

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 2nd September,
2021

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Debbie Chance (Chair), and Councillors Andrew Fry (in attendance as substitute for Councillor Jenny Wheeler), Salman Akbar, Joanne Beecham, Michael Chalk, Julian Grubb and Lucy Harrison

Also Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer – Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships
Councillor Nyear Nazir – Portfolio Holder for Community Services and Regulatory Services
Councillor Craig Warhurst – Portfolio Holder for Housing and Procurement

Officers:

Kevin Dicks, Claire Felton and Judith Willis

Democratic Services Officers:

Jo Gresham and Joe Galkowski

14. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies were received from Councillors J. Wheeler and A. Fogg with Councillor A. Fry in attendance as substitute for Councillor J. Wheeler.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest nor of any Party Whip.

Chair

16. PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no public speakers registered on this occasion.

17. DEMENTIA TASK GROUP REPORT

Councillor Chalk presented the Dementia Task Group Final Report to the committee. He thanked the members of the Task Group for taking part and individuals from external bodies who had provided witness testimonies to help inform the working group. Likewise, Councillor Chalk explained the background of the Task Group and its importance given the predicted number of individuals likely to be diagnosed with Dementia over the coming years, some of those being in Redditch Borough.

Councillor Chalk summarised the recommendations from the report. The first recommendation related to the promotion of Dementia Services in Redditch Borough by holding an event in conjunction with the Older People's Forum and Age UK. The second recommendation related to the updating of the Older People's Forum booklet which was available on the Council website. The last recommendation was that Councillors should be provided with Dementia Training so they could better understand the changing needs of the residents of the Borough. He recognised there would be some minor financial implications in terms of Officer time but believed they were achievable.

Members noted the report identified that there was no Public Health Practitioner operating in Redditch after the previous one had left the post. Members wondered why a replacement Public Health Practitioner had not been included in the recommendations of the Task Group. The Chief Executive responded by saying that previously Public Health had operated a model where there was a public health practitioner for each district but had modified this to a thematic based approach. He commented further that it was unlikely that the Worcestershire County Council Public Health Team would revert to the previous practice of place based Public Health Practitioners. The Chief Executive added that he and the Redditch Partnership Manager were working closely with partners as part of the local Integrated Care System through the Redditch Collaborative, so was happy to obtain up to date data and information for the Committee regarding Dementia Services.

Councillor Nazir was in attendance for the item, as the Portfolio Holder for Community Services and Regulatory Services. She thanked the members for bringing the report forward and recognised that there was not much provision of Dementia support, but there were some such as the Dementia Café at Astwood Bank. Councillor Nazir highlighted that there was also a hesitancy from GPs to diagnose individuals with Dementia.

It was suggested that an additional recommendation should be added which required the Chief Executive to return to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with new data and information in relation to Dementia Services. The recommendation was made by Councillor Chalk and seconded by Councillor Fry.

On being put to a vote, the proposal was agreed.

RECOMMENDED that:

- 1) officers work with local agencies including the Older People's Forum, Age UK to hold a Dementia Awareness Event in the Town Hall and promote the event on the Council's website.**
- 2) officers undertake a refresh of the Older People Services Booklet which is currently available on the Redditch Borough Council website and include a specific section regarding Dementia Services available in the Borough.**
- 3) Dementia Training be provided to all Elected Members in order for them to better understand the changing needs of the residents in the Borough.**
- 4) As part of the work in respect of Integrated Care System, the Chief Executive of Redditch Borough Council to work alongside partner agencies to provide Members with further information on Dementia services in the Borough and potential services for the future.**

18. PARKING AND ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

The Committee received a verbal update on Parking Enforcement in Redditch from Kevin Hiron, Environmental Services Manager.

During the update Members' attention was drawn to the recommendations that were agreed by Executive Committee for the Overview and Scrutiny Parking Enforcement Task Group final report from March 2020.

