



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 5th March, 2018

MINUTES

Present:

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

Also Present:

Councillor Juliet Brunner

Officers:

Ruth Bamford, John Godwin, Jayne Pickering and Dean Piper

Democratic Services Officers:

J Bayley

79. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Matthew Dormer and Pattie Hill and it was confirmed that Councillor David Bush was attending as a substitute for Councillor Dormer.

80. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

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

81. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday 13th February 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

82. SAFEGUARDING AND EARLY HELP PRESENTATION

.....
Chair

The Chair advised that as the Committee meeting had been rescheduled at short notice due to the adverse weather conditions it had not been possible to arrange for Officers from Worcestershire County Council to attend the meeting for this item. Instead, Officers had been asked to reschedule this for consideration at a meeting of the Committee in the following municipal year.

83. CIVIL CONTINGENCIES SHORT SHARP REVIEW - FINAL REPORT

Councillor Gareth Prosser, Chair of the Civil Contingencies Short Sharp Review, presented the group's final report.

Members were advised that the review had been agreed in July 2017, though had not been launched until September that year as the group had been waiting for another review to finish. The review had been established in a context in which the Grenfell Tower fire had been the subject of discussion and the role of local authorities in responding to such incidents had been the subject of public scrutiny.

During the review the group had consulted with a number of expert witnesses from a wide range of organisations. Members had also considered internal emergency planning arrangements in place at the Council. Based on the evidence that had been gathered the group had concluded that the local authority had sound emergency planning arrangements in place. However, instead of the current arrangements, whereby the Emergency Plan was reviewed every three years in line with national guidelines the group had concluded that the contents of the plan should be reviewed every year.

The group was also proposing that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should receive an annual update in respect of emergency planning arrangements. This would ensure that the subject was discussed in a public Committee environment and would help to provide reassurance to local residents.

The group had concluded that ideally their review should not have been launched until the North Worcestershire Civil Contingencies and Resilience Manager had returned from maternity leave. This was because the information that had been provided by the Officer had helped to reassure Members that the Council had appropriate emergency planning arrangements in place and had this feedback been provided at the start of the review Members would not have continued with the exercise for so long. With this in mind the group was urging the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to learn lessons

and to refrain from launching reviews in the future in the absence of key witnesses until they had returned to work.

RECOMMENDED that

the content of the Council's emergency plan should be reviewed on an annual basis.

RESOLVED that

the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should receive an annual update in respect of the Council's emergency planning arrangements.

84. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

The Chair presented the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Annual Report 2017/18 and explained that this provided a summary of the work that had been undertaken by the Committee during the year. The report would be presented for Members' consideration at the following Council meeting on 19th March 2018.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

85. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME - SELECTING ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY

Members noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendation in respect of the Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 to 2021/22, proposed at a meeting on 13th February 2018, had been endorsed by the Executive Committee and subsequently approved by Council on 19th February 2018.

The Executive Committee's Work Programme for the period 1st April to 31st July 2018 was tabled for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on Monday 19th February 2018 be noted; and**
- 2) the content of the Executive Committee's Work Programme for the period 1st April to 31st July 2018 be noted.**

86. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Officers advised that Overview and Scrutiny training would be delivered on 24th May 2018. All elected Members would be welcomed to attend.

87. TASK GROUPS, SHORT SHARP REVIEWS AND WORKING GROUPS - UPDATE

- a) Budget Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Jane Potter

Councillor Potter confirmed that there had been no further meetings of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group.

- b) Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer

The Committee was advised that there had been no further meetings of the Performance Scrutiny Working Group.

- c) Transition of Young People Leaving Care in Redditch Short, Sharp Review – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer

The Committee was informed that the first meeting of the short sharp review group had not yet taken place.

88. EXTERNAL SCRUTINY BODIES - UPDATE REPORTS

- a) West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Nina Wood-Ford, the Council's representative on the West Midlands Combined Authority's (WMCA's) Overview and Scrutiny Committee, confirmed that the latest meeting that had been due to take place on 2nd March 2018 had been cancelled due to adverse weather conditions.

