

MINUTES OF BROOKE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8 DECEMBER 2016

PRESENT:

Members of the Committee: Councillors Claire Edwards (Chair), Mrs A'Barrow, Cade, Mrs Garcia, Miss Lawrence, Mrs New, Mrs O'Rourke and Sandison

Officers: Adam Norburn (Executive Director), Julie Booker (Benn Hall Business Manager), Tom Kittendorf (Sport and Recreation Manager) and Veronika Beckova (Democratic Services Officer)

In attendance: Nick Andrews and James Andrews (Rugby Youth Council)

17. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 13 October 2016 were approved and signed by the Chair.

18. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence from the meeting was received from Councillor Dr Williams.

19. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2016/17 QUARTER 2

The committee received a report (Part 1 – Agenda Item 4) concerning finance and performance monitoring for the second quarter of 2016/17.

The Executive Director attended the meeting to present the report and answer questions. The committee was advised that no summary report will be provided at future meetings. Members are asked to bring the relevant Cabinet report along when finance and performance monitoring is discussed.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- The council has taken opportunities for voluntary redundancies which will have an impact in the 2016/17 financial year and will contribute towards part of the saving required in future years.
- Proactive steps have been taken to keep ongoing running costs down which will have some future ongoing benefits.
- The council is required to make an overall saving of £1.9 million by 2019/20.
- The Senior Management Team restructure has made a saving of around £200,000. The in-year savings amount to approximately £300,000.
- Other proposed savings are considered within the budget report.
- Caldecott Park Café is forecast to make a loss of around £10,700 this financial year. This is a significant reduction on the loss incurred last year of around £27k but still higher than desired. The café is not intended to provide a purely financial benefit as it clearly adds value to the overall offer within the park, although it is proving difficult to get people to walk down to the café

from the main play area. That said, the aim is to reduce the net cost of the café to somewhere near breakeven as quickly as possible.

- This year, the café was open from April until October, but it still incurs costs, such as building maintenance, utilities, rates, insurance etc. even when it is closed over winter.
- The Local Government Finance Settlement is due to be released on 15 December 2016. A clearer steer on new homes bonus and business rate retention is anticipated.
- The chair has urged the members to attend training on Rugby Performance Monitoring System provided by the Corporate Performance Management Officer. A short training session will be provided at a future meeting of the committee.

During the discussion, the following questions were asked:

*Cabinet 28 November 2016 – Agenda Item 6 – Recommendation 4
How will the saving of £90,000 from Refuse and Recycling be achieved?*

An estimate was made within the Refuse and Recycling contract that the council will be paying an increased monthly gate fee because of the commodity prices falling through the floor. The monthly cost was estimated at £40,000. A lot of work has gone into improving contamination rates. The quality of our materials has improved this year. The commodity market has not been as consistently bad throughout the year as it has been anticipated. The actual amount needed is therefore significantly lower than estimated.

*Cabinet 28 November 2016 – Agenda Item 6 – Recommendation 7
I have noticed refuse vehicles from other operators in Rugby. Presumably these are used when our vehicles break down or there is a shortage of vehicles. Is it a competitive leasing arrangement?*

The council has quite good spot hire rates but they tend not to be used very often. We can make our vehicles generally last longer than the estimates (vans for five years and refuse vehicles for seven years). This has improved in recent times. Works Services have a very good garage. Vehicles have trackers and cameras. Driving quality is a very important factor and good training is provided. The purchase of vehicles has increased due to the demand for the service because of housing expansion. Contributions towards our services from Section 106 agreements are always considered.

RESOLVED THAT – the Executive Director be thanked for his attendance.

20. BENN HALL – TWO YEAR MARKETING AND BUSINESS PLAN – 6 MONTH UPDATE

The committee received a report (Part 1 – Agenda Item 5) concerning the six month update of the Two Year Marketing and Business Plan for Benn Hall.

The Sports and Recreation Manager and the Benn Hall Business Manager attended the meeting to present the report and answer questions.

The final ticket sales for some of the advertised events outlined in Table 5 of the report were as follow:

Event	Date	Tickets sold
Union J	20 November	386
Rat Pack at Christmas	30 November	202
The Searchers	2 December	262

A further event has been booked in by Nationwide Windows.

During the presentation, the following questions were asked:

Is there an opportunity to build the promotion of the Caldecott Park Café into the marketing plan?

Next year, the promotion of the Caldecott Park Café will be built into the officer's time. Having the Research and Marketing Officer in post has given a clear direction to where we need to promote ourselves. The marketing is a lot more targeted.

What are the reasons for potential clients not making a booking?

For some it may be too big or too expensive but we try to work with clients where possible.

Are we making a better use of the lawns in conjunction with the Benn Hall? Is photography included in the wedding package?

A new wedding brochure has been created which sets out the three different standards of wedding (gold/silver/bronze). All include photography in Caldecott Park. The brochure will be circulated as part of the minutes.

The Benn Hall no longer has a wedding licence as it was not used effectively but 19 wedding receptions are booked in so far for next year which is an increase from the six wedding receptions booked on average over the past years.

Have you considered movable screens to make the rooms smaller?

Movable screens have not yet been considered. The Rokeby Room accommodates up to 80 people and the Main Hall is more suitable for functions over 100 people.

Are clients able to use their own caterers?

Clients can use their own caterers as long as they have the appropriate health and safety certificates. The hire of the kitchen is now included in the wedding package. Clients can also choose a caterer from the Benn Hall's list.

