

Minutes of a Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee - Corporate and Resources held in the Luttrell Room - County Hall, Taunton TA1 4DY, on Tuesday, 16 May 2023 at 10.00 am

Present:

Cllr Bob Filmer (Chair)
Cllr Richard Wilkins (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Theo Butt Philip	Cllr Shane Collins
Cllr Tom Deakin	Cllr Philip Ham
Cllr Tony Lock	Cllr Mike Murphy
Cllr Diogo Rodrigues	Cllr Peter Seib
Cllr Brian Smedley	Cllr Andy Soughton
Cllr Lucy Trimnell	

In attendance:

Cllr Leigh Redman	Cllr Mandy Chilcott
Cllr Faye Purbrick	

Other Members present remotely:

Cllr John Hunt	Cllr Marcus Kravis
Cllr Dave Mansell	

1 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1

Apologies were received from Councillor Liz Leyshon

2 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 2

There were no declarations of interest

3 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 3

There were no questions received from the Public

4 Committee Briefing by the Scrutiny Manager - Agenda Item 4

The Scrutiny Manager Jamie Jackson gave a short presentation giving an overview of the Scrutiny Committees, which now consisted of 5 committees, of which 3 were new.

The areas of responsibility for this committee were detailed and it was suggested that various methods could be undertaken due to the amount of work that the committee could be wishing to do, these included Task and Finish Groups, informal workshops and Member briefings in addition to the formal reports.

During discussion between the committee members, the following comments were made:

- Staff currently allocated to cover scrutiny work but whole team being restructured which will be approximately 3-6 months
- Concerns were raised about meetings being held bi-monthly as it was considered that this would not enable the committee to cover all the work streams thoroughly, especially the budget
- Need to ensure that areas of scrutiny doesn't encroach on other areas of scrutiny/committees i.e. Audit Committee, Constitution and Governance Committee

It was noted that the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Scrutiny committees will be meeting on a regular basis and will discuss areas that could be jointly scrutinised or would be for a specific scrutiny to be considered, to this end the Forward Plan would be adjusted and will provide further detail or signpost towards any particular scrutiny areas.

5 Briefing by Resources and Corporate Services Executive Director - Agenda Item 5

Jason Vaughan, Executive Director for Resources and Corporate Services gave a short presentation detailing the work that the Audit Committee will do and what this committee would need to consider within their work programme. Mr Vaughan explained this would include Budget Monitoring, Revenues, Capital Housing Revenue Account, Financial Strategy, MTFP, Budget proposals, Payments Performance and Commercial Investments.

Members requested that budget monitoring should be an item on the agenda for this committee due to the risks involved and should use profiles for the budgets but it was highlighted that this year would be difficult due to amalgamating 5 budgets into one, also some areas have not been profiled at present for example the

Capital Programme.

It was also asked that commercial investments be looked at to see if they are ethical as this was previously undertaken by the Investment Board within the District Council, it was confirmed that there was no Investment Board set up currently, but it was being considered by the Executive as a sub-committee.

Members were also informed that performance and service delivery would be considered and would be reflected with the budgets with Members being reminded that the committee can request officers to attend if issues were being highlighted but these requests should be timely.

The committee were requested to note that all these issues would be considered when the work programme for the committee was being set and that it may need the time outside of the set committee meetings to explore issues/areas in greater detail with reports back to the committee or for briefings to be undertaken.

6 Local Government Review Update - Agenda Item 6

Roshan Robati and Sarah Hawkins attended the meeting and gave an update on local Government Reorganisation and the move into transition and transformation. They explained that that Tranche 1 was now complete and that the Delivery Overview confirmed that 281 products had been delivered to date with 8 remain either in progress, overdue or pending and these are being monitored; a number of changes were listed that customers saw on Day 1 and a number of lessons were learnt and detailed within the presentation.

The new programme was in place, this would bring all service alignment, improvement, transformational and cost reduction activities together. There would also be a single overarching Transition, Transformation and Change Board (currently consisting of Executive Officers), it was confirmed that from July, it was hoped that when the new programme is due to commence, the Board will have new Terms of Reference and Membership. It was explained that the new programme will enable delivery of shared outcomes and defined benefits, achieve more with the resources available, be visible and transparent and that critical outcomes can be delivered including the Council Plan, MTFP savings targets and reducing demand for services. The new programme will now include some additional areas that weren't included in Tranche 1 i.e. Childrens Services so that all services will mirror the changes.

It was noted that the Programme Management Office will work with the committee to scrutinise the transition and transformation programmes at the appropriate times to enable input within the design and development of projects, strategies and other work.

During discussion, it was agreed that the 8 outstanding actions from Tranche 1 will be distributed with an explanation to the committee. It was confirmed that in respect to feedback from Public was taken from complaints and compliments process and staff were able to feedback via surveys and Managers. Local communities would be involved through the Local Community Network which had been set up and timetabled and it was confirmed that this information would be cascaded to Members after this meeting. The committee will receive the Transition programme with outlooks and benefits detailed and then will have the opportunity to scrutinise, it was hoped that this would take place by July and it was requested that a proposed timeline be provided for the programme targets.

7 Committee's Forward Work Programme - Agenda Item 7

The Chair admitted that there was a large range of proposed work and areas that the committee should consider and this would form the formal work plan. The plan will need to be drafted by the Scrutiny Manager, Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee and would then be considered by the committee members.

It was requested by members that the current frequency of the committee meetings needed to be considered and it was proposed that this will be taken into account when agreeing the plan as additional meetings or other ways of working may need to be undertaken.

It was reiterated that work for Scrutiny would also be agreed by the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the all the Scrutiny committees to ensure all areas were considered and that areas of public interest were included.

(The meeting ended at 12.13 pm)

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CHAIR