



MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
CORPORATE OVERVIEW GROUP
TUESDAY, 23 MARCH 2021
Held at 7.00 pm via Zoom

PRESENT:

Councillors T Combellack (Chairman), B Bansal, N Clarke, F Purdue-Horan, D Viridi and J Wheeler

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

C Caven-Atack	Service Manager - Corporate Services
P Linfield	Director of Finance and Corporate Services
L Webb	Democratic Services Officer
S Whittaker	Service Manager - Finance

APOLOGIES:

Councillors J Walker

23 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

24 Minutes of the meeting 15 December 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2020 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

25 Feedback from Scrutiny Group Chairmen

The Chairman of the Corporate Overview Group informed the Group that she had recently attended an East Midlands Council's Scrutiny Network Meeting with other local Council's about their scrutiny process. The Chairman noted that other Council's agreed that all parties involved with scrutiny had to have a common goal and was keen to hear the Group's views on the scheduling of meetings due to one finishing past 10pm recently.

The Chairman of the Communities Scrutiny Group responded by noting that the Communities Scrutiny Group had received a presentation about dog fouling and littering in advance of their most recent meeting as a result of a challenging and busy agenda. The Chairman informed the Group that Councillors appreciated the presentation in advance of the meeting but suggested that perhaps additional meetings were necessary in the next meeting cycle in order for the full scrutiny process to be in the public domain.

The Communities Scrutiny Group had scrutinised the future of Edwalton Golf

Course following the findings of Knight, Kavanagh and Page (KKP) who undertook a two-stage study which considered whether there was a golfing need for Edwalton Golf Course and an alternative options appraisal if a needed. The Group approved the recommendations to Cabinet which were that golf and/or other sporting and community use be retained on the site by developing and investing in the main golf course, a driving range and community facility and, if viable, other sporting activities, as part of the master plan work.

The Chairman of the Communities Scrutiny Group was pleased to note that following the request of additional resources to enforce environmental crimes, the Council had commenced a 12-month trial with a private sector partner "WISE", a dedicated resource to investigate all fly tipping reports and also undertake routine patrols at litter and dog fouling hot spots at zero cost to the Council. The Communities Scrutiny Group also discussed the revised Equalities Scheme and was pleased to note that an action plan for the scheme would be sent out for public consultation and that the Group would revisit the Scheme in 12 months to ensure that actions were being delivered.

The Governance Scrutiny Group considered items including the annual audit letter, an internal audit progress report and the internal audit strategy in which the Group approved year two of the strategy. The Group also discussed the risk management process following the impact of Covid-19.

The Chairman of the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group was pleased to note that the Group had met with representatives of Stagfield and Peveril Homes, who presented their design proposals for the Abbey Road development. The Group were informed that the developers promised to use 30% local labour, sub-contractors and local materials. It was also noted that management fees should be less than £200 and that the Chairman had asked the Portfolio Holder for Planning to write to the Secretary of State to introduce national guidance for management companies. The Vice-Chairman also echoed the comments of the Chairman and suggested that the use of 30% of local suppliers should be monitored.

The Chairman of the Growth and Development Group passed on his best wishes to the Executive Manager – Communities who was currently recovering from an operation and had recently announced that he would retire before the next meeting. The Chairman passed on his thanks to the Executive Manager for his guidance and support on behalf of the group.

26 Consideration of Scrutiny Group Work Programmes - March 2021

The Service Manager – Finance and Corporate Services presented the report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services which asked the Group to create and receive feedback on the scrutiny group work programmes for 2021/22 based on the Cabinet Forward Plan, Corporate Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Investment Strategy and Transformation Plan. The Group were also asked to consider potential topics for scrutiny which were submitted by Councillors and Officers.

The Service Manager – Finance and Corporate Services noted that some items

which were to be considered for the work programmes could either be scrutinised by the Communities Scrutiny Group or the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group and that the recommendations by officers were based on balancing agendas and resources for each meeting.

It was agreed that conservation areas would be scrutinised by the Growth and Development Scrutiny Group as there was currently a negative perception on the consistency of dealing with new planning applications. In addition, tree conservation would be scrutinised by the Communities Scrutiny Group which would include the discussion of tree preservation orders, where new trees can be planted, and the ongoing maintenance of trees required.

It was agreed that the Communities Scrutiny Group would scrutinise the safeguarding of adults and children strategy, police performance and resources for Rushcliffe, Rushcliffe housing delivery plan and the waste strategy. The Group agreed that the Growth and Development Group would scrutinise cycling networks in the Borough, the proposed footbridge over the River Trent and Covid-19 business recovery. The Corporate Overview Group would also scrutinise the results of the residents' survey in March 2022.

It was RESOLVED that

- a) the report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services be noted.
- b) The work programmes outlined below be agreed.

