

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Meeting held 19 September 2019

PRESENT: Councillors Mick Rooney (Chair), Ian Auckland, Steve Ayriss, Denise Fox, Julie Grocutt, Tim Huggan, Douglas Johnson, Mike Levery and Sioned-Mair Richards

.....

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ben Curran and Cate McDonald.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

4.1 Steve Hamilton, Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind (SRSB), referred to the proposed restructuring of the Council's City Growth Department and, in the light of potential job losses, which could include two posts of Access Officers, queried whether this Committee would be scrutinising such restructuring proposals. Mr Hamilton referred to the important role of the Access Officers in terms of making access for blind and partially-sighted people around the City much easier.

4.2 The Chair stated that he would look into whether or not such restructuring proposals would be scrutinised and if so, which Scrutiny Committee would be responsible, and the Policy and Improvement Officer would respond to Mr Hamilton.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4th July 2019, were approved as a correct record and, arising therefrom:-

- (a) further to a query raised by the Chair, as to whether information on whether the Council, as part of its telephone service, provided members of the public with the option of ringing them back, if they so requested, James Henderson (Director of Policy, Performance and Communications) stated that, whilst he believed a response on this issue had been provided to Members, he would check and make sure that this was the case;

- (b) further to a query raised by Councillor Douglas Johnson as to why an initial scoping paper regarding the proposed new Governance arrangements had not been included on the agenda for this meeting, the Chair stated that the recent change of the Cabinet post, with Councillor Terry Fox having been appointed to the post of Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance, had resulted in a slight delay in progress on this issue, and that it was hoped that a paper would be submitted to the Committee's meeting on 17th October 2019;
- (c) the Chair reported that, due to the change in the holder of the post of Cabinet Member for Environment, Streetscene and Climate Change, there had been a delay in the discussions regarding the proposed establishment of a Citizens' Assembly to look at climate change;
- (d) further to the recent establishment of a cross-party Member Task and Finish Group to look into communications and consultation on the budget process, as raised by Councillor Sioned-Mair Richards, it was confirmed that Councillor Douglas Johnson would be the Green Group representative on the Task and Finish Group and that Councillor Tim Huggan would contact Councillor Richards with a nominee from the Liberal Democrat Group; and
- (e) further to a query raised by the Chair as to the progress regarding the Access to Mental Health Services – Call for Evidence, the Policy and Improvement Officer stated that she would chase this up with relevant officers, and inform Members of any progress.

6. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

- 6.1 The Committee received a report of the Director of Policy, Performance and Communications on the design and implementation of a new Corporate Performance Framework, which included associated indicators and reporting arrangements, and attached, as appendices, the new Corporate Performance Framework model, new performance indicators and key performance measures and actions, in the form of RAG ratings, for Quarter 4 of 2018/19.
- 6.2 In attendance for this item were James Henderson (Director of Policy, Performance and Communications) and Louise Brewins (Head of Performance and Intelligence).
- 6.3 The report contained an update of the programme for the new Corporate Performance Framework, together with details of the Authority's performance in 2018/19. James Henderson stressed the importance of the Council having an effective Corporate Performance Framework, to help it know that everything was working effectively, ensure that it had the relevant information to make managers aware of how the Authority was performing and to provide an opportunity for the public and other stakeholders to understand such performance. Mr Henderson added that, whilst it was acknowledged there was a very extensive list of performance indicators, it was proposed that officers would look at a number of key indicators, and report back to the Committee on these. Louise Brewins referred to the performance for Quarter 4 in 2018/19, stating that there had been mixed

results.

