

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 4 April 2018 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Mrs Falp (Chairman); Councillors Mrs Cain, H Grainger, Gill, Murphy, Parkins, Mrs Stevens, Shilton and Weed.

Also Present: Councillors Butler and Mobbs.

90. Apologies and Substitutes

- (a) Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bromley and Davison.
- (b) Councillor Gill substituted for Councillor Mrs Knight, Councillor Weed substituted for Councillor Naimo and Councillor Murphy substituted for Councillor Mrs Redford.

91. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Mrs Falp and Shilton made a general declaration of interest for any item concerning Warwickshire County Council as they were both Members of this Authority.

92. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2018 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

93. Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 7 April 2018

The Committee considered the following item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 7 April 2018.

Item 9 – Delivery of St Mary’s Lands Masterplan for 2018/19 and beyond, Warwick

The Committee supported all of the recommendations in the report.

(Councillor Butler left the meeting.)

94. Update from the Leader of the Council on his corporate and strategic leadership

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Mobbs, gave a synopsis of some main issues the Council had tackled in the last 12 months and issues still facing the Council. The main points he covered are attached as an appendix to these minutes.

Members were pleased to note the Council’s response to the Grenfell fire tragedy to ensure its housing stock did not have the same risk. They were also pleased with the work being done by Human Resources on recruitment and staff remuneration.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

(Councillor Mobbs left the meeting.)

95. Shared Environmental Enforcement with Rugby Borough Council

The Contract Services Manager, Mr Charlton, gave a verbal update to Members on how the shared environmental enforcement initiative with Rugby Borough Council (RBC) was progressing.

Members were informed that:

- The service level agreement with RBC had been signed at the start of March 2018.
- Due to some staff departures at RBC, enforcement would not start until May.
- Every incident of fly-tipping was being investigated and logged. Evidence where available was collected.
- Since November 2017, 645 fly-tipping incidents had been reported.
- Most fly-tipping incidents were black bags of waste being dumped.
- A first offence was treated with a proportionate response, but repeat offences would be pursued by RBC. The process would be as follows for repeat offenders:
 - (1) An informal warning from WDC
 - (2) RBC would issue the offender with a Civil Penalty Notice
 - (3) RBC would issue a Notice
 - (4) RBC would issue a Final Notice
- It was difficult to collect evidence as offenders had learnt to remove address labels from the waste that had been dumped.
- WDC Contract Services had a lot of new staff, but the Contract Services Manager anticipated that the Council would be able to start really working to prevent fly-tipping from August/September. It would take a lot of work before any impact was felt.
- WDC staff would target areas that suffered heavily from fly-tipping and accumulated waste (where residents left large amounts of waste on their own property, causing an environmental issue and upset to neighbours). RBC staff would support the Council on ways to tackle these issues.
- As yet, there was insufficient data to determine how much resource was required to target the issue of accumulated waste. When the system had been in place for a while, then the Council would be better placed to see where to concentrate effort and whether accumulated waste or fly-tipping needed more resource.

Members suggested that the Council's efforts to halt fly-tipping should be notified to residents on the Council's website and via a Press Release. The Council should encourage residents to notify it of any offenders. The Contract Services Manager agreed to look at whether a Press Release could be done, letting people know that the Council would now prosecute repeat fly-tipping offenders.

Members requested a further update around December/January time.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Contract Services Manager for the update.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

96. Task & Finish Group – Role of Warwick District Council Chairman

The Chairman reported that there had been a delay to starting work on this Task & Finish Group because of staffing issues in Committee Services, but her understanding was that a date for the first meeting would be announced shortly.

97. Overview & Scrutiny Committee End of Term Report

The Committee considered its draft end of term report for Council on its work during the year. The report also included work by the Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

Under Article 6 of the Council's Constitution, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee was required to provide an end of term report to the Council on the work it had undertaken during the year.

It was therefore

Recommended to Council that the list of matters considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee during the municipal year 2017/18, as detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted.

98. Member Children's Champions End of Year Report

The Committee were provided with the Children's Safeguarding Improvement Action Plan Update. It detailed the work already achieved and the actions still outstanding to ensure that the Council gave due consideration, and action was taken, to safeguard children in the District. The Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer asked Members to consider the action plan as serving a dual purpose in not only informing as to work being covered to safeguard children, but also to serve as the required end of term report for the municipal year.

The Current Children's Champions were Councillors Grainger and Parkins.

Resolved that

- (1) the current position of the Children's Safeguarding: Improvement Action Plan is noted; and
- (2) the areas of work the Children's Champions would like to explore are noted.

99. To review membership/participation with certain Outside Appointments

The Committee considered a report from the Deputy Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer who, under the Council's Scheme of Delegation, was required to carry out an annual review of Member outside appointments.

