

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 1 November 2022 in the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00pm.

Present: Councillor Milton (Chair); Councillors Cullinan, A Dearing, J Dearing, Jacques, King, Kohler, Noone, Redford and Syson.

Also Present: Councillor Day – Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership, Councillor Falp – Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities, Leisure & Environment, Councillor Tracey – Portfolio Holder for Transformation.

35. **Report on the reasons for cost increases in the Castle Farm Leisure Centre and Abbey Fields Swimming Pool projects**

The Chair informed the meeting that this item had been deferred due the absence of a key officer due to illness.

36. **Apologies and Substitutes**

(a) No apologies for absence were received.

(b) There were no substitutes.

37. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

38. **Minutes**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 28 September 2022 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

39. **Cabinet Agenda (Non-Confidential items and reports) – Thursday 3 November 2022**

Item 5 – Significant Business Risk Register

The Committee noted the report and thanked officers for their detailed work on it and the responses to the questions that had been asked before the meeting. The Committee asked that:

1. in future reports, the future actions should be dated so as to avoid checking back when it became an action; and
2. in future reports, a short summary be included to provide a general overall of risk to the Council, i.e., generally is the risk increasing or decreasing.

Item 7 – Future Delivery of the Domestic Pest Control Service

The Committee had concerns about the removal of the service and asked that:

1. the service would continue to monitor to record and report the number of complaints received; and
2. that non-co-operation by HMO Landlords with enforcement activity would be reported to private sector housing so they were aware when licenses were being considered for renewal.

40. **Work Programme, Forward Plan and comments from the Cabinet**

The Committee considered its work programme for 2022 as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report. Appendix 2 to the report gave responses from the Cabinet to the comments and recommendations the Committee had made to Cabinet reports it had scrutinised.

The Committee received an update from the Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer on behalf of the Chair of the Equalities Task & Finish Group as follows:

- A new Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Business Partner had been appointed to an 18-hour post. They would be starting on 1 December 2022. They were an experienced professional with awareness of WDC policies and processes, and also had significant experience in EDI from both an employers and other perspectives.
- The scope of the officer role was to highlight immediate priorities and longer term action of the EDI agenda within the organisation.
- The EDI Officer were aware of the Task and Finish Group which they had been briefed on and awareness of key issues
- The Council had just completed Black History Month and a series of other awareness initiatives, such as menopause awareness, in October. The speakers, in respect of menopause awareness, were both male and female, to get a different perspective and impact from a legal point of view in term of equalities.
- In January 2023, there would be training on EDI, including for Members, delivered by the new EDI officer.
- External focus delayed due to significant events – Commonwealth Games and the sad passing away of the Queen Elizabeth.
- As a result, the Group now needed to reflect on the expected timescales due to the extenuating circumstances.
- The support from the EDI officer would consolidate the co-ordination for this next stage. The delay in appointing to this post had not helped with the external focus – as identified in the original report, where resources were a key element to continue this journey (it was the third recruitment round as these posts were now so sought after in a competitive market) – the Council was paying above market rate.
- Equalities now added as a standard agenda item for every Programme Advisory Board to act as reminder when considering any paper.

Resolved that

- (1) appendices 1, 2 and 3 to the Work Programme report be noted; and
- (2) the noise nuisance report be delayed by a meeting to February and the Climate Change update be aligned to the Cabinet paper on the same subject.

41. **Press and Public**

Resolved that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraph 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

(Further details were included within the confidential minutes of the meeting.)

42. **Regulatory Services Software Replacement Project – Review and Termination of Supplier Contract**

The Committee received a confidential report from the Head of ICT regarding the the progress made towards replacing the Regulatory Services line of business application and subsequent termination of the supplier contract.

Resolved that

- (1) the reported be noted; and
- (2) officers were asked to consider
 - a. how they and the public can be informed of any costs involved in the termination of the contract; and
 - b. when concluded, as much information as possible can be made public.

(The meeting ended at 8.46pm)

CHAIR
6 December 2022