

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 12th April, 2016

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Jane Potter (Chair), Councillor Gay Hopkins (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Joe Baker, David Bush, Gareth Prosser, Paul Swansborough, Jennifer Wheeler and Nina Wood-Ford

Also Present:

Councillors Tom Baker-Price, Roger Bennett, Natalie Brookes, Antonia Pulsford, David Thain and D Jones (Independent Person, Audit, Governance and Standards Committee)

Officers:

Tracy Beech, Jackie Boreham, Sue Garratt, John Godwin, Sam Morgan, Jayne Pickering and Deb Poole

Democratic Services Officer:

J Bayley and A Scarce

90. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Andrew Fry.

91. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest nor of any party whip.

92. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting held on 1st March 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

93. PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD - PRESENTATION

The Chair reminded the Committee that all Members had been invited to attend the demonstration of the Corporate Dashboard which was delivered by Officers.

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Chair

Officers explained that the Corporate Dashboard had been created over a number of years and was unique to Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils. The data collected focused on areas covered by the Council's strategic purposes, which had been agreed by Councillors. The aim was for the data to be fluid and for those using it to be able to use it to draw down information on a particular area which would enable the user to see a full picture of that area. Performance Indicators in the traditional format were no longer used, being replaced by measures which could be used to gain a much more holistic understanding of the Council's position in respect of service delivery at any one time.

During the demonstration Officers covered the following points in more detail:

- The aim of the measures was to help Heads of Service deliver better operational services.
- A common sense approach has been used which was geared towards the needs of the Council's customers.
- The data included various graphs and background information together with the commentary which related to any significant changes which had occurred in performance over time.
- The data had been collected from 2013 to 2015 and would be updated regularly.
- How a good measure should identify a number of further questions which would allow Members to look at the information provided "in the round".
- Members could discuss the data in order to meet with relevant officers to get further information about a particular area.
- The Dashboard was designed to be interactive and easy to use. Members were shown how they could create their own Dashboard picking out particular areas of interest.
- Councillors could access the Dashboard via the sunray units in each of the group rooms and it was hoped that access would also be available via Councillors' iPads in due course.

Following the demonstration Members discussed a number of areas in more detail:

- The flexibility of the dashboard and how the data would be used.
- How the measures had been chosen and whether these would be regularly updated.
- The lack of performance indicators and planned targets and the impact this could have in particular areas. It was explained that the key objectives would be met by measuring

what the Council was delivering and any problems which were highlighted would be investigated in more detail.

- The upper and lower control limits and how these could be adjusted to take account of any anomalies which may occur within the data.
- Who had built the system. It was confirmed that this had been undertaken “in house” by Council staff.

Officers encouraged Members to take time to look further at the Dashboard and to contact relevant members of staff if further explanation was required.

The Chair thanked Officers for the demonstration and suggested that in future the Committee might want to receive further presentations or to set up a Task Group to look at the Corporate Dashboard in more detail and to establish how it could best help the Committee in its work.

RESOLVED that

the demonstration be noted.

94. S106 FUNDING - INFORMATION

The Chair reminded the Committee that a number of questions in respect of Section 106 monies had been raised at a meeting earlier in the year and Officers had been invited to deliver a presentation which would respond to those questions. Officers had also provided a written report which gave details of the present financial position in respect of this funding.

The presentation covered the following points:

- How much funding was available.
- The sources of Section 106 funding. Members were advised these were a form of mitigation that was used to make what would otherwise be an unacceptable development, acceptable.
- All funding needed to be necessary, related and proportionate to the particular permission.
- What criteria were applied to determine how the funds were spent. The Committee was informed that this was set out in the legal agreement and each case would therefore be different.
- Who determined how the funding was spent. This was down to the decision maker based on information related to the necessary mitigation.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 12th April, 2016

- The length of time the funding was available. Members were advised that this was specified in each individual agreement.
- How Members could influence the use of the funding. Officers explained that Members could influence the use of funding through the pre-application process and via the Planning Committee.

Following the presentation Members discussed a number of issues including:

- Whether there was a particular cut off point for the monies being spent and whether the funding had to be returned to the developer if not spent within that time scale.
- How payment was made (for example whether this was direct to the Council or the developer could pay a supplier directly).
- How Members could influence how the funding was spent and the timeline for discussions.
- How an application which was cross boundary would be dealt with and whether funding would be split or go to one particular authority.
- The impact of a development in a particular ward that could also affect other wards.
- Whether all Members were informed of a development or just the relevant Ward Member. Officers agreed to check the Council's constitution and provide Members with clarification on this point outside of the meeting.
- In order to be involved in any pre-application discussions Members needed to have received the appropriate training.
- The involvement of Worcestershire County Council in the process.

Officers also provided Members with details of the current balance of Section 106 funding allocated to the Council, explaining that £600k had been allocated to capital projects and £566k related to commuted sums and would be spent on maintaining the areas adopted by the Council as specified in the Section 106 agreements. Following further discussions Members agreed that it would be useful to receive regular updates as to the financial position in respect of this funding.

