

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 4th February, 2019

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Joe Baker (Chair), Councillor Debbie Chance (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Salman Akbar, Roger Bennett, Michael Chalk, Andrew Fry, Pattie Hill, Anthony Lovell and Mark Shurmer

Officers:

Ann Dallison, Sue Hanley, Guy Revans and Judith Willis

Democratic Services Officers:

J Bayley and Farzana Mughal

80. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Joanne Beecham, Gemma Monaco and Jennifer Wheeler. It was confirmed that Councillors Salman Akbar, Roger Bennett and Mark Shurmer were attending as their respective substitutes.

81. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

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

82. MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEETING HELD ON 3 JANUARY 2019

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 3rd January, 2019 were submitted for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on

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Chair

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3rd January, 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

83. COMMUNITY LOTTERY - PRE SCRUTINY

The Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Co-ordinator provided Members with an overview of the Community Lottery Scheme for Redditch Borough Council. Members were reminded that the Executive Committee and Council had already agreed in September to set up a Council lottery.

The business plan outlined raising money for local community and voluntary sector groups from a weekly draw, with the potential for players to win a £25,000 jackpot. With regards to the ongoing costs of the annual license fee and annual lotteries, Council membership would be met through the 10% share of ticket sales.

Members discussed the following matters in relation to the implementation of this scheme:

- The potential that people from deprived backgrounds would be encouraged to take part in gambling.
- The extent to which the scheme would be sustainable and the basis for the projected figures in the report.
- The safeguarding policy proposed for the scheme and whether the policy would be robust enough to protect those who were under age and vulnerable people.
- The potential impact of the Council's lottery on income derived from organisational lotteries by local charities.
- The extent to which there was demand for a lottery in Redditch. Members expressed concerns that no market testing had been undertaken in the Borough before a decision had been taken to launch a Council lottery.
- The arrangements for the Council to hold a license for the lottery and the role of the external company that would be managing the scheme.
- The potential impact that a number of jackpot winners would have on the insurance premiums for the external management company and the impact that this could have in the long-term on the organisation's willingness to support the lottery. Members were advised that it was likely the lottery would be managed by an experienced external company.
- The possibility that residents would take part in the Council lottery in order to provide financial support to good causes. Members were advised that participants could nominate

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charities that would receive funding following their purchase of a lottery ticket.

- The examples of Council lotteries that had been successfully launched in other parts of the country.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the Business Plan and suite of Policies found in Appendix 1 - 6 of the report be approved, and implemented for the Redditch Community Lottery Scheme;**
- 2) the Head of Community Services in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder be granted delegated authority to adapt the policies as and when required to ensure ongoing compliance with the rules and regulations set by the Gambling Commission as per our lottery licence;**
- 3) the Executive Committee note the concerns raised in the preamble above by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and**

RESOLVED that

- 4) an update be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee about the numbers participating in the council lottery scheme six months after the scheme has been launched.**

84. HOUSING / HOUSING REVENUE IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROGRESS REPORT - PRE-SCRUTINY

The Committee received a report in relation to the Council Housing/Housing Revenue Account Strategic Improvement Plan outlining the progress made to date. Whilst presenting the report the Deputy Chief Executive highlighted the following matters for Members' consideration.

Members were reminded that in September, 2018 the Executive Committee agreed a number of decisions which included the endorsement of a Strategic Improvement Action Plan.

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- This was the first progress report presented to Members. Further updates would follow every six months.
- A revised timetable had been developed in respect of the Gas Services Business Case. Major improvements had been made with the number of voids being reduced from approximately 120 to 51.
- The Housing Capital, Property and Compliance Teams had been reviewed and revised management and service structures had been developed. These would be subject to formal consultation with the Trade Unions and staff.
- The Strategic Measures Dashboard would be updated regularly and Members could request to look at the Corporate Performance report for the six strategic purposes.
- The current risks were reviewed on a regular basis with a full formal review to be undertaken in advance of the new financial year 2019/20.