6.4 Members of the Committee raised questions, and the following responses were provided:-

- Members would be granted access to the new Corporate Performance Framework to enable them to look at specific elements of the information.
- The reason as to why no RAG ratings had been highlighted for certain indicators in the Quarter 4 report for 2018/19 was due to the fact that either there was no data available, a specific target had not been formally agreed, or the target definitions had changed. A number of indicators related to national definitions, for example, education performance indicators, of which the Government had recently changed the definitions, meaning that there were no previous data to compare these with directly.
- Information, in the form of a spreadsheet, and setting out a list of the proposed new high level measures, together with details of which previous high level indicators had been abandoned, modified or added to the Corporate Performance Framework, together with the reasons for this, would be circulated to Members.
- Whilst the majority of the measures related to functions of the Council, there were a number which related to functions of external partners. These had been maintained on the basis that they were still relevant.
- The performance indicators for Quarter 1 of 2019/20 would be available in October 2019.
- Officers were aware of the fact that the new Corporate Performance Framework was too focused on quantitative data, but acknowledged the fact that qualitative data would need to be included. It was envisaged that future reports would contain more qualitative data.
- It was hoped that once the new Framework had been established, officers would then seek to implement an engagement plan, which would include a communication plan and training, as required.
- This meeting was to be used as one forum for consulting with Members on the proposed new Framework.
- Whilst the protected characteristics of staff were not listed as performance indicators in the list of new indicators, this was an area where data was collated, and to which all managers had access. Such measures were reviewed at the Staff Equality and Inclusion Board.
- Whilst a number of performance indicators related to standard measures, there was some degree of variation in what Council Services had put forward. It had been identified that there was a need for a consistent approach, which

would include the need for a core set of indicators related to management of services for use by all Council Services. Further discussions would be held with Services.

- Consideration would be given, as part of the establishment of the new Framework, to providing information in those areas where key discrepancies had been identified.
- The aim of the Corporate Performance Framework model was to ensure that team managers and Heads of Service would be held responsible and accountable, respectively, from the start and, if an issue could not be resolved, or was causing a particular problem, it would be escalated promptly to a level where it could be resolved.
- At present, the new indicators were prioritised in terms of the level of escalation required, for example, to Senior Leadership Team, Portfolio Leadership Team or Executive Management Team. However, performance indicators were not looked at in isolation, for example Adult Social Care, which enabled officers to take a more holistic view. Indicators were also reviewed over time so that any changes may be identified and analysed. This included measuring the amount of change from one point in time to another.
- Providing relevant data was available, comparator information could be included, for example, core cities, statistical neighbours and neighbouring authorities.
- Consideration would be given to removing any measures over which the Authority had no influence.
- In terms of any measures having red or amber ratings, it would be helpful to incorporate commentary on reasons for this.
- Officers were not able to confirm whether there were any indicators to be included in respect of the Council's 'Tell Us Once' scheme, but would find out and report back to Members.
- The new performance indicator '% of Internal Audit Resources Spent on Productive Activities' under Finance and Commercial Services, was a standard measure, and referred to the time actually spent undertaking audits. It was accepted that the wording wasn't ideal, and consideration would be given to renaming this indicator.
- The indicator relating to the percentage of household waste composted, under Business Strategy and Regulation, referred to the Garden Waste Scheme.
- It had been acknowledged that further work was required in terms of how the indicator regarding the total number of fly-tipping incidents, under Business Strategy and Regulation, was measured. At present, although there could be a high number of incidents, the volume of waste dumped overall could be low.

- Information on whether the performance indicators relating to print issues in libraries included community and voluntary libraries, would be circulated to Members.
- It was not easy to capture information on those measures over which the Council only had a limited amount of control, such as buses. It could be possible to break down the information and construct indicators so that they demonstrate a dependency. The Authority could, realistically, only exert influence over such indicators if they were included in the Council's partners' own performance framework. The Authority looked at its partners' performance indicators and frameworks as a matter of routine. An example of where this worked particularly well was in relation to the NHS, on the basis that there were a number of shared national indicators with the Authority.
- There was currently no indicator referring to the time taken by officers to respond to Councillors' queries, referring mainly to Councillors' casework, but this would be included in the new Framework.