Corporate Overview Group

June 2021

- Standing Items
 - o Feedback from Scrutiny Group Chairmen
 - o Consideration of Scrutiny Group Work Programmes
 - o Financial and Performance Management
- Rolling Items
 - o Health and Safety Annual Report

September 2021

- Standing Items
 - o Feedback from Scrutiny Group Chairmen
 - o Consideration of Scrutiny Group Work Programmes
 - o Financial and Performance Management
- Rolling Items
 - o Customer Feedback Annual Report

December 2021

- Standing Items
 - o Feedback from Scrutiny Group Chairmen
 - o Consideration of Scrutiny Group Work Programmes
 - o Financial and Performance Management
- Rolling Items
 - o Diversity Annual Report

March 2022

- Standing Items
- o Feedback from Scrutiny Group Chairmen
- o Consideration of Scrutiny Group Work Programmes
- o Financial and Performance Management
 - Rolling Items
- o Feedback on Residents' Survey 2021

Governance Scrutiny Group

24 June 2021

- Internal Audit Progress Report
- Internal Audit Annual Report
- Annual Governance Statement
- Redmond Review Update
- Constitution Update
- Streetwise Annual Report

September 2021

- Internal Audit Progress Report
- Treasury Management Outturn
- Asset and Investment Outturn 2020/21
- Risk Management
- Fraud Annual Report

November 2021

- Internal Audit Progress Report
- Statement of Accounts
- Treasury and Asset Investments – 6 monthly update

February 2022

- Internal Audit Progress Report
- Internal Audit Strategy
- External Audit Annual Plan
- Annual Audit Letter
- Risk Management
- Treasury and Asset Investments Strategy - Update

May 2022

- Internal Audit Progress Report
- Internal Audit Annual Report
- Annual Governance Statement
- Constitution Update

Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

April 2021

- Conservation Areas

July 2021

- Cycling Networks in the Borough
- Trent Footbridge

October 2021

- Covid-19 Business Recovery Update

January 2022

- Tree Conservation

April 2022

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Communities Scrutiny Group

April 2021

- Carbon Management Plan

July 2021

- Safeguarding Adults and Children Strategy
- WISE Review

October 2021

- Police performance and resources for Rushcliffe

January 2022

- Housing Delivery Plan

April 2022

- Waste Strategy
- Carbon Management Plan

27 Finance and Performance Management - March 2021

The Financial Services Manager presented the report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services which outlined the quarter two position in terms of financial and performance monitoring for 2020/21. This report presented the budget position for revenue and capital as at 30 December 2020 as reported to Cabinet on 9 March 2021 and includes the in-year variances along with variances as a result of Covid-19.

It was noted that further lockdowns had exacerbated the negative impact on the Council's finances, albeit offset by additional government funding and these were reflected in the projections. The overall anticipated budget position is a positive with a budget efficiency of £0.721m, which took into account financial challenges caused by the pandemic, additional Government funding and importantly in-year net efficiency savings. The Group were also asked to note the capital budget efficiencies of £7.3m which were as a result of uncommitted

funds in the Asset Investment Strategy, reprofiling of Bingham Hub expenditure based on a revised cash flow position; and an underspend on Disabled Facilities Grants. The Group also noted the expected outturn position for Special Expenses of £0.087m deficit.

The Financial Services Manager was pleased to inform the Group that the Council in conjunction with Parkwood, has recently submitted and been successful in an application to the National Leisure Recovery Fund to seek support of £0.21m toward the financial losses incurred. It was noted that data to 31 January 2021, showed collection rates for Council Tax had reduced by 0.9% equating to approximately £0.79m of cash not received which would create a deficit and a burden on future income streams albeit the County Council would take a significant proportion of the Council Tax deficit. However, recent government announcements mean this deficit can now be spread over three years and this should reduce the burden in each year.

At 7.55pm the meeting was adjourned so that the Group could pay their respects to those who had died during the Covid-19 pandemic. The meeting resumed at 8.05pm.

The Group asked questions regarding the Council's inclusion of Leisure deficits in future budgets and assurance on long-term strategy for any financial difficulties in the future brought about by funding reviews, NDR receipts and the impact of Covid longer term. The Financial Services Manager reassured the group that projected leisure deficits had been included in the MTFS and NDR receipts modelled at 'worst case scenario' along with planned replenishment of reserves over the period of the MTFS to provide resilience against potential negative impacts of impending funding reviews.

The Service Manager – Finance and Corporate Services asked the Group to comment on the monitored tasks which were outlined in the Corporate Strategy and the performance measures within the Corporate Scorecard. The Group were reminded that some targets had been omitted as a way of measuring performance for those indicators that are being impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. There was one exception within the operational score card:

LICO41 Percentage of householder planning applications processed within target times

The Service Manager – Finance and Corporate Services explained that despite the percentage of householder planning applications processed within target times being an exception for this quarter, this was a direct result of the planning officers hitting targets for major applications and developments.

The Group were asked to consider Appendix H in the report which detailed performance measures that had been impacted by Covid-19 and was presented as a supplement to the usual performance information. It was explained that this appendix showed measures grouped under headings of delivery, community and finance and was being used as additional tool to help monitor performance more closely, providing an early warning where a significant downturn in performance was emerging.

OFFICIAL

The Group asked questions regarding the collection of household waste and the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting. The Group were informed that the collection of recycled materials was on a downward trend but the collection of residual waste had increased. It was noted that the collection of waste would form part of the Waste Strategy item to be discussed at Communities Scrutiny Group. The Service Manager – Finance and Corporate Services also agreed to provide the Group with more detailed information about social media engagement at the next meeting.

It was RESOLVED that

- a) The report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services be noted
- b) The expected net revenue efficiency for the year 0.721m be noted
- c) The expected outturn position for Special Expenses of £0.087m deficit be noted and;
- d) The Group be provided with more details regarding social media engagement at the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

CHAIRMAN