Regarding car parking, is there something that could be done for wedding guests?

Each car parking pass book has a charge. The monthly cost is too high. As the focus has now shifted from ceremonies to evening receptions, car parking might be something that will become a non-issue. Some of the other venues do charge for car parking.

How do clients pay for room hire?

A 20 per cent deposit is required upon booking. The outstanding balance is required to be paid a month before the event.

Are clients provided with feedback forms? Is there a comments book?

Feedback is mainly received through 'word of mouth' during the event and upon conclusion. A comments book is currently not in use but we will definitely consider the idea.

Have you identified your target market?

With regards to meeting rooms, the target market is corporations and larger organisations (company conferences, annual meetings, training, etc).

Have you reached out to health organisations?

We have. Public Health Warwickshire held their recent event at the Benn Hall. The feedback was positive and they have rebooked for next year.

The main question remains the future of the site. 1 of the recommendations of the sub-group was to look at the frontage and reception area of the Benn Hall.

Options are being considered moving forward. The frontage will be part of the discussions with Corporate Property in the New Year.

RESOLVED THAT –

- (1) the Sports and Recreation Manager and the Benn Hall Business Manager be thanked for their attendance and update; and
- (2) a progress report on the adopted marketing and business plan be submitted to the committee in 12 months' time.

21. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The committee received a report (Part 1 – agenda Item 6) concerning the progress of task group reviews within its remit and the forward work programme.

1. Scrutiny Reviews Progress

1.1 Homelessness

Outcomes of the workshop held on Wednesday 23 November will be discussed at the next meeting of the sub-group scheduled for Thursday 12 January 2017.

2. Work Programme

A further joint scrutiny meeting will be arranged for Monday 16 January 2017 at 5.30pm to discuss the emerging Sustainability and Transformation Plan and issues relevant to Rugby. Members will also receive Rugby Performance Monitoring System training from the Corporate Performance Management Officer.

2.1 Joint Meeting of Overview and Scrutiny – 31 January 2017

Scrutiny members are asked to submit questions to Democratic Services.

Rugby Youth Council advised the committee that they are intending to attend the joint meeting.

2.2 Next meeting of Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 16 February 2017

The Crime and Disorder annual review will include the following topics:

- alcohol related crime and disorder
- hate crimes
- hot spots across Rugby

An invitation will be extended to the Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner and Warwickshire Police to attend the meeting.

RESOLVED THAT – the forward work programme and progress in review be noted.

CHAIR



Weddings

AT THE BENN HALL

At The Benn Hall we understand that your wedding day is one of the most important days of your life and therefore we specialise in offering complete flexibility in terms of room size, layout and catering options. Whether you are looking for a small, intimate gathering or a lavish banquet for up to 500 guests, we are here to help you realise your dream day.



THE BENN HALL



Wedding Packages

CHARLES BENN £1185

- Exclusive use of The Benn Hall all day 10am – 1am
- Full use of the kitchen, if catering for yourself
- Red carpet
- Bespoke lighting
- Digital Presentation Screen
- Bar
- Tables and chairs
- Complimentary bottle of sparkling wine for the bride and groom
- Use of the park for photos
- Informal host

WEDDING BREAKFAST

The Main hall holds max 350

The Rokeby holds max 70

WEDDING RECEPTION THEATRE STYLE

The Main Hall 450

The Rokeby Room 100

THE BENN
F  HALL



Wedding Packages

EVENING RECEPTION £680.00

- Exclusive use of The Benn Hall for your reception 5pm – 1am
- Use of the kitchen
- Bespoke lighting
- Digital Presentation Screen
- Bar
- Tables and chairs
- Complimentary bottle of sparkling wine for the bride and groom
- Use of the park for photos

Main hall holds up to 350 people and the Rokeby room holds up to 70 guests seated at round tables.

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Wedding Packages

QUEEN ELIZABETH £695.00

- The Rokeby Room for your wedding breakfast
- Bar
- Use of the kitchen
- Digital Presentation Screen
- Tables and chairs
- Use of the park for photos
- Complimentary bottle of wine for the bride and groom
- Informal host

The Rokeby Room holds up to 70 guests

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Wedding Packages

DRINKS PACKAGE

CELEBRATION PACK – £5.20 PER GUEST

- 1 glass of bucks fizz or orange juice on arrival
- 1 glass of sparkling wine for the toast

CHARLES PACK – £9.85 PER GUEST

- 1 glass of Pimms or mulled wine on arrival
- ½ bottle of house red or white wine with the meal
- 1 glass of sparkling wine for the toast

GEORGE PACK – £10.75 PER GUEST

- 1 glass of bucks fizz or orange juice on arrival
- ½ bottle of house red or white wine with the meal
- 1 glass of sparkling wine for the toast

BENN PACK – £14.75 PER GUEST

- 1 glass of kir royal or Prosecco
- ½ bottle of house red or white wine with the meal
- 1 glass of champagne for the toast

We can arrange those little extras that will help to make your wedding day really special. Ask us about

- Table linen and chair covers
- Table decorations
- Flowers, balloons
- Wedding breakfast catering
- Disco
- Photography
- Favours

For an informal chat about your wedding day or to arrange a visit please call The Benn Hall 01788 533719 or email bennhall@rugby.gov.uk

Photos supplied by Ani Evans
www.anievensphotography.co.uk and The Benn Hall.

**THE BENN
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