

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 24 July 2018 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Mrs Falp (Chairman); Councillors Boad, Bromley, Mrs Cain, D'Arcy, Davison, H Grainger, Naimo, Parkins, Mrs Redford and Shilton.

Also Present: Councillors Grainger and Phillips.

16. Apologies and Substitutes

- (a) There were no apologies made.
- (b) There were no substitutions.

17. Declarations of Interest

Minute 19 – Review of Housing Services – Service Area Update

Whilst this item was being discussed, and mention was made of Syrian refugees, Councillors Mrs Falp and Shilton made a general declaration of interest concerning Warwickshire County Council as they were both Members of this Authority.

18. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 May 2018 and 26 June 2018 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

19. Review of Housing Services – Service Area Update

The Committee considered a report from Housing Services which brought together the details of Housing Services' performance.

In response to questions from Members, Councillor Phillips, Portfolio Holder – Housing Services and the Head of Service – Housing Services responded that:

- They did not have the information available at the meeting to state what percentage or numbers of the 305 affordable homes (page 6 of the report) completed in 2017/18 were social housing. Over a three year period, the Council had built 252 out of a target of 752 social homes, which equated to about 36%.
- The Council was very dependent on developers to hit the social housing targets and the Portfolio Holder – Development Service was pressing developers to try to ensure that they did not leave building social housing until last in their list of works.
- The Council was pressing ahead with its own housing developments such as in Station Road and Theatre Street where 220 homes would be developed.

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- The Council was keen to get tenants to engage with it but at the last meeting of the Housing Advisory Group (HAG), there had been zero input from tenants. The Council would be looking at the recommendations from the Grenfell Enquiry and lessons learnt, to find suitable methods for tenant engagement.
- Walkabouts had been popular but had been abandoned as a means for tenant engagement because it had been found that when there were no issues; people were not interested in engaging. Where there was engagement, it tended to be the same tenants who did not necessarily represent all tenants.
- If someone was homeless, they only had to wait a few weeks on the housing list, but for others, it depended on their personal circumstances for how long they had to wait on the housing list. The Council's objective was to reduce the waiting time.
- The amount of rent arrears fluctuated for a number of reasons, but summer holidays and the run up to Christmas often caused peaks.
- The Council was examining opportunities that new technology would present in the care homes for the elderly and whether there were any commercial opportunities to provide services, such as additional concierge services.
- The Council was examining options to make life more affordable (financial inclusion). Universal Credit would start in October.
- There was no extra money available at the County Council to settle any further Syrian refugees.

(Councillor Mrs Redford left the meeting.)

20. Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 25 July 2018

The Committee considered the following non-confidential item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 25 July 2018.

Item 6 – Air Quality SPD

The Committee welcomed and supported the report and recommended that the report was aligned with the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) prior to the report going out for consultation.

21. Public and Press

Resolved that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following two items by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as set out below.

22. Executive Agenda (Confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 25 July 2018

The Committee considered the following confidential item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 25 July 2018.

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The full minute of Minute 22 would be contained within a confidential minute which would be considered for publication following the implementation of the relevant decisions. However, a summary of the decision was as follows:

Item 13 - Creative Quarter: Growth Deal, Bid Options & Potential Purchases

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee's comment and recommendation only related to Recommendations 2.1, 2.2, 2.5 and 2.6 in the report. It was felt that Recommendations 2.3 and 2.4 were matters for the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise.

The majority of O&S Members supported the recommendations in the report and recommended that the wording to one of the recommendations was amended.

23. Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 25 July 2018 (continued)

Item 10 - Leamington Car Park Displacement Strategy

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

24. Review of the Work Programme, Forward Plan and comments from the Executive

The Committee considered its work programme for 2018 and the Forward Plan and the responses the Executive gave to the comments the Overview and Scrutiny Committee made regarding the reports submitted to the Executive in June 2018.

Resolved that

- (1) an update on the Leamington Car Park Displacement Strategy be given in October;
- (2) a full update on HMOs and the progress on what was agreed at Executive in June 2017 be given in September; and
- (3) a review of the TBA items on the O&S Work Programme be moved back to August.

The Chairman ended the meeting before all business on the report had been completed.

(The meeting finished at 8.55 pm)