

Response from the meeting of Cabinet on the O&S Committee’s Comments – 20 September 2023

Item 4 – Policy & Budgetary Framework Procedure Rules

Scrutiny Comment:

The Committee held a good discussion on a draft Corporate Strategy for this Council.

The Committee considered that the Corporate Strategy report (in its draft stage) was difficult to scrutinise as a “Strategy” document because the document did not have either the structure or framework to understand the direction the Council wished to take, and whether the areas of focus listed in the report would help to achieve that. It made the following points that it wished Cabinet to bring more detail to in the Corporate Strategy:

1. The Committee encouraged Cabinet to “be brave” in setting out what it wished to achieve, particularly around climate ambitions.
2. There was a need for “smart objectives” showing what the Council intended to do, building on what it had already achieved in respect to its aims and there should be an indication of a timeframe.
3. The strategy should focus more on people and the different segments of people living or coming into the District such as new communities, visitors to the District, people who work in the District. It should seek to be “People first”.
4. A more wholistic view on finances should be taken, not just the profit and loss but also the balance sheet.

The Committee suggested that how the Council intended to support new communities, local enterprise and town centre regeneration should be added to the Strategy.

Parish Councils should be added to the list of consultees.

Cabinet Response:

In response to the comments from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee regarding the strategy focusing more on people, Councillor Davison stated that this was a point well made; if the vision was to stay the same as it currently was, that Warwick District be a great place to live – i.e. residents, work – including people who might commute, and visit, these were distinct groups of people which perhaps had not been considered enough. It was important that when the strategy was next considered this would be taken into account.

Councillor Davison also clarified that the Head of Governance & Monitoring Officer would email Parish/Town Councils directly as opposed to via the Warwickshire Association of Local Councils (WALC), and that Warwickshire Wildlife Trust would also be included as part of the Consultees. He then proposed the report as laid out.

Item 10 – Kenilworth Wardens

Scrutiny Comment:

The Committee held a good discussion on the project reflecting on the fact that it had taken a considerable amount of time to reach this stage and noting the complexity of the project.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

The Committee recommended to Cabinet that as well as reviewing the financial case, that a best practice audit of governance of the club including confidence in the continuity of its management be carried out by officers. This should include how it planned to engage new communities and new members into the club to ensure its continued running.

Cabinet Response:

The recommendations in the report were approved, along with the recommendation from Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Urgent Item – Earmarked Reserves

Scrutiny Comment:

The Committee remarked on the late publication of the report which did not provide adequate time for proper scrutiny. The Committee would have preferred more time to undertake better scrutiny.

Cabinet Response:

The recommendations in the report were approved.