There was detailed discussion in respect of recommendation 1 regarding Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) being put in place in order for enforcement to take place on zigzag lines outside of schools. The Committee were informed that this recommendation had not yet been actioned, and that the process of the implementation of TROs was a protracted one. In addition to this,

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the Covid-19 pandemic had inevitably caused further delays. The Chair suggested that this was something that perhaps County Councillors who were present at the meeting could raise with Worcestershire County Council. Councillor Dormer agreed to address this further at a county level to see if any progress could be made.

Some Members noted that the process could possibly be so lengthy as Worcestershire County Council (WCC) were responsible for looking at TROs across the whole of Worcestershire and not just in Redditch. It was suggested that potentially Redditch could be offered as a trial area for TROs on zigzag lines due to its tight urban setting, which could possibly result in the process being carried out more quickly.

Members discussed the use of Walking Buses to help combat parking outside of schools. The Environmental Services Manager commented that this worked well with the third recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Parking Enforcement Task Group final report from March 2020 which recommended that Officers from Redditch Borough Council work with WCC, local schools and West Mercia Police to develop a strategy to tackle problem parking near schools. In addition to this, the Environmental Services Manager highlighted that the Road Safety Education Team ~~wh~~ offered class talks within schools.

The Chief Executive recommended that some monitoring be undertaken within the next 6 months by Officers around schools in addition to the possibility of looking into School Streets, an initiative where a temporary restriction on motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times was implemented on the road outside a school. It was agreed that the Parking Enforcement Task Group be re-established to reconsider the outstanding recommendations and the possibility of the implementation of School Streets in the Borough. The Chief Executive also agreed that the earlier suggestion of offering Redditch as a trial area was a positive one and could potentially provide good outcomes for the Borough.

Councillor Beecham stated that she would be happy to volunteer as Chair of the Parking Enforcement Task Group should it be re-established and Members were happy with this suggestion. The Democratic Services Officer agreed to investigate the process for

revisiting the Parking Enforcement Task Group and to contact relevant Members.

The Committee agreed that an update on Parking Enforcement be included on the Work Programme in sixth months' time. However, it was noted that there may be little progress in respect of TROs in sixth months' time, but it would provide a good opportunity for the Committee to receive further information from the Parking Enforcement Task Group and School Streets.

RESOLVED that

the Parking and Enforcement Update be noted, and any actions progressed subject to the preamble above.

19. PRE-SCRUTINY - HOMES ENGLAND ASSET TRANSFER (TO FOLLOW)

The Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services presented the report for the Executive Committee on Homes England Asset Transfer to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for pre-scrutiny.

It was highlighted to Members that this was a straightforward report and provided clarification on the circumstances of these transfers and historical context of previous transfers to the Council.

Some Members queried what the transfer would mean for the current tenants of the Matchborough West Meeting Rooms. It was acknowledged that currently the meeting rooms did have tenants and that the change of ownership would not affect them at present. However, it was reported that it was not known what might happen going forward.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

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

Members were provided with an updated copy of the Executive Committee's Work Programme, for the period of the 1st October 2021 through to the 31st January 2022. No additional items were selected for pre-scrutiny during consideration of this item.

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RESOLVED that

- 1) **The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday, 13th July 2021 be noted.**
- 2) **The content of the Executive Committee's Work Programme for the period 1st September through to 31st December 2021 be noted.**

21. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

During consideration of this item there was further discussion regarding inviting the West Mercia Road Safety Team to a future meeting of the Committee in order to provide more information to Members on Road Safety and Speeding in the Borough. This was agreed by the Committee and the Democratic Services Officer undertook to contact the West Mercia Road Safety Team to see if they would be available to attend.

RESOLVED that

the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be noted.

22. TASK GROUP REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

Members were informed that a topic proposal had been received from Councillor L. Harrison regarding Speeding and Road Safety in the Borough. It was highlighted that this topic had been identified as a possible area of investigation during the Overview and Scrutiny Committee training that had taken place in June 2021.

