

Executive Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of Executive Scrutiny Committee was held on Tuesday, 19th September, 2017.

Present: Cllr David Harrington(Chairman), Cllr Gillian Corr(Interim Vice Chair), Cllr Derrick Brown, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Chris Clough, Cllr Lisa Grainge, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E (Vice Cllr Tracey Stott), Cllr Matthew Vickers, Cllr David Wilburn.

Officers: Jamie McCann(CS), Gary Cummings (F&BS), Julie Danks, Ian Coxon, Peter Mennear, Gary Woods, Kirsty Wannop(DCE)

Also in attendance: None

Apologies: Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Sonia Bailey, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Tracey Stott

ESC 9/17 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Paul Rowling declared a personal non prejudicial interest in the agenda item 7 - Scrutiny Review of Fire safety of High Rise Residential Buildings as he was previously a Director of Tristar.

Cllr David Harrington declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 9 as he had delivered training at LGIU and LGA at no cost, and was also a member of Unite.

Cllr Gillian Corr declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 9 as she had delivered training at LGA at no cost, and also previously worked at Bankfields.

Cllr Norma Stephenson declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 9 as she was a fully paid member of Unison.

Cllr Carol Clark declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 9 as she was a member of Unison.

Cllr Paul Rowling declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 9 as he was a member of Unite.

Cllr Eileen Johnson declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 9 as she was a member of Unite.

Cllr David Wilburn declared a personal non prejudicial interest in agenda item 9 as he was a member of Unison.

ESC 10/17 **Minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2017 - for signature**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st February 2017 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

ESC 11/17 **Minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2017 - for approval**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 21st February 2017.

AGREED that the minutes be approved.

**ESC
12/17** **Medium Term Financial Plan Outturn - March 2017**

Consideration was given to a report that focussed on the financial performance and position at the end of the 2016/17 financial year and updated the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) as at 31 March 2017. The report was presented to the July meeting of Cabinet.

Members were given opportunity to ask questions/make comments that could be summarised as follows:-

- The expenditure on direct payments was lower than normal why was this? Every effort was made to encourage use of direct payments.
- What does the Virgin Media non domestic rates mean for domestic users. It has no effect for domestic users and it had decided not to progress with the appeal.
- Where were the costs of the unexpected general election funded from? Vast majority of this was funded from central government.
- The overspend in Children's Services on legal costs, was this due to us getting something wrong? No this was due to complexity of cases and increasing numbers.

AGREED that:

1. The MTFP and the current level of General Fund balances be noted.
2. The position regarding the Virgin Media appeal relating to National Non Domestic Rates be noted.
3. The allocation of £3,640,877 from the Improved Better Care Fund be noted.
4. The revised Capital Programme at Appendix A be noted.

**ESC
13/17** **Council Plan - Annual Report 2016/17**

Consideration was given to the annual report that provided an update on the non-financial performance of the Council during 2016/17.

Members were given opportunity to ask questions/make comments that could be summarised as follows:-

Members raised the following issues which would be addressed by the Deputy Chief Executive:

- Issues on the housing regeneration schemes and developers finishing jobs i.e. roads and pathways as promised, how do we tackle this?
- Outstanding s.106 monies
- Low attendance and engagement at Locality Forums was raised as an issue.

Members also discussed the following:

- Was the roll out of the LED lighting scheme on track? It was explained that delays had previously been experienced due to the contracted company and the

connecting of the lights to the network, a new company was now dealing with this which had addressed the delays.

- The wild flowers that were in an around the Borough had received a positive response from members of the public. It was noted that these were relatively cheap to provide, and the Council would look to expand where possible.
- Members noted the impressive figures in relation to those who were Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET).
- Development of the Victoria Estate with a focus on housing for older people. Although no decision had been made, it was noted that this was now unlikely to be the focus of the project, and options had been assessed using the standard approach for options analysis.
- Members commended the refuse collection and how weekly collections were still happening although it was noted that Stockton's recycling performance could be improved and this also impacted upon carbon reduction.

Reducing resources had impacted upon the level of community engagement that took place with residents, and other ways of changing behaviour could be considered. It was also highlighted how the receptacles that recycling was collected in needed to be looked at, and what was appropriate in relation to collecting green waste.

Members agreed for the Chair of Place Select Committee to meet with the Director of Community Services to look at recycling collections and the receptacles used, particularly in relation to green waste, and report back.

- Members queried progress in relation to digitalisation of services, A long term Access to Services Strategy was in place. It was explained that People Select Committee would be looking at Digital Optimisation, and an update on smarter working for Members would be useful as part of that.

It was requested that any aspects of the digital optimisation review related to Councillors be notified to Members at the relevant time.

It was explained that MAP would also be looking at Members and digital working.

Members discussed the infographic within the report that highlighted some high level contextual information. Members noted that this only provided a snapshot and requested some further context and comparisons at the November meeting, including the following:

- planning applications
- library visits
- free school meals
- visits to Preston Hall
- SIRF visitors

AGREED that

1. Further information on the infographic to be provided as detailed at November's meeting, and the Six Month update on the 2017-18 Council Plan be submitted to January 2018.

2. The report be noted.

**ESC
14/17** **Scrutiny Review of Fire Safety of High Rise Residential Buildings**

The Committee considered the final report from the Place Select Committee's Task and Finish Scrutiny Review of Fire Safety of High Rise Residential Buildings. Members were advised that the report had already been agreed by Cabinet and details of the recommendations were provided.

Members requested that an agenda item to consider progress be added once the six monthly update had been received by Place Select Committee.

AGREED that the final report be noted.

**ESC
15/17** **Statutory Forward Plan**

There were no items on the Statutory Forward Plan.

**ESC
16/17** **Select Committee Chairs' Updates**

Members were provided with an update from Select Committee Chairs.

During discussion of the Adults Social Care and Health Select Committee update:

- the Chair of the Select Committee indicated that she would query whether there had been an increase in attendance, at the new Urgent Care Centre, from residents of the South Tees area. It was noted that this would be addressed during the Committee's planned visit.

- concern was expressed about the lack of awareness amongst Stockton residents of a consultation event, as part of the consultation on NHS commissioned respite and short breaks services. This would be picked up by the Chair of ASCH Committee.

AGREED that the updates be noted.

**ESC
17/17** **Chair's Update and Executive Scrutiny Work Programme**

The Committee considered its work programme and it was explained that it would be updated to reflect discussion at this meeting.

Due to the addition of the urgent Scrutiny Review of Fire Safety of High Rise Residential Buildings (Task & Finish) to the Place Select Committee's 2017-2018 work programme, the Final Report for the Scrutiny Review of Asylum Seeker Services would be now be brought to the Executive Scrutiny Committee meeting in November 2017.

**ESC
18/17** **Scrutiny Developments**

The Committee noted the using Evidence in Scrutiny practice guide. It was requested that this be circulated to all Members.