Minute 94 - Leader's update to Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Main Highlights

Assets:

The Assets Team is now incorporated within the Chief Executive's Office following the break-up of the former Housing & Property Services' Service Area. It has been a challenging year for the team with considerable change at the senior manager level and there are currently interim managers in post pending the finalisation of proposals for a fundamental redesign of the team. These are being designed to ensure that it is set up to provide a robust corporate support service to all the asset owning service areas and specialist technical input to corporate projects as required and consultation will begin shortly allowing final proposals to be brought to Employment Committee in or before September.

Despite these challenges, which have led to some slippage on the corporate Planned & Preventative Maintenance Programme – works that will now be completed during the coming financial year, the team completed the stock condition survey work for the HRA stock allowing the future Housing Improvement Programme to be better tailored to support and successfully undertook the re-letting of the main responsive repair and void repair contract for all HRA homes which will see a new contractor in place from April 2018.

The tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in June 2017 and its aftermath was a major source of work for the team in the second half of the year. The Council's response was swift and robust with joint fire safety inspections of the 7 HRA multi-storey blocks and a further 2 six-storey blocks undertaken with Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service within weeks of the fire. The cladding fitted to 6 of the blocks was thoroughly investigated, including by abseil survey and confirmed to be both structurally sound and not posing any fire safety risk. All fire alarm and detection systems have been upgraded to fully addressable systems linked to an automatic receiving centre and providing Acorn Court with full details of the type of activation. Drench systems have been fitted to bin stores and Automatic Opening Vents ordered so that smoke can be removed from stairwells. Every resident in all 9 blocks was visited and major programme of refurbishment to the communal areas, including re-wiring, improved signage, new decorations and floor finishes and the replacement of every door leading onto a communal area, including all flat front doors, with a FD60S fire door providing a minimum 60 minute of fire protection has begun and is due to be completed by the end of the financial year.

HR

HR has continued to support the FFF strategy and work with the organisation to realise its vision and values. Present full time equivalent for the organisation is 428, headcount is 487, staff turnover is at 8.96% (22.8% including TUPE out of Leisure Services). Management information and trends are reviewed regularly with the Senior Management Team, Workforce Steering Group and People Strategy Steering Group including staff absence, vacancies, leaver information and agency staff spend.

JVA

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

HR provides support to its customers for managing day to day issues with the council and support for redesigns/policy guidance/recruitment and performance, conduct, absence related issues and learning and development.

The People Strategy priorities in 2017/18 have resulted in a complete re-branding of how we recruit with significant results; a remuneration review based on hard to recruit areas; a refresher of our HAY evaluation scheme guidance; preparation for our new corporate apprenticeships scheme and review of our learning and development offering. Media and Communications, Design & Print and Website teams are aligned to HR as part of CXO and responsible for all our internal and external communication with residents, councillors and staff by all communication channels including press releases, advertising, printed literature, website, and social media. A review of our Social Media offering has resulted in restructure of the team to integrate a Digital and Social Media Officer into the team to ensure we are progressive in how we deliver our communications.

In 2017/18 HR, Media & Communication completed a comprehensive review of the service and the capacity required to ensure the teams can continue to provide the resources to achieve key projects and day to day support for all our customers.

ICT

For the past two years the Infrastructure team has been replacing all of the Council's ICT Infrastructure systems, many items of which had gone end-of-life and posed a security threat. 2017/18 was mainly focused on replacing network components including the firewalls. Linked to this, a significant step change has occurred in the Council's cyber-security posture with a next generation update to our anti-virus protection and the adoption of many of the National Cyber Security Centre's Active Defence Programme, such as Web-Check and Public Sector DNS.

Application Support continues to deliver the Council's Digital programme details of which were provided to the Executive in February.

The desktop team is responsible for the front line support for the service, receiving in excess of 13,000 calls per annum while meeting its 95% SLA completion target and delivering 68% First Time Fix (problem fixed while the customer is still on the phone).

Income from Street Naming and Numbering remains strong. Income to date (19 Feb 18) is £43,500 against a 2017/18 income target of £45,000.

Democratic Services

Electoral Services have had a busy year with the additional general election, but supplemented by completing key projects such as the successful tender of the printing contract for electoral registration and elections materials.

Civic & Committee Services have continued to deliver a high level service considering the challenges that have presented themselves and also delivered some good initiatives such as the death of national figure protocol.

Corporate support team have continued to develop and will be taking on the contract management of three corporate contracts over the next 12 months to supplement.

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There has also been the introduction of the Information Governance Manager within the team as the Council commits to ensuring the way it handles information is at a high level. This has already seen many policy revisions being brought forward which will be followed by appropriate training. It should also be noted this is a shared post with Stratford District Council and this has brought additional knowledge sharing between the two authorities.

