, which set out the objectives of the Action Plan. It was noted that the Plan would be reported on and reviewed annually.

Councillor Every commented that a huge amount of time and work had been spent on what she considered to be an exceptional strategy. She thanked the Communities & Partnerships Manager and commended him for all his efforts. She also spoke of the intention to have 8 community hubs across the District, saying that it was very ambitious but could be achieved.

The Chairman added his thanks to the Communities & Partnerships Manager, saying he had done 'a great job'. Whereupon,

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Draft East Cambridgeshire Vulnerable Community Strategy 2018/23 and Action Plan 2018/20 be approved.

#### **49. NOMINATION OF A TRUSTEE TO THE BOARD OF SOHAM ACTION 4 YOUTH**

The Committee received a report, S261, previously circulated, which sought Member approval for the inclusion of Soham Action 4 Youth as an Outside Body to which the Council may nominate a Board Member, and asked Members to consider the nomination of Councillor Dan Schumann to serve as a Trustee on the Board.

It was noted that the Council had received an invitation from Dr Stephen Jenkins, Chairperson, Soham Action 4 Youth, to nominate a representative from the Council to serve on its Board of Trustees. The stated objectives of the charity (taken from the Charity Commission website) were:

- i. The relief of poverty and the preservation and protection of good health by the provision of guidance, education and such other services;

- ii. The provision of facilities for recreation and other leisure-time occupation in the interests of social welfare with the objective of improving the conditions of life for young people who have need of such facilities;
- iii. The promotion of good citizenship for young people with a view to increasing their active participation in society.

In his letter, Dr Jenkins stated that the charity's constitution contained a clause indicating that it should include one Trustee nominated by East Cambridgeshire District Council.

Councillor Schumann said he was happy to serve in theory, but he had never understood what separated this charity from other organisations. He believed youth related matters to be a County Council function and wondered whether accepting the nomination would set a precedent as the Council did not fund the charity. He was disappointed that not more background information was provided.

Councillor Every remarked that efforts were being made to create youth strategies for East Cambridgeshire and this could fit into it.

The Chairman asked Councillor Schumann to undertake the role until May, during which time he could evaluate how the charity's work fitted in with the Council's Corporate Objectives and then report back to the Committee. He thanked him for raising concerns, saying that he would still like to test the waters, for the Council's benefit.

Councillor Schumann wished to know if due diligence had been carried out before he attended any meetings and the Director, Commercial assured him that this would be done before any formal acceptance of the role was made.

Councillor Whelan said the Officer's recommendation should be approved, subject to the appropriate assurances being given.

It was resolved:

That subject to satisfactory due diligence:

- 1) The inclusion of Soham Action for Youth as an Outside Body to which the Council may nominate a Board Member, may be approved;
- 2) The nomination of Councillor Dan Schumann to the Board of Trustees of Soham Action 4 Youth, may be approved.

## **50. ELY COUNTRY PARK IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE 2017/18**

The Committee received a report, S262, previously circulated, which provided Members with an update on progress made with delivering the Ely Country Park Improvement Plan during 2017/18.

It was noted that all works were shaped by consultation with site users and community groups including the Ely Access Group and local families.

The Communities & Partnerships Support Officer said it had been another successful year and she highlighted some of the key improvement works and achievements that had taken place during the Improvement Plan in 2017/18:

- The installation of a play ship was completed by July 2017;
- In July 2017 the Country Park had retained its Green Flag status for a fourth time;
- A contract to provide temporary toilets, and a contract for cleaning them, had been secured for the period July 2017 – September 2019;
- Pathway improvements were carried out and completed in April 2017; and
- A memorial bench was installed in the Country Park within the play area in February 2018.

Priorities at the Country Park for 2018/19 would include the installation of baby play provision, additional shade and seating provision, toilet provision during the summer, and ongoing consultations and site inspections.

There being no comments or questions,

It was resolved:

To note the update on progress made with the Ely Country Park Improvement Plan during 2017/18.

## **51. FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

The Committee reviewed the Community Services Forward Agenda Plan.

The Chairman asked for The Hive Business Plan to be added to the list for the meeting of the Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2018, and there being no other comments or queries,

It was resolved;

That the Forward Agenda Plan, and the comments made thereon, be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm.