

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2017

Present:

Councillor Rawlins- In the Chair

Councillors Austin-Behan, Cookson, Fletcher-Hackwood, Grimshaw, Ilyas, Knowles [CESC/17/48 - CESC/17/51], Marshall, Peel [CESC/17/48 - CESC/17/51] and Siddiqi

Councillor S Murphy, Statutory Deputy Leader

Councillor B Priest, Deputy Leader

Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Schools, Culture and Leisure

Claire Tomkinson, Timebanking UK

Matthew Barker, Southway Housing

Estelita Avilez, Timebank Member

Nicola Hamilton, Real Neighbours Timebank, Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG)

Faye Greaves, Real Neighbours Timebank, WCHG

Ros Holland, Boaz Trust

Denise McDowell, Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit (GMIAU)

Maria Houlihan, GMIAU

Apologies:

Councillors Hassan and Sharif Mahamed

CESC/17/47 Minutes

Decisions

1. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2017 as a correct record.
2. To receive the minutes of the Hate Crime and Third Party Reporting Centres Task and Finish Group meeting held on 16 November 2017.

CESC/17/48 Volunteering – Timebanks

The Committee received a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods which provided a brief update on how volunteering had developed and was supporting the delivery of the “Our Manchester” approach. It also set out the opportunity to support the expansion of the Timebanking approach throughout the city.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report, which included:

- Work to encourage and facilitate more people to volunteer;
- Timebanking in Manchester; and
- Opportunities to develop timebanking in Manchester further.

Some of the key points which arose from the Committee’s discussion were:

- How the Council could support this work through the provision of resources and how facilities that were only used for a few hours a week, for example, catering facilities at a community venue, could be identified and made available;
- Whether the work undertaken by carers could be recognised within the timebanking model;
- A request for Members to visit a timebank project;
- Whether timebanking could attract people who would not take part in traditional volunteering;
- How timebanking could reach different communities and what role Equality Lead Members could play, for example, encouraging the establishment of a BME (black and minority ethnic) specific timebank through existing BME voluntary organisation networks;
- The range of different events to celebrate the role of volunteers and whether there was a better way to manage this; and
- That the Committee should look in more detail at community asset transfers, in particular how the Council supported voluntary and community groups to manage an asset transfer.

Claire Tomkinson informed Members that there was a timebank in London run by carers for carers which enabled them to help each other out. She advised the Committee that the University of East Anglia had undertaken research on the impact of timebanks and had found that they did attract people who were less likely to take part in traditional volunteering but who liked the flexibility of timebanking, including carers, disabled people and people with mental health issues. She also informed Members about the Hullcoin, which had been introduced in Hull and East Riding and which residents could earn by undertaking activities and then spend to obtain a discount with local businesses. The Statutory Deputy Leader informed Members about work to map community assets and advised that Ward Councillors should be involved in this. She reported that there were a number of other events which celebrated the role of volunteers, in addition to those listed in the report. She advised that it was important to recognise and celebrate the role of volunteers but that it would be useful to review these and consider how the different events could fit together better.

Decisions

1. To receive an update report on timebanking in Manchester at a future meeting, to include an update on asset mapping.
2. To ask Equality Lead Members to consider what role they could play in enabling timebanking to reach different communities, including consideration of specific timebanks around protected characteristics.
3. To request that officers consider the timebank for carers in London and whether a similar model could be introduced in Manchester.
4. To request that the report on the impact of timebanks by Gill Seyfang from the University of East Anglia be circulated to Members.

5. To request that officers consider the range of events to recognise the role of volunteers and how the different events can fit together better.
6. To arrange for Members to visit a timebank project.
7. To receive a detailed report on community asset transfers, including how the Council supports voluntary and community groups to manage an asset transfer.

CESC/17/49 Support Available to Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Manchester

The Committee received a report of the Director of Homelessness which provided an overview of the support available to asylum seekers and refugees in Manchester, including case studies.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report, which included:

- Asylum dispersal within Manchester; and
- Support provided by the voluntary, community and faith sector.

Some of the key points which arose from the Committee's discussion were:

- What was working well and what the gaps were in support available for asylum seekers and refugees;
- Accommodation available for people with no recourse to public funds (NRPF);
- The relationship with Serco, who were contracted to provide accommodation for asylum seekers;
- Legal support on immigration issues and the challenges of this work; and
- What individual Councillors could do to support this work or campaign on this issue.

