

**SCRUTINY COMMISSION
16TH SEPTEMBER 2019**

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Rattray)
The Vice Chair (Councillor Draycott)
Councillors Bailey, Baines, Bolton, Hadji-Nikolaou
and Parsons

Councillor Poland (Cabinet Lead Member for
Equalities, Member and Strategic Services)

Chief Executive
Head of Strategic Support
Democratic Services Manager
Corporate Improvement and Policy Officer
Democratic Services Officer (SW)

APOLOGIES: None

The Chair stated that the meeting would be recorded and the sound recording subsequently made available via the Council's website. He also advised that, under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting, and the use of any such images or sound recordings was not under the Council's control.

37. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Matters arising from previous minutes:

- i. Minute 36 (Scrutiny Commission Work Programme) was raised and described as an overly complicated and impractical system of pre-scrutiny. It was requested by the Vice Chair that the Committee should review the decision made on the work programme. The Democratic Services Manager consulted the constitution which confirmed the Scrutiny Commission is responsible for:
- Setting the overall Scrutiny work programme.
 - Setting, managing and controlling the scrutiny work programme and coordinating scrutiny generally.
 - Reviewing proposed decisions on the Forward Plan and the agenda for forthcoming Cabinet meetings and making recommendations to Cabinet in respect of those proposed decisions.

The Commission agreed that the arrangements set out in the Constitution must be followed, and that the relevant work programmes will be amended with the pre-decision items listed in resolution 2 removed.

The minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 5th August 2019 were then approved.

38. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

No disclosures were made.

39. DECLARATIONS OF THE PARTY WHIP

No declarations were made.

40. QUESTIONS UNDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PROCEDURES 11.16

No questions had been submitted.

41. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF ANY SPECIFIC FINANCIAL MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED BY CABINET

There were no items of this nature on the Cabinet agenda for the Commission to consider.

42. CORPORATE PLAN - ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

Cllr Baines arrived at the meeting at 6:08pm.

A report of the Chief Executive, presenting the annual performance information for 2018/19, which evaluates how effectively the Council has delivered the themes set out in the Corporate Plan 2016-2020 was submitted to the Commission for their comments (item 07 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Corporate Improvement and Policy Officer assisted in the consideration of the item and the following summarises comments made:

- i. The Council had completed 41 out of 50 Business Plan actions in 2018-19.
- ii. There were 18 green Business Plan indicators, 3 amber and 1 red.
- iii. There were 6 green Key Performance Indicators, 3 amber and 3 red.
- iv. The objectives which were not achieved were described as follows:
 - The Local Plan was delayed and not delivered at the deadline of October 2018. A revised Local Development Scheme was considered by Cabinet in March 2019, setting out a revised consultation date of October 2019. This objective is included in the 2019/20 Business Plan for further progression.
 - Improvements to the Beehive car park were not delivered on time due to difficulties in procurement. The procurement process will be reviewed with a view to re-tender during 2019/20.

- The Decent Homes contract did not meet the target set. The bathroom programme is expected to be completed in 2019.
 - The Community Hub in Thorpe Acre was not developed in time. This was due to an external factors which was not under the Council's control.
 - The target for complaints proceeding was missed marginally. The objective set was 90% of complaints not proceeding past stage 1 of the process, and the actual figure was 89.4%.
 - The target for satisfaction in the web service was not reached, however there were increased levels of customer satisfaction.
 - The web chat pilot and call recording has not yet been fully implemented and is dependant on the introduction of new software.
 - The new Customer Service programme is incomplete, although only two of seven projects remain unfinished.
 - The Investment Strategy did not meet the allocated deadline. This will go to Cabinet for review on the 19th September 2019.
- v. All red objectives have been transferred to the 2019-20 Business Plan and will be subsequently monitored.
- vi. There were three Key Corporate Indicators related to the recycling of household waste, Council Tax collections and Crime Reduction. These will also be transferred to the 2019-20 Business Plan and subsequently monitored.
- vii. It was acknowledged that there was some duplication of wording in the success measurement and performance information on page 23 of the Annual Report. The Corporate Improvement and Policy Officer referred to the statements and reassured the Committee that amendments will be made for transparency.
- viii. The red indicators often relate to topics of work undertaken by Scrutiny Panels.

RESOLVED the above mentioned comments on the Annual Report 2018-19 be noted, along with observations about the annual performance attained by the Council.

Reason

To ensure timely and efficient scrutiny of the Annual Report.