- b) Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)

The Council's representative on Worcestershire HOSC, Councillor Nina Wood-Ford, advised that there had been no meetings of HOSC since the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 5th March, 2018

89. LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES BUSINESS CASE - PRE-SCRUTINY

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources presented the Leisure and Cultural Services Business Case for the consideration of the Committee. During the delivery of this presentation the following matters were highlighted for Members' consideration:

- In 2017 the Council had agreed to establish a TECKAL company, also known as a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC), to manage the Council's Leisure and Cultural Services moving forward.
- Subject to the Leisure and Cultural Services Business Case receiving the support of the Executive Committee and Council in March 2018 a detailed business plan in respect of this item would be presented for Members' consideration in July 2018.
- Officers were working on the basis that the new LATC would be in operation from October 2018 onwards.
- A number of services would be included in the LATC's remit, though not all.
- Some services could potentially transfer to the LATC at a later date including the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre, the BMX Track and the Council's Learning on Line service.
- Officers had been consulting with the Trade Unions throughout the process.
- Officers had made some assumptions regarding staffing and finances; the unions had expressed concerns about some of these assumptions.
- One area of concern raised by the unions was the assumption that any new staff employed by the LATC would not have similar pension entitlements to those members of staff who had transferred to the company.
- A number of staff would be TUPE transferred to the LATC, though some would remain employed directly by the Council where those services were not transferred to the company. It was anticipated that 50 staff would continue to be employed by the Council and 62 would be transferred, together with additional casual staff.
- The Council was assuming that both the LATC and the client side remaining at the Council would need to restructure following the introduction of the LATC and the unions had also expressed some concerns about this.
- Officers were working on the basis that the LATC would need to access Council support services, such as HR and IT, for the first 12 months. However, after this point the company could give notice and seek to obtain these services from another

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 5th March, 2018

supplier. Again this had been raised as a concern by the trade unions.

- Through the LATC model the Council would retain ownership of land and assets used in the delivery of Leisure and Cultural Services.
- The Council would have influence over the LATC, though would need to refrain from seeking to control the company as this could curtail the potential of the LATC to thrive.
- The Council was anticipating that savings would be achieved through transferring services to the LATC. Some of these savings would arise as the LATC would be eligible to apply for concessions in respect of Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR).
- Officers were also anticipating that the LATC would be able to achieve efficiency savings and income growth. Other local authorities that had established LATCs to deliver similar services had found that staff transferred to the new company would deliver services in a different manner to the way they had provided services when employed by a Council.

Following the presentation of the report Members discussed a number of points in detail:

- The potential for economies of scale to be achieved by the Council through adopting approaches to procuring services and managing supply scales that differed from the local authority.
- The opportunities that an LATC would provide for staff to work in a more innovative, customer-focused manner free from the constraints of working within a local government environment.
- The need for culture change to occur once the LATC was established in order to foster a working environment in which staff felt able to work differently.
- The implications of the transfer of staff to the LATC for management costs at the Council moving forward. Officers advised that a restructure of the Council's management team was scheduled to take place and this could be taken into account as part of that process.
- The governance arrangements for the LATC.
- The role of a Shareholders Committee in holding the LATC to account. Officers advised that this committee would have the power to determine a number of reserved matters.
- The position of the Board of Directors, comprising both Directors and Non-Executive Directors.
- The service specification for the LATC that would help to outline the Council's requirements.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 5th March, 2018

- The use of a mixture of corporate outcomes and output measures linked to the Council's strategic purposes and operational measures to help monitor the performance of services delivered by the LATC.
- The powers available to the Council to exert influence over the LATC should Members become dissatisfied with the services delivered by the company. Officers advised that there would be a contractual relationship and the LATC would also be required to submit an annual report through which it could be held to account.
- The important role of contractual management moving forward, and the need for positive working relationships to be developed between relevant officers and the LATC. Members were advised that this working relationship would be key to ensuring that the Council continued to retain confidence in the company.
- The arrangements for paying those on the Board of Directors. Members were advised that whilst the Managing Director would be paid it was anticipated that Non-Executive Directors would be provided with expenses only.
- The likely backgrounds of any Non-Executive Directors appointed to the Board of Directors. The Committee was advised that the aim would be to appoint Non-Executive Directors who had expertise in respect of Leisure and Cultural Services and private sector experience.
- The physical location in which LATC staff would be based. Officers advised that this had not yet been determined, though staff would continue to work from Council premises and the authority could charge the LATC for doing this at a market rate.
- The potential for additional services, currently out to contract with other suppliers, to be included in the LATC's remit at a later date. Officers advised that opportunities would be assessed on a case by case basis.
- The potential for any savings arising from the work of the LATC to be reinvested in areas such as repair and maintenance of Council assets used in the delivery of Leisure and Cultural Services.
- The potential for the Council to reduce the support it provided to the LATC at a later date and the possible negative impact that this might have on the LATC in terms of staff morale.
- The position of the Managing Director and the potential for existing staff to apply for the role. Members were advised that this post would be advertised externally and subject to open competition; internal staff would be eligible to apply.
- The potential for Parks and Open Spaces to be incorporated into the work of the LATC in the long-term. Officers advised

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 5th March, 2018

that Parks and Open Spaces were not included in the scope of the service.

