

Petitions Committee

Minutes - 26 February 2016

Attendance

Members of the Petitions Committee

Cllr Greg Brackenridge (Chair)
Cllr Val Evans (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Judith Rowley
Cllr Daniel Warren

Members in attendance

Cllr Elias Mattu

Employees

| | |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| Tony Ivko | Service Director - Older People |
| Paul Smith | Head of Commissioning - Older People |
| Abby Vella | Graduate Management Trainee |
| Paul Fantom | Interim Democratic Support Officer |

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Photay and Gakhal.
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
There were no declarations of interest.
- 3 **Minutes of previous meeting**
Resolved:
 That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2016 be approved.
- 4 **Matters arising**
There were no matters arising.
- 5 **Schedule of petitions**
Resolved:
 That 107-12 Blockage of Turning Circle at Dunkley Street be closed.
- 6 **Petition 150-15 - Save Warstones Resource Centre**
The Chair welcomed the lead petitioner and reported that the respective petition had been recognised at Cabinet on Wednesday 24 February. The Chair advised that amendments to the budget strategy considered by Cabinet could be made, subject to the recommendations of the Petitions Committee.

The lead petitioner introduced the petition, highlighting the number of signatories and value of the facility to service users.

Cllr Mattu, Cabinet Member for Adults, thanked the lead petitioner for his petition and effort in collecting the signatures. The Cabinet Member for Adults outlined the background of the Resource Centre and highlighted that it suffered from significant disrepair and was now surplus to requirements.

The Cabinet Member for Adults summarised the continued correspondence between the lead petitioner and officers from the Council, from November 2015 until the current date. He reported that of the six groups that had been using the facility, the art group was yet to accept an alternative relocation offer. The Cabinet Member for Adults reported that the art group was a valued community service and officers would continue to support the relocation of the group to a suitable alternative. He supported the recommendation to hand over the Warstones facility to Corporate Landlord.

In response to a question from the lead petitioner regarding the disrepair of the Warstones office, the Cabinet Member for Adults and Service Director, Older People, advised that a structural survey had been completed. The outcome of this reported a £514,000 maintenance log, excluding a contingency fund, to sustain the building. The Service Director, Older People, agreed to provide the lead petitioner with the details of the engineer, if required.

Cllr Rowley outlined the creative, health, social and mental benefits of the art group to the elderly. She reported that due to financial constraints, the Council needed to explore alternative ways of providing services, particularly through partnership working. She suggested that the lead petitioner working alongside officers of the Council, to relocate the art group, would be mutually beneficial.

Cllr Warren agreed and highlighted the difficulty of restructuring Council assets due to financial constraints. He also recognised the difficulty of communities groups themselves running facilities.

The Chair requested that an update report be presented to the Committee in six months' time, outlining the progress of the relocation of the art group.

It was moved by Cllr Warren and seconded by Cllr Rowley.

Resolved:

1. That the issues raised in the petition were considered by the Petitions Committee.
2. That the plans to handover the Warstones office at the end of February 2016 to Corporate Landlord be endorsed.
3. That an update report be presented in six months' time.

7

Vote of thanks

The Chair thanked Abby Vella, Graduate Management Trainee, for her work with the Petitions Committee over the last six months.