The Chair reminded the Committee to bring forward proposals for Task Groups for the Committee to consider. It was requested that the Democratic Services Officer emailed Members to remind them that a Topic Proposal could be received at any time for consideration by the Committee.

RESOLVED that

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the Task Group Reviews - Draft Scoping Documents item be noted.

23. TASK GROUPS, SHORT SHARP REVIEWS AND WORKING GROUPS - UPDATE REPORTS

a) Budget Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Jennifer Wheeler

The Chair reported that the Budget Scrutiny Working Group was due to meet on the 6th September 2021 and that an update would be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.

b) Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Jennifer Wheeler

The Chair reported that the Performance Scrutiny Working Group was due to meet on the 14th September 2021 and that an update would be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.

c) Dementia Task Group – Chair, Councillor Michael Chalk

The Chair acknowledged that the report had been considered and agreed by the Committee earlier in the meeting, therefore an update was not required.

d) Parking on Unicorn Hill, Short, Sharp Review – Chair, Councillor Joanne Beecham

Councillor Beecham informed Members that there had not been another meeting of the Parking on Unicorn Hill Short, Sharp Review since the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, however, the next meeting was scheduled for 21st September 2021.

RESOLVED that

The Task Groups, Short Sharp Reviews and Working Groups Update Reports be noted.

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24. EXTERNAL SCRUTINY BODIES - UPDATE REPORTS

There were no updates reports for the Committee.

25. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 27th July 2021 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

26. PRE-SCRUTINY - ST DAVID'S HOUSE EXTRA CARE SCHEME BUSINESS CASE

The Head of Community and Housing Services presented the report for the Executive Committee on St. David's House Extra Care Scheme Future Delivery Model to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for pre-scrutiny. The purpose of the report was to consider the options for the services provided by Redditch Borough Council at St. David's House and the Queens Cottages, including domiciliary care, core care and kitchen provisions. The recommended option was to put the services out for procurement to a specialist care provider.

Councillor Warhurst was in attendance for this item, as the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Procurement, and was invited to speak on the item. Councillor Warhurst recognised that this was a difficult decision to make however it was a huge cost to the Council for a non-statutory duty and therefore necessary to do due to the Council's financial situation. Councillor Warhurst concluded by saying that the Council would be keeping the property as landlord, so therefore could ensure the provision of care provided at St. David's House and the Queens Cottages were at the level the Council expected for its residents.

Members asked if the Trades Unions had been consulted and what the outcome of the discussion was. It was reported that a meeting with union representatives was due to take place the day after the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, so discussions had not taken place.

The Committee wanted further assurances that there was confidence in the business case. Members were informed that some soft market testing had been undertaken within the care sector in conjunction with Worcestershire County Council. This was because any potential service provider had to be on the Worcestershire County Council approved care provider list. Members were advised that if there were no successful

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tenders for providing the aforementioned services at St. David's House and the Queens Cottages, then the Head of Community and Housing Services would be willing to return to members to update them.

Members expressed concerns about how this business case would affect the number of staff and quality of services provided to the residents in St. David's House.

The committee noted many of the points that had been raised throughout the discussion and that it was a difficult decision to make. However, it was acknowledged that the service provided at St. David's House by Redditch Borough Council was not a statutory function, that any provider of care needed to be a Worcestershire County Council approved care provider and that they would be monitored by the Care Quality Commission as the ultimate body for inspecting care service quality. Likewise, Members believed if this action wasn't taken, the Council could be in a worse financial position.

Councillor Chalk recommended that the Committee recommend to Executive that the support the recommendations contained in the Executive report. This was seconded by Councillor Beecham. On being put to a vote, the proposal was agreed. Some members voted against the recommendation.

RECOMMENDED that

Executive Committee resolve that the delivery of the Personal Domiciliary Care, Core Services and Kitchen services at St David's House Extra Care Scheme be procured in accordance with the Business Case attached to the report.

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 8.06 pm

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