

Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Monday, 12 March 2018 in Committee Rooms 1 & 2 - Deanes, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council at 6.30 pm

Members of the Scrutiny Committee in attendance: , Councillor G Falconer, Councillor I Tilbury, Councillor R Bean, Councillor R Golding, Councillor P Harvey, Councillor G James, Councillor P Miller, Councillor C Phillimore and Councillor T Robinson

38/17 Apologies for absence and substitutions

Councillor N Pierce was replaced by Councillor D Potter
Councillor J Richards was replaced by Councillor N Robinson

39/17 Appointment of Vice-Chair

Councillor Gavin James was appointed to the position of Vice-Chair for the meeting.

40/17 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest

41/17 Urgent Matters

There were no urgent items

42/17 Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd January 2018

The [minutes](#) of the meeting held on 23rd January 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

43/17 Call-In - Basingstoke Live

The Chair introduced the item by explaining the procedure for the meeting and invited the lead signatories of the call-in application to address the committee.

The signatories set out their main concerns and reasons for calling in the decision on Basingstoke Live. Their comments included the following:

- The signatories supported the continuation of Basingstoke Live as a free, inclusive event citing the impact of arts and cultural events on educational attainment
- Individuals from low income families who are involved in the arts are three times more likely to progress to further education
- The borough council should be proud not charge
- The decision would make Basingstoke Live less inclusive and exclude low income families

- Free entry to Basingstoke Live enabled low income families to have a day out
- There had been a lack of consultation on:
 - An additional nights entertainment and the impact on local residents
 - The impact upon the top of the town retailers from a potential 50% drop in attendance
- Proposals were not properly researched with no exploration of other ways to increase funding
- Basingstoke Live should be about showcasing local talent
- The council would be disadvantaging the borough's poorest residents by introducing an entrance charge
- The decision had been rushed, needed further research and should be delayed for 6 months

The Committee asked questions of the signatories and made comments including:

- What were the views of the individuals who organised Basingstoke Live
- Had surveys been conducted on attendees to see if people would be willing to pay an entrance charge
- Whether concessionary visitors would need to provide evidence
- That the level of concessionary discount was not enough
- What analysis had been conducted on where attendees would be coming from
- The level of subsidy granted to Basingstoke Live comparable to other organisations which demonstrated it's value for money
- That there was a positive impact in that local musicians would now be getting paid

The signatories responded to questions, commenting that:

- Some members of the forum who organised Basingstoke Live had resigned and were no longer interested in taking part, feeling that they had been 'strong-armed' into agreement
- Previous research had shown there would be opposition to a charge
- Not enough consideration had been given to 'just about managing' families and their ability to pay

- Not enough research had been carried out
- Having Basingstoke Live as a free event showcased local talent

The Cabinet Member responded thanking the signatories for their input stating that Cabinet wanted to ensure that Basingstoke Live continued as a good, sustainable event.

The Cabinet Member commented that:

- Comparisons with other cultural events were difficult when acknowledging that Basingstoke Live was only run for two days
- Basingstoke Live was becoming unsustainable in it's existing format with costs rising year on year
- Officers had considered how to increase income and funding which had been unsuccessful as the event was not large or high profile enough
- £10 was not a large charge for a full day of entertainment

The Cabinet member agreed that involvement in arts and cultural events was very important for young people and low income families and clarified that a 50% drop was not expected.

Officers provided further detail on consultation that had taken place, explaining that the forum were on board and welcomed charging for the event.

The committee were then invited to make comments and ask questions of the Cabinet Member, which included several questions on the level of the entrance charge and concessions, general marketing of the town, cost of officer time and the potential risk or impact of any delays.

During discussion the committee expressed a range of views which included:

- Concerns over the entry process for individuals seeking a concession
- Support for enhanced digital content
- Requests for the item to return to either the Scrutiny or Community, Environment and Partnerships Committee in the Autumn to consider feedback and outcomes
- Questions over the inclusion of a risk assessment and equalities impact assessment.
- Who Basingstoke live was being expanded for

Officers responded to advise councillors of the entry process for members of the public who would be seeking a concession and of the work undertaken to source support, although this was generally offered as support in kind rather than money.

Officers agreed to follow up on best practice on admissions for those seeking concessions

The Chair then summarised the debate, picking out the key points from the debate as being concern over how concessions and related data protection issues would be dealt with, which needed to be clarified and the benefits of reviewing the event in the autumn.

The signatories were asked by the Chair if they were satisfied that their concerns had been addressed by the committee. The signatories advised that;

- They still felt that charging an admission charge was not a good idea and would exclude people, reiterating the point that more research was required.
- They felt the decision had been rushed.
- There were significant issues over concessionary fees

The chairman invited the Cabinet Member to make final comments which included that:

- The full equalities impact assessment was available online
- Officers would circulate:
 - The risk assessment to committee members
 - Best practice guidance on dealing with concessions
- The issue of risk was well covered and had been understood in the Cabinet decision and that there would be further consultation on the proposals.
- She was happy to return with a review of the event to the Community, Environment and Partnerships Committee in October

In considering their recommendations, the committee were divided over the proposal to take no further action. In trying to reach a consensus, the proposal was put to the vote with 6 votes for and 4 against and 1 abstention, the vote was carried.

Councillor Nick Robinson left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.

Resolved: That:

- 1.) After consideration of the issues, the committee did not agree to refer the matter back to the Cabinet. Therefore, no further action will be taken in relation to the decision and it will take effect immediately.
- 2.) The Community, Environment and Partnerships Committee consider a review

of Basingstoke Live at it's meeting in October 2018

- 3.) As part of the implementation, officers consider how admission to the event for those seeking concessions would work in practice.

44/17 **Review of work programme**

The Chair introduced the committee work programme and timetable of future meetings.

Resolved: The Committee note it's work programme

The meeting ended at 8.09 pm.

Chairman