

Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of meeting held in Court Room at Eastbourne Town Hall, Grove Road, BN21 4UG on 11 June 2018 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Councillor Penny di Cara (Chair)

Councillors Colin Belsey, Jim Murray, Pat Rodohan, Robert Smart, Steve Wallis and Janet Coles (Reserve) (as substitute for Dean Sabri)

Officers in Attendance:

Peter Finnis (Assistant Director of Corporate Governance), Jessica Haines (Head of Commercial Business), Jo Harper (Head of Business Planning and Performance) and Millie McDevitt (Performance and Programmes Lead), Jane Goodall (Strategy and Partnership Lead) and Jazmin Victory (Scrutiny Officer)

1 Minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2018 were submitted and approved, and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

Members raised that, subject to the minutes of the last meeting, they still had not received the following information:

- A staff organigram; and
- A list of asset acquisitions showing their capital costs and revenue generated/expected.

Officers responded that the organigram was available on the Council Hub and a link to it would be circulated to members. On the acquisitions list, officers undertook to follow this up and arrange for it to be circulated to members.

2 Apologies for absence/Declaration of Substitute Member.

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors D Sabri and H Miah.

Councillor J Coles declared that she was acting as substitute for Councillor D Sabri for the duration of the meeting.

3 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) by members as required under Section 31 of the Localism Act and of other interests as required by the Code of Conduct.

There were none.

4 Questions by members of the public.

There were none.

5 Urgent items of business.

There were none.

6 Right to address the meeting/order of business.

There were none.

7 Equality Monitoring Policy

The committee noted the report of the Strategy and Partnerships Lead (Thriving Communities) and the Policy and Engagement Coordinator. The report asked the committee to consider and endorse the proposed Equality Monitoring Policy and make any relevant recommendations in relation to these for Cabinet to consider when it meets on 11 July 2018.

Officers informed members that the following two recommendations had been put forward by the Equality and Fairness Stakeholder forum (our external reference group):

- That 'other' be added as an additional gender option.
- That 'other' be added as an additional sexual orientation option.

Members enquired about the anticipated costs of implementing and managing the requirements of the new Joint Equality Monitoring Policy. Officers responded that they were unable to provide an estimate as each Head of Service had to observe their areas and consider the benefit of collecting data versus the cost of officer time. Members were assured however that any costs accrued would be reasonable and proportionate.

Members were informed that the collection of data would only be when there was already contact with the customer. Responding to the monitoring questions would not be compulsory, nor would customers be penalised should they choose to respond or not.

Members enquired where the information would be stored to ensure that it remained confidential. Officers responded that it would be held in a back office system and access would be strictly restricted.

Resolved:

That the Scrutiny Committee endorse the proposed Equality Monitoring Policy for Cabinet to consider.

Reason:

An Equality Monitoring Policy is required to ensure the Council meets its legal duties under Equality Act 2010 and collects the information required to fulfil its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) whilst complying with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

8 Health & Housing in East Sussex

The committee received a presentation by the Head of Commercial Business, pursuant to a resolution of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5 February 2018.

The presentation outlined:

- The key principles and priorities of the Council regarding Health and Social Care;
- Changes in demographic and NHS impact on public purse;
- The complexity of Health and Social Care in the South East and the preventative care available before bedded care; and
- The strategic priorities for all Partners.

Members were informed that the new Health and Social Coordinator role had been in place for one year, and the introduction of the role had enabled the Council to focus on offering alternative options before bedded care. The role had also been researching disabled facilities grant access.

Members requested information specifically regarding Eastbourne Borough Council's responsibility for Health and Housing. Officers responded that the statutory responsibility sits with East Sussex County Council and the NHS. As a Planning and Housing authority, Eastbourne Borough Council would continue to work closely and support its partners and it was important to understand the role of the Council within the wider context of other agencies.

Members thanked the Head of Commercial Business for an informative presentation.