- The need for the Council to address its responsibilities to Bromsgrove District Council under existing shared services arrangements, with a restructure of the services that remained in house required as soon as possible.
- The stage by which the LATC would become financially sustainable. Officers advised that the Council was anticipating that £1.9 million savings would be achieved in the first four to five years.

The Committee discussed the composition of the Shareholders Committee in some detail, with Officers advising that this would comprise five elected Members, to be appointed by the Council. These appointments would be made in line with standard Outside Body appointment processes. Members concurred that the elected membership of the Shareholders Committee should ideally reflect the political balance of the Council.

The Committee was advised that at a meeting of the Stakeholders Group, which was supporting work on the development of the LATC, the potential for elected Members to be appointed on a three year rolling basis had been discussed. There was general consensus that appointment to the Shareholders Committee on this basis would be sensible due to the Council's system of elections by thirds.

The potential for the Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) to be managed like a business in order to be as efficient as possible was also discussed by the Committee. In order to manage the company as effectively as possible Members noted that the LATC might decide to offer incentives to staff, such as performance related pay or bonuses. The Committee agreed that any such incentives offered as part of staff remuneration packages should ideally be included in the range of matters reserved for approval by the Shareholders Committee. As there was already a section in the business case dedicated to the range of matters reserved for the approval of the Shareholders Committee Members agreed to propose an amendment to the wording in the document to reflect this suggestion.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the five elected Members appointed to the Shareholders Committee of the Local Authority Trading Company should be appointed in accordance with the political balance of the Council;**

- 2) the five elected Members appointed to the Shareholders Committee of the Local Authority Trading Company should be appointed on a three year rolling basis; and
- 3) the range of matters reserved for approval by the Shareholders Committee, as detailed on page 27 of the business case, should be amended so that the fourth bullet point from the bottom reads as follows: “*Approval of above inflation pay increases and any other remuneration packages*”.

(During the debate in respect of this matter the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services declared a pecuniary interest due to his eligibility to apply for the position of Managing Director of the LATC. He left the room and was not present when Members considered information pertaining to this role).

90. ONE PUBLIC ESTATE - PRE-SCRUTINY

The Head of Planning and Regeneration delivered a presentation in respect of the One Public Estate (OPE) exercise (Appendix 1). During the delivery of this presentation the following matters were highlighted for Members’ consideration:

- The Town Centre Regeneration Prospectus, included within the report, was an ambitious document focused on promoting Redditch town centre.
- There were issues in Redditch in terms of connectivity between old and new parts of the town.
- The ring road around Redditch town centre could be regarded as a barrier to areas surrounding the town centre, in terms of preventing those areas from taking advantage of access to the centre.
- There was quite a lot of land at Church Road that was under-utilised and would benefit from regeneration.
- Improvements could also be made to the area of the town centre in which the Redditch Railway Station was located.
- HOW College had invested in Redditch, having established a Redditch campus.
- In recent years improvements had been made in the town centre, with a gym, restaurants and the cinema all now accessible in the town centre and public realm improvements having recently been undertaken on Alcester Street.
- Some Section 106 funding was available that could be utilised on regeneration works in Church Green.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 5th March, 2018

- The Executive Committee would be considering the report the following evening and would be asked to consider investing a further £50,000 to support the development of proposals contained in the Town Centre Regeneration Prospectus.
- The OPE focused on the potential to make more constructive use of public sector assets.
- The OPE report identified various parcels of public land and public sector assets and suggested alternative ways in which these could be used.
- One of the suggestions made in the OPE was that the area around Church Road should be the location of a multi-agency public sector hub as it was suggested that this would help to increase footfall in the area.
- There was the potential to make efficiency savings as a result of co-locating with other public sector organisations.
- The Executive Committee would be asked to empower Officers to investigate these options further and it was important to note that no decisions had yet been taken on how to proceed with any of the ideas that had been suggested.

