

MINUTES OF SCRUTINY (CALL-IN) SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING - 1ST NOVEMBER 2012

Present:

Councillor D. Coleman (in the Chair)

Councillors

Elmes Hutton Matthews O'Hara

Evans Lee M Mitchell

In attendance:

Councillor Williams

Councillor Taylor, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

Mr N. Jack, Chief Executive

Mr J. Blackledge, Assistant Chief Executive, Leisure and Operational Services

Mr S. Sienkiewicz, Scrutiny Manager

Mrs S. Davis, Senior Democratic Services Adviser (Scrutiny)

Also Present:

Councillor Mrs Delves

Mrs J. Roberts, Head of Tobacco Control, NHS Blackpool

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6th FEBRUARY 2012

The Sub-Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th February 2012, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3. CALL-IN REQUEST

The Sub-Committee considered the Call-In of Executive Decision EX/36/2012 'Designation of Community Parks as Smoke-Free Sites' that had been called-in by Councillor Williams on 29th October 2012.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Williams explained the reasons behind the call-in of the decision, which were focussed upon the size of the signs used to advertise the sites as smoke-free and the lack of consultation that had been undertaken with the community and, in particular, the many 'Friends of Parks' Associations in Blackpool.

With regard to the designation of community parks as smoke-free sites, Councillor Williams expressed his support, however, he reiterated that the size of the signs was not commensurate with the size of the parks, that the design of the signs was not appealing

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and that he had had many people approach him who had been aggrieved with the lack of consultation and information available before the signs had been put in place. Councillor Williams added that there had been much negative press on this issue.

The Chairman invited Councillor Taylor, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing to respond. In doing so, he explained that the scheme had been developed and funded by the NHS with the aim of reducing the number of young people who started smoking. The cost of smoking related diseases to the NHS was over £10 million per annum. He added that the signs were being targeted at parks and recreational areas where children and young people congregated and played sports.

Councillor Taylor cited similar schemes outside the football stadium and hospital in Blackpool as initiatives already in place to try and prevent children and young people from witnessing smoking. It was noted that the designation of community parks as smoke-free was not enforceable and relied upon good will, and that evidence suggested that the size of the signs correlated with the impact they would have.

The Committee discussed whether the signs would require planning consent in order to install and if the community would have a chance to make representations at that stage.

Concern was expressed that smokers who used the parks for activities including dog walking would feel restricted and that the placement of the signs did not appear to differentiate between children's play areas and the remainder of the park. There was additional concern that the Council risked alienating the 'Friends of Parks' Associations due to the lack of consultation and design of the signs.

The Committee also recognised the importance of taking measures to prevent children and young people from smoking and to protect health.

After further discussion, the Sub-Committee agreed to take no further action.

Background Papers: None.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 3:54 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
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