The Chair informed the Committee that a resident had informed him that a member of the Housing Team had dealt with their enquiry and had been very helpful and courteous.

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

- With regards to the gas contract, the Council would be looking to get external help to ensure that the issues were managed appropriately.
- It was recognised that the voids numbers would not reduce further until the new Housing IT system was in place.
- Pre-inspections on properties would be carried out as well as regular inspections when necessary and photographs would also be taken of the properties.
- The stock condition survey would be completed in the spring and checks would be made at regular intervals.
- The new Housing IT system would be operational in May/June 2019 with the expectation that this would be fully implemented within 18 months.
- The tenants' handbook would be revised in due course.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked all housing staff, including the Deputy Chief Executive, the Head of Environmental Services and the Head of Community Services for their hard work

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to address the issues in respect of Housing Services that were identified in 2017/18.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **thanks be extended to all housing staff, including the Deputy Chief Executive, the Head of Environmental Services and the Head of Community Services for their hard work to address the issues in respect of Housing Services that were identified in 2017/18; and**
- 2) **the Executive Committee consider the content of the report and endorse the progress reports for each of the items detailed.**

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

Members considered the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 8th January, 2019 and the Executive Committee's Work Programme from 1st March to 30th June 2019, which was tabled at the meeting.

Members agreed to pre-scrutinise the following item:

- Matchborough and Winyates District Centres – Outcome of Soft Market Testing report.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 8th January 2019 be noted; and**
- 2) **the Executive Committee's Work Programme be noted; and**
- 3) **the following item be included in the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for pre-scrutiny as agreed:**
 - a) **Matchborough and Winyates District Centres – Outcome of Soft Market Testing report.**

86. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Senior Democratic Services Officer (Redditch) presented the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme. The Committee was informed that there would be short timescales available for Members to consider the Medium Term Financial Plan should the meeting on 18th February take place. Therefore Officers suggested that the meeting should be rescheduled to take place on 20th February in order to allow Members more time to review the report prior to the budget being agreed at Council on 25th February.

Members were provided with the following updates:

- Pre-decision Scrutiny - Matchborough and Winyates District Centre Redevelopment Consultation that was due to be considered in February had been replaced with Matchborough and Winyates District Centres – Outcome of Soft Market Testing report and this would be considered in March, 2019.
- CCTV Service Provision Review – Pre-Scrutiny had been removed from the work programme as this was now not being considered by the Executive Committee.
- Pre-decision Scrutiny - Service Delivery Options – HRA Gas Maintenance would be considered in June, 2019.
- Tenancy Conditions for Council Housing Tenants and Tenants Handbook would be considered in July, 2019.
- Overview and Scrutiny – Select Committee Findings and new Government Guidance had not yet been published. This would be presented for Members' consideration when it was published.

RESOLVED that

subject to the amendments in the preamble above, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme be noted.

87. TASK GROUPS, SHORT SHARP REVIEWS AND WORKING GROUPS - VERBAL UPDATES

Members were advised that Councillor Jennifer Wheeler would be unavailable to Chair meetings of the Budget Scrutiny and Performance Scrutiny Working groups for the rest of the year. Therefore the Committee agreed that Councillor Andrew Fry should Chair the Budget Scrutiny and Performance Scrutiny Working Groups until the end of the municipal year.

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The committee was informed that the next Performance Scrutiny Working Group meeting would be arranged in February, 2019.

RESOLVED that

- 1) Councillor Andrew Fry be appointed Chair of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group for the remainder of the 2018/19 municipal year; and**
- 2) Councillor Andrew Fry be appointed Chair of the Performance Scrutiny Working Group for the remainder of the 2018/19 municipal year.**

88. EXTERNAL SCRUTINY BODIES - UPDATE

Councillor Chalk provided a written update in respect of the West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Members were also provided with an update in respect of Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC). Councillor Chalk advised that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 5th February 2019. He informed Members that he had attended the Budget Scrutiny meeting in Worcestershire the previous week and it was highlighted that there were concerns in relation to the increasing numbers of adults with a learning disability requiring care.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.20 pm