6.5 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the information contained in the report now submitted, together with the information now reported and the responses to the questions raised;
- (b) thanks James Henderson and Louise Brewins for attending the meeting, and responding to the questions raised; and
- (c) requests the Director of Policy, Performance and Communications to:-
 - (i) send information, in the form of a spreadsheet, and setting out a list of the proposed new high level measures, together with details of which previous high level indicators had been abandoned, modified or added to the Corporate Performance Framework, together with reasons for each of these;
 - (ii) ensure that there is a consistent set of core service management indicators, for use by all Council Services, and arrange for further discussions to be held with those Services who fail to provide the data or if the data sent is not relevant;
 - (iii) make arrangements for details of the performance indicators to be sent to the relevant Scrutiny Committee, for comment;
 - (iv) provide Members with an explanation of the escalation process in terms of the new Corporate Performance Framework model, together with an indication of longer-term trends and commentary; and
 - (v) include a measure regarding the time it takes for officers to respond to Councillors queries, as part of their casework.

7. BUDGET SETTING AND CONSULTATION PROCESS FOR 2020/21

7.1 The Committee received a report of the Executive Director of Resources providing an update on the context and background information relating to the financial position for the Council as it approaches setting its Revenue Budget for 2020/21, and also outlining the suggested process for consultation on the budget proposals.

7.2 In attendance for this item were Eugene Walker (Executive Director of Resources), Dave Phillips (Head of Strategic Finance) and James Henderson (Director of Policy, Performance and Communications).

7.3 Members of the Committee raised questions, and the following responses were provided:-

- There was a certain level of confusion in terms of future budget proposals, given the current political climate. Local authorities approached consultation on their budget-setting proposals in different ways, with Birmingham and Newcastle having undertaken some interesting work in this area. The Local Government Association had recently provided new guidance on budget consultation.
- There was a need to think creatively in terms of how the Council consulted with residents in different areas of the City on the budget proposals. There was also a need to ensure that residents both received, and understood, all relevant information regarding the Council's budget. It had been acknowledged, given its complexity, that this was not always easy, and more work was required in terms of looking at suitable consultation mechanisms.
- Following the recent announcement from Government, as part of the Local Government Spending Review, the current level of savings to be identified totalled £23 million.
- There were still plans, as part of the budget-setting process, to use £35 million from the Council's reserves over the next four years, as originally forecast. The recent Government announcements had reduced the upward pressure on this reserve usage, which would have to be mitigated by further spending reductions.

7.4 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the information contained in the report now submitted, the comments now made and the responses to the questions raised;
- (b) thanks Eugene Walker, Dave Phillips and James Henderson for attending the meeting, and responding to the questions raised;
- (c) approves the approach being undertaken in respect of the budget-setting and consultation process for 2020/21, as set out in the report; and

- (d) requests that, as part of the consultation, officers talk to the Equality Hubs, Housing Forums (specifically regarding the Housing Revenue Account), the Youth Council and the Youth Parliament.

8. ISSUES TO RAISE FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

- 8.1 Councillor Denise Fox reported that the Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee had visited the Energy Recovery Facility, Bernard Road, prior to having a very positive Scrutiny meeting following the visit, on 3rd September 2019.
- 8.2 Councillor Mick Rooney reported that, with regard to the Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee, (a) the Committee had held an informal meeting on 15th July 2019, and had a very positive and thorough discussion on the Committee's Work Programme for 2019/20, and (b) the report on the SEND inspection was to be submitted to the meeting of the Committee to be held in November 2019.
- 8.3 The Committee noted the information now reported.

9. WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

- 9.1 The Committee received a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer containing the Work Programme for 2019/20.
- 9.2 The Chair referred to the three topics set out in the report, listed as items to be scheduled, but having no set date – Equalities Objectives, Equalities Hub Network and Public Sector Reform, and stated that if the reports on new Governance Arrangements and the Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change were not prepared in time, these three topics could be discussed at the meeting to be held on 17th October 2019.
- 9.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes and approves the Work Programme for 2019/20, including the suggestion now raised.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 10.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday, 17th October 2019, at 1.30 pm, in the Town Hall.

This page is intentionally left blank