

MINUTES OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE Thursday, 7 March 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Matthew Tomlinson (Chair), Carol Chisholm, David Howarth, Susan Jones, Keith Martin, Michael Titherington, Graham Walton and Linda Woollard

CABINET MEMBERS: Councillor Colin Clark (Cabinet Member (Corporate Support and Assets)), Councillor Margaret Smith (Leader of the Council and Leader of the Conservative Group), Councillor Phil Smith (Cabinet Member (Regeneration and Leisure)), Councillor Susan Snape (Cabinet Member (Finance)) and Councillor Karen Walton (Cabinet Member (Public Health and Safety, Wellbeing and Environmental) and Member Champion for Older People)

OFFICERS: Darren Cranshaw (Assistant Director of Scrutiny & Democratic Services), Charlotte Lynch (Trainee Governance and Member Services Officer), Tim Povall (Deputy Chief Executive of Resources and Transformation (Section 151 Officer)) and Gregg Stott (Deputy Chief Executive of Regeneration and Growth)

47 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Colin Coulton, Jim Marsh, Elizabeth Mawson, Mike Nathan, and John Rainsbury.

48 Minutes of the Last Meeting

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 14 February 2019 be signed as a correct record by the Chair.

49 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

50 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

The Committee received an update on the progress made against matters arising from previous meetings.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the update be noted.

51 Quarter 3 Section 151 Financial Monitoring

The Cabinet Member for Finance (Councillor Susan Snape) and Deputy Chief Executive (Resources and Transformation)/Section 151 Officer (Tim Povall) addressed the Committee and responded to members' comments and enquiries relating to the financial monitoring report at the end of Quarter 3.

During the discussion, the Committee's comments and enquiries included the following areas:

- The change in the presentation and format of the report, compared to the report corresponding to Quarter 2, was felt to be confusing and unnecessary. Concern was raised as to whether members had been consulted regarding this change in format.
- The delay in producing this report was queried, as the report would have been useful information for Members during the budget-setting Council meeting held the week prior. The delay was acknowledged and assurances were given that timescales for the publication of reports were being investigated.
- The rationale for and use of the surplus £100,000 identified for environmental works was queried. It was advised that this relates to the Green Links project and would be spent within the next municipal year.
- An explanation of the use of Reserve Drawdown and Net Variance after Reserves figure terms was requested. It was reported that work was being undertaken to provide members with a more detailed breakdown of all costs including net costs in the future.
- The definition of efficiency targets was queried and it was highlighted that this related to any reduction in costs and increase in income. This was exemplified by the green waste take-up and natural staff turnover.
- The impression given of including the Borough Investment Reserve in the Capital Forecast data was questioned. A separate analysis of this was requested.
- Members queried the reasoning behind the re-phasing of the agreed capital programme and the accuracy of the capital budget forecast. It was explained that some schemes would continue into the next administrative year and that work undertaken with the appropriate resources would ensure deliverance as stated in the report.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That:

1. any changes to the format and style of future reports to Scrutiny Committee be made in discussion with Members and that appropriate training is provided.
2. the Committee looks forward the third quarter's Budget Monitoring report being provided earlier and informing the budget process in future years.

3. more detailed information be included in the report to help justify the Cabinet's consideration of up to £100,000 for existing Green Links programmes.
4. the format of the report be reviewed to ensure that it is understandable to Members and the public, with particular emphasis on the Reserve Drawdown and greater explanatory notes.
5. future capital monitoring reports present how capital finances relate to the delivery programme.
6. the Borough Investment Reserve be shown separately to the wider Capital Programme to help easily analyse the position.
7. the Committee welcomes the Deputy Chief Executive (Resource and Transformation)'s reassurance that the Capital Programme for 2019/20 will be achieved as planned.
8. the Committee requests that further consideration be given to a more relevant definition and use of the word '*efficiency*' in reports.

52 Corporate Performance Report at the End of Quarter 3

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Margaret Smith) and Deputy Chief Executive (Resources and Transformation)/Section 151 Officer (Tim Povall) addressed the Committee and responded to members' comments and enquiries relating to the Corporate Performance Report at the end of Quarter 3.

During the discussion, the Committee's comments and enquiries included the following areas:

- It was expressed that the format and presentation of the project table made it difficult to read. This was noted and would be altered for future reports.
- The use of the colour green to signify performance or delivery which is on target was queried as some projects may have been on track but were not yet complete. The Committee was informed that the colour schemes provided a commentary in terms of themes and projects but that the minutiae of detail was not feasible for each individual project.
- Members asked for greater clarity to be provided in relation to the detail against each target and the process by which they become green for future reports.
- The process by which the Council learns from complaints received, to mitigate risk of receiving the same complaint again, was queried. It was stated that the preferred method is through meetings and training for both staff at the Civic Centre and those on the frontline.
- The data on crime in the borough from Lancashire Constabulary was unavailable, despite a Committee Member having been told a week prior that information was now available. It was requested that the comments in the health and wellbeing table be updated with the relevant information.

- The methodology constraints on comparing the number of children participating in extra-curricular activities between Quarters when the seasons are different were acknowledged. The possibility of measuring this yearly was raised.
- The 'on target' status of the Leyland and Lostock Hall Masterplans was queried, as the Committee believed them to be incomplete. Disappointment was also expressed that information on these had not been reported to members of the Leyland and Central Forums.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That

1. tables within the report be made easier to read from a font, size and colour perspective.
2. greater commentary be provided against milestones to show the journey.
3. community safety information showing data not available be provided to the Committee as soon as possible.
4. consideration be given that the indicator on young people taking part in activities becomes an annual measure and that other measures are reviewed to see if this would be more appropriate.
5. concern be expressed at Members not being involved to date in the Leyland and Lostock Hall masterplanning that has commenced.

53 Worden Hall - Progress Update

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Support and Assets (Councillor Colin Clark) and the Deputy Chief Executive (Regeneration and Growth) (Gregg Stott) addressed the Committee and responded to members' comments and enquiries relating to the Worden Hall Progress Update.

During the discussion, the Committee's comments and enquiries included the following areas:

- Disappointment was expressed at the lack of a written report. Assurances were given that a written report would be provided once all bids had been received and there was a more substantive update to deliver.
- The assessment criteria for the suitability of bids, the transparency of this, and who had the responsibility for decision-making in the process was challenged. It was confirmed that bids would be judged on best value finance and that the lead officers on the project would be considering the bids.
- Clarification was requested with regards to the timeline for decision-making, as a report to Cabinet on possible options would be presented prior to receipt of the consultant's report on such options. It was stated that the Council would enter into an exclusivity period to arrange a commercial deal with the winning

tender and would then formalise a deal, with the consultant's report acting as supplementary evidence in this period.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That

1. the Committee is disappointed that a written report was not provided as recommended and accepted.
2. the Committee looks forward to written progress reports being provided at future meetings.
3. the Committee be provided with the information and criteria requested from bidders expressing an interest in the future of Worden Hall.
4. concern be expressed that the consultant's report is not yet available and that the bidding process is being progressed separately.

54 Scrutiny Matters

55 Cabinet Forward Plan

The Committee noted the Cabinet Forward Plan.

Chair

Date