Following the delivery of the presentation Members discussed a number of points in further detail:

- The financial support that had been provided by the Government to enable local authorities to regenerate town centres.
- The exciting opportunities that could be made available to help regenerate Redditch town centre in the foreseeable future.
- The organisations involved in the OPE exercise. A number of partner organisations had been involved including Worcestershire County Council, various branches of the NHS, Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, West Mercia Police and Homes England.
- The focus of the Town Centre Regeneration Prospectus and the extent to which any further ideas, not detailed in this document, could be raised. Members were advised that the prospectus focused on concepts and ideas, rather than specifics, and no decisions had yet been taken.
- The need for additional work to be undertaken before final decisions were taken in respect of specific regeneration projects.
- The potential for this report to be discussed at a meeting of the Planning Advisory Panel (PAP). Officers confirmed that this matter had not been considered at a PAP meeting, though OPE contained information relating to a range of matters, not

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 5th March, 2018

just Planning, and therefore would not necessarily be suitable for discussion at a PAP meeting.

- The implications of suggestions detailed in the prospectus and OPE report for the Local Plan, and the extent to which the ideas corresponded with requirements set out in the plan. Officers explained that changes in use of land and assets in the town centre complied with requirements set out in the Redditch Town Centre Strategy.
- The areas that would be covered in the additional work for which £50,000 would be requested from the Executive Committee. Officers clarified that this would be used on matters such as exploring ideas to develop the railway quarter and on developing a comprehensive master plan on the opportunities available in the town centre.
- The suggestion in the report for a board to be established to progress projects detailed in the OPE documentation.
- The work that had initially been undertaken by the Place Partnership Ltd, which had informed both the prospectus and OPE exercise.

Members noted that the development of the Town Centre Regeneration Prospectus and OPE exercise had been officer-led to date. Some Members raised concerns about the limited involvement of elected Members. Concerns were also expressed about the lack of engagement with the public regarding this matter to date. In this context it was proposed that a Task Group should be established, to investigate all opportunities available to regenerate Redditch town centre.

A proposal was made to recommend to the Executive Committee that Officers should be granted £50,000 to support the development of ideas detailed in the Town Centre Regeneration Prospectus. However concerns were raised that this would mean that work on a Task Group in respect of this matter would have no value as this would represent duplication and provide limited time for the scrutiny group to investigate the matter in detail or to contribute suggestions that could help to enhance regeneration work in the town centre. As such this proposal was defeated.

These discussions led Members to conclude that the timing of a Task Group exercise in respect of this subject would be crucial. As such it was proposed that the Executive Committee should be asked to postpone any further work in respect of the Town Centre Regeneration Prospectus and the OPE exercise until a Task Group exercise had been completed into the subject. This proposal received support from the majority of the Members present.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 5th March, 2018

RECOMMENDED that

further work in respect of the Town Centre Regeneration Prospectus and the One Public Estate Review be postponed to allow time for an Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish exercise to be undertaken to investigate this matter in more detail.

The Meeting commenced at 5.00 pm
and closed at 6.55 pm

REDDITCH TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION

5 March 2018



Summary of Report

- The report sets out a number of development concepts for Redditch Town Centre included within a 'Regeneration Prospectus' (Appendix 1)
- Proposals could drive new investment into the town and improve the vibrancy and diversity of the town centre offer
- Prospectus has been informed by the outcome of the Place Review / One Public Estate (OPE) process led by Place Partnership
- Report also sets out the outline business case for the Council to work with other public sector partners to create a new 'Public services hub'



Regeneration Prospectus – Concept Plan

- Vision is to create a set of well defined quarters and a retail hub within the Town Centre
 - Business Quarter (Prospect Hill, Church Road)
 - Railway Quarter
 - Cultural / Leisure / Residential Quarter
 - Learning Quarter
 - Retail Hub
- Plus public realm and accessibility improvements
- Further feasibility work required to develop proposals for each area



Place Review

- OPE process looks at the future of the public sector estate in Redditch
- Some assets are underused, have been declared as surplus or are in need of replacement
- OPE report (Appendix 2) considers the future of the Town Hall, Library, Police and Fire Stations and land owned by NHS/ Homes England
- Recommends the development of a new Public Services Hub including the Council, Library, Job Centre Plus and potential other service providers



Public Services Hub

- Preferred site for the Hub is Smallwood House (owned by NHS) and land on Church Road owned by Homes England (formerly the Homes & Communities Agency)
- Could drive regeneration, improve service delivery and generate savings for the Council and public services partners
- Could release the Town Hall for conversion or re-development
- Proposed by Place Partnership that the Hub could be funded through a mixture of funding sources
- Further work would be required to develop the detailed business case and confirm support from key partners



Recommendations of Report

- **The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the content of the attached report and to determine whether to make any recommendations on this subject to the Executive Committee.**



This page is intentionally left blank