

People Select Committee

A meeting of People Select Committee was held on Monday, 16th March, 2020.

Present: Cllr Jean O'Donnell (Chair), Cllr Mohammed Javed (Vice-Chair), Cllr Helen Atkinson, Cllr Lynn Hall (sub for Cllr John Gardner), Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Bill Woodhead MBE and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

Officers: Margie Stewart-Piercy, James Burrell (HR,L&C), Michelle Connolly (F&BS), Lorraine Dixon (C,L&E) , Rebecca Saunders-Thompson, Judith Trainer (MD).

Also in attendance: Nicola Moss (Ipsos MORI).

Apologies: Cllr John Gardner and Cllr Stefan Houghton.

**PEO
37/19** **Evacuation Procedure**

The evacuation procedure was noted.

**PEO
38/19** **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**PEO
39/19** **Scrutiny Review of Public Consultation**

This was the first evidence gathering session for the scrutiny review of public consultation.

Members received a presentation from officers from HR, Legal and Communications service area. The key topics of the presentation were as follows:

- An outline of the evidence gathering sessions
- The purpose of consultation
- Data on the number of consultations across all directorates for the period 2019/20
- The four Gunning principles (a reference point for the practice of consultation)
- The consultation procedure
- Consultation methods
- Corporate and Service-led consultation
- The Consultation Portal (which included the 'My Views' area)
- An overview of the Viewpoint Panel (which included the membership profile and response rate)
- The relationship between Consultation, Communication and Engagement.
- An introduction to Ipsos MORI.

The main issues discussed were as follows:

- Members were informed that some consultations have been open to all residents in the Borough. These consultations were advertised in various forms. For example, in the press, on the Council website, in libraries, and through residents groups. In other instances, some consultations have focussed on services which might affect specific groups so information has been sent to

them as a closed group.

- Members were informed that breakdowns for figures/data for the period 2019/20 could be sent to members if they required it.
- Members requested specific information on the response rate and the final report from the consultation on the closure/ merger of Fairfield Library in 2018. Members were informed that they would receive this information.
- Members were informed that there was a higher response rate on issues residents felt most passionate about and most affected by. Consultations had been publicised across digital platforms and in paper format for those who did not have access to a computer.
- Members were informed that the consultation department sits centrally within the Council, meaning it is not aligned to a particular service area. All information gathered from consultations has been sent to this central department. This feedback has then been sent to the relevant service area.
- Members suggested that a banner could be placed on the cover of the Stockton News to inform readers about current consultations that they could participate in.
- Members were informed that the consultation department worked with the service area concerned and any other necessary individuals to maximise the potential participation rate.

Members received a presentation from officers from the Managing Director of Ipsos MORI North. The key topics of the presentation were as follows:

- The principles of good consultation
 - Creating a representative survey
 - Selecting your sample
 - Using interviewers
 - The mode of a survey
 - Maximising response
- The Stockton approach
 - Method of the residents in-home survey
 - Key issues/questions
 - Analysis of the survey
- Industry developments
 - Ownership of Technology and usage of Social Media platforms
 - Innovative methods

The main issues discussed were as follows:

- Members praised the work of Ipsos MORI on the Stockton residents' survey.
- Members were informed that members of the public have continued to have data privacy concerns about completing surveys online. However, letters which were issued to members of the public included reassurance that Ipsos MORI have complied with GDPR regulations. A unique website link to access the survey online for two members of each household was included in these letters.
- Members were informed about the process for the Stockton residents' survey. Interviewers were each given 300 addresses and had to complete enough surveys to ensure that they had captured a wide range of responses.
- Members were informed that the sample size for the Stockton residents' survey was robust enough to evaluate the results across the different wards.

AGREED that:

- 1) the information be noted.
- 2) the further information be provided as requested.

PEO 40/19 Monitoring Progress Report – Digital Optimisation

Consideration was given to the assessments of progress on the implementation of the recommendations from the scrutiny review of Digital Optimisation.

- Members noted that they were pleased that Stockton Borough Council had purchased a new Digital Development Platform (GOSS).
- Members expressed that they still struggled to use the SBC website and were looking forward to the new developments of the website.
- Members commended the work of customer service and library staff in assisting the elderly and those who have experienced difficulties using online systems.

AGREED that:

- 1) the Progress Updates be noted and the assessments of progress be confirmed.

PEO 41/19 Action Plan – SWIS Accommodation and Buildings

Members were presented with the Action Plan setting out how the agreed recommendations from the Scrutiny Review of SWiS Accommodation and Buildings will be implemented and target dates for completion.

- Members were informed that planning had begun on Council office accommodation following the approval by cabinet for two new office buildings. Evaluation of the current ten office buildings had commenced. Evaluation of Stockton Town Hall was also planned.
- Members asked if any evaluation of Stockton Town Hall could include member involvement. The option of a task and finish group to assess the options for the Town Hall was suggested. Members were informed that they would be involved in any evaluation process in whatever form it would be.

AGREED that the Action Plan be approved.

PEO 42/19 Work Programme 2019-20

Consideration was given to Work Programme.

The next People Select Committee Meeting will be held on 27 April 2020.

AGREED that the Work Programme be noted.

**PEO
43/19**

Chairs Update

The Chair had nothing to update.