43. SHARED INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE WITH NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL AND BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

A report of the Head of Strategic Support was received to present proposals for a shared service arrangement between Charnwood Borough Council, North West Leicestershire District Council and Blaby District Council for the provision of internal

audit, with North West Leicestershire being the lead authority (item 08a on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Lead Member for Equalities, Member and Strategic Services and the Head of Strategic Support attended the meeting to assist with consideration of the item and gave the following responses:

- i. The timescale of the existing shared service agreement between North West Leicestershire District Council and Blaby District Council is currently approximately three years. The agreement will be renewed to incorporate Charnwood Borough Council.
- ii. It was unknown whether there was a national shortage of auditors. Auditors with Local Government knowledge are a scarce commodity, and Charnwood Borough Council has experienced difficulty in the recruitment and retention of audit staff.
- iii. Concerns of the Audit Committee and the operation of the Internal Audit Programme specifically with regards to incomplete work have been addressed through a procurement process. Ninety days of audit work will be delivered by BDO to address outstanding work. The proposed shared service will be fully staffed and relevant Charnwood Borough Council Managers and Heads of Service will be consulted on preparing teams for the arrival of the Senior Audit Officer allocated. Resilience is required and the intention is that the shared internal audit service will deliver this.
- iv. The time frame for the implementation of the shared internal audit service will be between December 2019 and January 2020.
- v. The Head of Strategic Support and the equivalent at North West Leicestershire District Council and Blaby District Council will meet two or three times a year in order to manage and review the contract. There is also scope for any further meetings if required. The Lead Member for Equalities, Member and Strategic Services will be kept updated with developments in the contract.
- vi. Transparency in the success of the shared service will be valued. There is a possibility that meetings can be minuted and agendas provided. The intention is for strong working relationships between the partners.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet be informed that the Commission supports the recommendations as set out in the report of the Head of Strategic Support.

Reason

The Commission was satisfied that a shared internal audit service between the three authorities increased resilience, improved service delivery and potentially generates future cost savings. The Cabinet's consideration of the Commission's views and recommendations was welcomed as part of its decision-making process.

44. SCRUTINY COMMISSION PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY - CABINET RESPONSE

There were no responses to report due to the August Cabinet meeting being cancelled.

45. PROGRESS WITH PANEL WORK

The Democratic Services Manager gave a verbal update to the Commission on the progress on panel work following the last meeting. It was reported that:

- i. A time line has been developed which ensures no more than four Scrutiny Panels are active at any one time.
- ii. Express and formal panels have been allocated Democratic Support, whereas informal panels will not be supported by an Officer.

RESOLVED that Chairs be appointed to the following informal panels:

Cllr Rattray	Waste Services and Waste Management
Cllr Baines	Generating Commercial Income/Surplus

Reason

To make appointments to the relevant informal panels.

46. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

A report of the Head of Strategic Support was considered to agree the Scrutiny Work Programme for the committees including any amendments to the current work programme.

The Democratic Services Manager attended this meeting and assisted with the consideration of this item.

The Commission was advised that the Housing, Planning and Regeneration, and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee made the following amendments to their work programme:

- i. A standing item was created titled 'Five Year Housing Land Supply – Update' to begin at the meeting on 10th December 2019.
- ii. The scope of the 'Update on the Housing, Empty Homes and Homelessness Strategies Action Plan' was changed in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair on 3rd September 2019.
- iii. Clarification has been provided on the 'Housing Capital Programme' through the addition of high level figures following the meeting on 3rd September 2019.
- iv. An annual item has been created titled 'Full Climate Local Action Plan' to scrutinise the Climate Change Strategy to begin in September 2020.

- v. The Commission were also informed that the Committee supported the approach taken to explore alternative service delivery models.

In addition to considering this item, the Vice Chair highlighted concerns regarding an overly complicated and impractical system of pre-scrutiny. The Democratic Services Manager consulted the constitution which confirmed the Scrutiny Commission is responsible for:

- Setting the overall Scrutiny work programme.
- Setting, managing and controlling the scrutiny work programme and coordinating scrutiny generally.
- Reviewing proposed decisions on the Forward Plan and the agenda for forthcoming Cabinet meetings and making recommendations to Cabinet in respect of those proposed decisions.

RESOLVED

1. That the pre-decision scrutiny items set out in the Directorate based Committee work programmes be removed.
2. That the changes to the Housing, Planning and Regeneration, and Regulatory Services Scrutiny Committee Work Programme, be approved.

Reasons

1. To ensure timely and effective scrutiny.
2. To ensure that the information contained within the Work Programme is up to date.

47. SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME

A report of the Head of Strategic Support was considered, to enable the Commission to consider its work programme and forthcoming Key Decisions and decisions to be taken in private by the Cabinet in order to schedule items for pre-decision scrutiny (item 12 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

An action requested was to add a report on the Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities to the work programme for 11th November 2019.

RESOLVED

1. That forthcoming Executive Key Decisions or decisions to be taken in private by the Executive, set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and scheduled scrutiny of those matters, be noted, and that further items be scheduled for scrutiny as follows:

- i. *Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities – 11th November 2019*
- ii. *Local Development Scheme – 12th March 2020.*

2. That the Commission's current work programme be noted and updated following this meeting, in accordance with the decisions taken during consideration of this item and at this meeting and any items of pre-decision scrutiny that require changing due to their reprogramming by the Cabinet.

Reasons

1. To ensure timely and effective scrutiny.
2. To ensure effective and timely scrutiny, either to provide Cabinet with advice prior to it taking a decision or to ensure that the Council and external public service providers and partners were operating effectively for the benefit of the Borough.

NOTES:

1. No reference may be made to these minutes at the Council meeting on 4th November 2019 unless notice to that effect is given to the Democratic Services Manager by five members of the Council by noon on the fifth working day following publication of these minutes.
2. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Commission.