RESOLVED that

Officers provide six monthly updates in respect of the current balance of Section 106 funding.

95. IMPROVING ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO REDDITCH TAXI FLEETS SHORT, SHARP REVIEW - FINAL REPORT

Councillor Gay Hopkins, Chair of the review, delivered a presentation which provided background information as to why it had been set up. She explained that it had been a very intense piece of work over a short period of time.

The presentation provided information in respect of the number of taxis in Redditch, together with data in respect of the number of wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs), the types of disabilities that could affect people when travelling by taxi, and details about relevant legislation. Councillor Hopkins stressed that there were some very good drivers in the Borough who provided excellent services to those in need. However, improvements could still be made to services available to customers with disabilities. She went on to provide a summary of the supporting evidence for each of the recommendations that had been put forward by the group and provided details of the rationale behind each one.

Following the presentation Members of the review, who were present at the meeting, supported the recommendations and advised the Committee that as the Chair had stated, it had been a very informative, intense piece of work which had tackled a very difficult subject. The Chair of the review responded to a number of questions from Members and following further discussion it was

RECOMMENDED to the Licensing Committee that

The Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licensing Policy and the Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Policy should be amended:

- 1.1) to allow applications for new hackney carriages to be made for vehicles that are less than six years old, meet European M1 safety standards and have facilities for carrying a disabled person in a wheelchair within the vehicle. (*This relates to the Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licensing Policy only*);**
- 1.2) to require drivers to display stickers in their vehicles that provide information about how to report complaints;**
- 1.3) the Driver Licence Policy – Application for a Hackney Carriage and / or Private Hire Vehicle Driver’s Licence – should be amended to require that refresher training**

should be provided on driving standards and disability awareness to taxi drivers every three years;

- 2.1) there should be a media campaign to guide disabled people and taxi drivers when travelling by taxi about their rights and responsibilities;
- 2.2) WRS should publish a list of drivers who currently operate licensed wheelchair accessible vehicles on the WRS and Redditch Borough Council websites in a similar format to Brighton and Hove City Council and Eden District Council;
- 3.1) WRS should undertake a review of the conditions attached to taxi operators' licences; and
- 3.2) the Licensing Committee should review the effectiveness of the disability awareness training provided to taxi drivers.

96. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY - RECOMMENDATION TRACKER REPORT

Officers provided feedback in respect of a number of recommendations which had been completed or were near completion:

- Voluntary and Community Sector Task Group – These recommendations had been completely or were in the process of being implemented and would now be removed from the tracker.
- Provision of Support Networks for the LGBT Community Task Group – Councillor Baker, the former Chair of the review, had reported that the LGBT Support Services Network had recently informed him that the LGBT leaflet had had a positive impact on attendance at cervical screenings and requests for Hepatitis B vaccinations by members of the LGBT community. However, further information had not been forthcoming from Worcestershire County Council in respect of the group's second recommendation and it was suggested that those Members who were also County Councillors might wish to take this matter up on behalf of the Committee.
- Arts and Culture Centre Task Group – The Community Safety Team had confirmed that unfortunately it was not possible to install the Creative Redditch art work on the shutter of the former Poundstretcher store.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 12th April, 2016

Members expressed disappointment that the Apprenticeship post supporting the Grants Officer had not yet been filled. Officers confirmed that this would be discussed further and a more detailed update would be provided for Members' consideration outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED that

- 1) County Councillors Fry and Baker be asked to request a response from the relevant officers at Worcestershire County Council in respect of the outstanding recommendation from the Provision of Support Networks for the LGBT Community Task Group; and**
- 2) Officers contact the Community Safety Team to request that they consider using the Creative Redditch art work for any future bus shelters located in the town centre, as detailed in the Arts and Culture Task Group's recommendations.**

97. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME

Officers confirmed that there were no updates in relation to Overview and Scrutiny within the Executive Committee minutes from 8th March 2016. In respect of the Work Programme Members were asked to consider whether there were any items which they wished to pre-scrutinise.

RESOLVED that

the Executive Committee Minutes of 8th March 2015 together with the latest addition of the Executive Committee's Work Programme be noted.

98. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair reminded Members that a training event for Overview and Scrutiny would take place on 31st May 2016. She also thanked Members and officers for their support during the year.

RESOLVED that

subject to the inclusion of a six monthly update in respect of Section 106 monies, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme be noted.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 12th April, 2016

99. TASK GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

Joint Worcestershire Increasing Physical Activity Task Group –
Redditch Borough Council Representative, Councillor Gareth
Prosser

Councillor Prosser informed Members that a meeting had been held on 31st March when the draft recommendations had been discussed and amended. The final report would now be submitted to the Cabinet at Worcestershire County Council, although Councillor Prosser advised that the date for this had not yet been agreed.

100. HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillor Nina Wood-Ford, the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), had been unable to attend the most recent meeting of this Committee due to illness and did not therefore have an update for Members.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.45 pm