Ros Holland reported that the Boaz Trust provided accommodation and support for refugees and refused asylum seekers, including 16 managed properties, a hosting scheme and a winter night shelter. She advised that, while their core work was to support people whose asylum claims had been refused, there had been a significant increase in the number of people who had found themselves homeless following a positive decision from the Home Office to grant them refugee status. She advised that her organisation was having to turn people away from its night shelter every night. Denise McDowell from the Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit (GMIAU) reported that the law in this area was very complex with frequent new legislation which governed what people could access, for example public services, accommodation and bank accounts, and that the GMIAU was providing legal support to a range of vulnerable people, who were excluded from accessing mainstream support. Maria Houlihan (GMIAU) highlighted the position of people who wanted to return to their country of origin but did not have and were not able to obtain a passport or other national identification from their home country. She reported that there was a range of voluntary and community organisations supporting asylum seekers and refugees in Manchester but that some asylum seekers were being dispersed to areas outside Manchester where there was no support. The Strategic Commissioning Manager advised Members that the Council had a good relationship

with Serco, who were making timely referrals to the Council commissioned Refugee Resettlement Service, provided by Riverside, and, in some cases, had allowed people who had been granted refugee status to stay in their accommodation beyond the 28 days notice period. Ms Houlihan suggested that the Council could encourage other homeless hostels and night shelters to make a few places available to people with NRPF. Ms McDowell suggested that Councillors could lobby government regarding the legislation being introduced in this area. Ms Holland welcomed that a motion on ending indefinite immigration detention had been passed by Full Council on 29 November 2017. The Chair advised that, if the guests felt that there was any scope to use timebanking with asylum seekers and refugees, they could contact the Scrutiny Support Officer, who would put them in touch with the relevant people.

Decision

To thank the guests for attending and to express the Committee's continued support for their work.

CESC/17/50 Manchester Playing Pitch Strategy

The Committee received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Growth and Neighbourhoods) which sought approval from the Executive on the vision and strategy for Manchester's playing pitches. The Committee was invited to comment on the report prior to its submission to the Executive on 13 December 2017.

The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure and Events) referred to the main points and themes within the report, which included:

- The strategic context;
- Vision and strategic aims;
- An analysis of the current provision; and
- Actions and recommendations.

Some of the key points which arose from the Committee's discussion were:

- Why there was an over-supply of third generation turf (3G) pitches in the city;
- The use of community asset transfers and long term leases to sports clubs and the support these groups needed to successfully manage this;
- The proposal that some low value/single pitch sites could be lost;
- How Members could support this work; and
- That the review of the number of bowling greens within the city should take into account the additional travel time for users, noting that bowling green users were more likely to have mobility issues.

The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure and Events) advised that the over-supply of all-weather pitches across the city was largely as a result of significant investment into pitches on school sites and schools wanting to have all-weather provision to support their curriculum and extra-curricular needs. He added that, where these were made available for community use, this could have an impact on displacing use from other pitches, which could affect the facility operator's ability to sustain these facilities in the long term. He assured Members that clubs seeking an asset transfer or a long

term lease were provided with support. He informed Members that the Football Association and other governing bodies had advised that multi-pitch sites were the highest priority as they provided the greatest opportunity for clubs to grow and develop age group teams from a single site. He advised that some single pitch sites were not currently being used and that sports governing bodies would take a pragmatic approach and did not object to some of these sites being made available for development/ other purposes as long as demand could continue to be met and improvements were made to pitch provision across the city, particularly at the multi-pitch/ larger sites. He also advised that Members would have the opportunity to feed into the action plan. He informed Members that a report on bowling greens would be submitted to Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee and the Executive in January 2018 and that he would ensure this report took into account the travel time.

Decisions

1. To endorse the recommendations that the Executive:
 - Note the analysis undertaken, to agree the vision and strategic aims as described in section 4, and agree the recommendations, actions and strategic priorities listed in appendix 1, 2, and 3.
 - Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Growth and Neighbourhoods Directorate) and the Director of Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Executive member for Schools, Culture and Leisure, to agree a playing pitch strategy action plan in consultation with Sport England and National Governing Bodies of Sport, which together with this recommendation 2 and recommendation 1 above forms the adoption of the Manchester PPS.
2. To welcome that Members will be given the opportunity to have input into the action plan.
3. To receive an update report on the action plan in approximately 6 months' time.
4. To request that the report on bowling greens which is to be submitted to a future meeting of the Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee be circulated to Members of this Committee and to request that travel time and the mobility issues of some bowling green users be considered.
5. To request that the future report on community asset transfers include the issue of asset transfers or long term leasehold to sports clubs.

[Councillor Fletcher Hackwood declared a personal interest as a member of the Joint Management Committee of the Platt Lane Sports Complex.]

CESC/17/51 Overview Report

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained a list of key decisions yet to be taken within the Committee's remit,

responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

Decision

To approve the work programme.