

Report to: Cabinet 6 September 2021

Lead Members: Councillors Bridget Smith and Brian Milnes

From: Councillor Grenville Chamberlain, Chair, Scrutiny and Overview Committee
Councillor Judith Rippeth, Vice Chair, Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Update from Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Purpose

1. This report is to inform Cabinet about the discussion among members of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee at its meeting on 20 July 2021.

Re-set and Recovery Plan

2. Members appreciated having early sight of the report and understood that it was work-in-progress.
3. Committee members made the following comments:
 - The Council must endeavour to retain and enhance the incredible volunteer effort and sense of community that had resulted from the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - The re-set and recovery plan must be drafted to complement the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan and identify those businesses with the most pressing need for ongoing financial support.
 - The plan must acknowledge that working and leisure practices had changed because of the pandemic, and effective measures must be put in place to rebuild confidence and increase a sense of wellbeing.
 - The plan must quantify its claims, drawing upon among other things data held by partner organisations, and be specific in setting out achievable measures for addressing the issues identified.
 - The Council must encourage the re-emergence of cultural activity within the district.
 - Effective partnership working would be crucial, but it was equally important to concentrate on linking to local services such as healthcare.
 - The final draft must be more readable, and all jargon and acronyms must be defined.

- While recognising the enforced move towards a greater emphasis on distance learning, an attempt must be made to replicate the associated leisure and social activities found in more traditional settings such as schools and universities.
- Mental health issues resulting from the pandemic must be addressed.

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982

- The Council needed a policy that was consistent and would ensure food hygiene, safe practices, and wellbeing.
- The policy should be balanced to avoid any risk of putting traders out of business.
- An effort should be made to align this Council's policy with that of neighbouring district councils, including Cambridge City Council, to minimise differences in practice in those parishes bordering other local authority areas.
- Before introducing a new policy, consideration must be given to the principle that just because you can regulate something does not necessarily mean you should.
- Is there any evidence of unsafe practices?
- At a time when the Council was exploring ways of helping businesses to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, was this an appropriate time to be introducing this policy?

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