Resolved:

That the Scrutiny Committee note the presentation.

Reason:

To comply with the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 5 February 2018, that the relevant officer prepare a presentation with more information regarding Health and Housing in East Sussex.

9 Corporate Performance Quarter 4 2017/18

The committee considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive regarding Quarter 4 2017/18 performance against the Corporate Plan priority actions, performance indicators and targets.

Key discussions and officer actions arising from the report were detailed below.

Tourism - members commented that the figures presented in the report were from 2016. It was explained that the data comes from the Cambridge Model, a respected and widely used tourism report which draws on a complex and wide-ranging dataset. Members asked if the report containing the data could be circulated to members.

Devonshire Park - members requested that an update be circulated by the Project Lead regarding the anticipated completion dates for each of the component sections of the Devonshire Quarter project.

Conservation area appraisals - members requested that the Conservation Officer circulates a list of when appraisals were last done for the various conservation areas before the next meeting of the committee.

Parks and open spaces - members queried the length of time for the ongoing signage project. It was however noted that signage for Children's Play areas had recently been completed to ensure that all signs included the postcode and an emergency telephone number.

Clear Futures - members requested that a relevant officer attend the next meeting of the committee to provide more information on the Clear Futures programme of work and specifically what was meant by 'local energy'.

Garden Waste Recycling – members questioned whether the unregistered bins were an indication that households were disposing of their garden waste in other ways. A view was also expressed that it was important to monitor whether the new charged service for garden waste would start to have a negative impact on recycling rates. Officers responded that the garden waste charged service was optional which was why some bins were not registered. Alternative disposal options were available such as composting.

Disabled Facilities Grant - members requested that both the original performance indicator as well as the new performance indicator be presented to future meetings. Officers responded that they would investigate, but assured members that the Council would continue to put pressure on partners to improve the application waiting time.

Homelessness – officers noted members' comments that homelessness figures should include numbers of people rough sleeping to give a complete picture.

Contact Centre – members commented on the importance of the wellbeing of the contact centre staff, especially considering the 7 vacancies in the department. Officers responded that the Assistant Director of Human Resources and Transformation had recently spent days shadowing the team and their wellbeing was an ongoing priority.

Council Tax Collection Rates – members requested more information regarding how many people paid their Council Tax by Direct Debit.

Community Lottery – members enquired about the total revenue obtained from the new Lottery so far. Officers took note and would look into this.

Sickness – members were unsatisfied with the 2018/19 proposed target of 9 days. They requested that the Assistant Director of Human Resources and Transformation be invited to the next meeting of the committee to provide absence reasons for 2017/18, a breakdown of absence by department and a further discussion on the 2018/19 proposed target.

Resolved:

That the Scrutiny Committee note the achievements and progress against Corporate Plan priorities for 2017/18, as set out in this report.

Reason:

To demonstrate the discharge of the Scrutiny Committee function to monitor all aspects of performance management activities, as required by Part 3 section 2.2 (7) of the Constitution of the Council.

10 Corporate Plan 2016 - 2020

Members received the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning which set out the results of a review and refresh which had been undertaken of the Council's four year plan (2016 – 2020) at the end of the second year. Members noted the design changes of the Corporate Plan and its new focus on key content and outcomes.

Resolved:

1. That the Scrutiny Committee recommend to the Cabinet member for Place Services to include improving Air Quality in his Quality Environment Vision.
2. That the Scrutiny Committee noted the progress made in the second year of delivery of the Corporate plan; and
3. That the Scrutiny Committee noted the design changes to the Corporate Plan.

Reason:

During the period of a four year Corporate Plan, adjustments and refinements may need to be made to respond to changed circumstances and emerging opportunities. In acknowledgement of this, an annual review and refresh is a helpful way of ensuring that the Plan remains focused on delivery of the organisations overall strategic objectives.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm

Councillor Penny di Cara (Chair)