

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Tuesday 21 September 2021 at 7.00 pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present:

Axam, Crookes, Davies, Dorn, Farmer, Harward, Smith, Wildsmith and Worlock (Chairman)

In attendance:

Cllr David Neighbour
Cllr Alex Drage
Cllr Sara Kinnell

Officers:

Daryl Phillips, Joint Chief Executive
John Elson, Head of Environment & Technical Services
Emma Foy, Head of Corporate Services & S151 Officer
Mark Jaggard, Head of Place
Neil Hince, Environmental Health Manager
Joanne Innes, Audit Manager
Jenny Humphreys, Committee Services Officer

35 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of 17 August 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

A member queried the level of detail in the minutes on the accessibility description for the website redesign project but was satisfied with the Joint Chief Executive's (JCX) confirmation all the comments has been included in the Cabinet report.

36 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillor Collins. Councillor Drage attended via Microsoft Teams.

37 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

38 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

39 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)

None.

40 PLACE SERVICE PANEL UPDATE

Councillors Davies, Dorn and Worlock attended the meeting.

Members summarised that the update:

- Was a constructive discussion.
- Provided additional knowledge of processes and procedures.
- Highlighted opportunities where processes could be tightened up and improved.
- Shared ideas on how the service communicated and provided feedback to residents and offered alternative ways to do so.

Several members said they would have preferred face-to-face meetings for these panel reviews, rather than the current online ones.

The Head of Place highlighted that joint working groups are taking place next week (28th September) to discuss the Development Management Improvement Plan in more detail.

Cllr Dorn requested a separate discussion with the JCX outside of the meeting.

41 COMMUNITY SERVICE PANEL UPDATE

Councillors Farmer and Wildsmith attended the meeting.

Like the previous panel update, members commented that they would have preferred face-to-face meetings.

Members agreed it was a good meeting, well formatted with useful summary paragraphs. Members were also very impressed with the answers to their pre-submitted questions to the Head of Community.

Members were reassured that any queries or concerns they had, were being dealt with, or had been picked up already by the Head of Service.

42 ENVIRONMENT & TECHNICAL SERVICE PANEL UPDATE

Councillors Axam, Drage and Farmer attended the meeting and were pleased with the responses and detail they received from the Head of Service.

Members feedback included:

- A desire for the plan to include more specific target completion dates for progress and some actions.
- The publishing of the Traffic Management Plan.

- Clarification on the KPIs for CCTV downtime in quarter one.
- Waste Management and Collection Contract – could a review of this be done before quarter two or brought to the next O&S committee meeting.
- The Service Risk Register was absent from the plan.
- The formatting of tables in the plan could be improved with comments and dates more aligned.

The Head of Environment & Technical Services confirmed that the Traffic Management Plan would soon be published on the council's website and sent to all members. The Service Risk Register will also be circulated to members.

The Chairman confirmed that face-to-face meetings will be considered and reminded members to confirm their availability for these.

The JCX highlighted the importance of submitting questions in advance to all service panel meetings.

43 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

The Audit Manager summarised that the Corporate Risk Register provides assurance that appropriate arrangements are in place to mitigate identified risks the council may be exposed to.

This register is reviewed by management on a regular basis and reported to members.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee reviewed the content of the Corporate Risk Register and made the following recommendations:

- Changes could be highlighted on the document to make them clearer.
- Including more detail on these changes - for example what has gone up and gone down would provide more scope and insight.
- Extracting the top five and going into more detail about these would be beneficial.

The Audit Manager to contact Cllr Dorn.

44 SEEKING NOMINATIONS TO A TASK AND FINISH GROUP FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY

The Council is in the process of developing its new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and as part of the development process, officers were seeking nominations from the O&S Committee for three Members to be part of a Task and Finish Group.

DECISION

Councillors Axam, Farmer and Harward volunteered to be part of the Task and Finish group.

45 REFRESHMENTS CONCESSION OPPORTUNITIES AT EDENBROOK AND BRAMSHOT FARM COUNTRY PARKS

The Head of Corporate Services and the Leader of the Council asked the committee for their thoughts on providing potential refreshment facilities at Edenbrook and Bramshot Farm Country Parks.

Members questioned:

- Power and drainage facilities for a potential catering vehicle.
- Reputational risks if the catering option chosen does not perform to expected standards.
- The length of the contract (provisionally a year) and break clauses.
- How environmentally friendly a vehicle would be and stressed that the supplier should not use single use plastics; to support Hart's commitment to reducing climate change.
- The potential need for toilet facilities.
- Operating hours of the facility/vehicle; both Bramshot Farm and Edenbrook have gates to their car parks that are locked at night.
- Litter and rubbish concerns – a potential increase if food and beverage items are being sold on site.

Members also asked if the Council had sought resident's opinions on proposed refreshment options and whether there was a genuine need for them.

The Chairman replied that she would continue to speak to neighbouring councils to gather experiences.

Members queried how a refreshment facility at Edenbrook may impact the café at Hart Leisure Centre and that this could potentially increase more cars to travel to the site.

Discussions about the current mobile catering facilities on the Elvetham Heath estate and in Yateley were also summarised by members, with a view to speak to the relevant parish councils to gain more information on how these are managed and run.

The JCX reminded the committee that any facilities would complement the country parks, not make them specific destinations for refreshments, and they would not operate at night.

RECOMMENDATION

Members supported the idea to explore this option and subject to approval by Cabinet in October agreed to:

1. Subject to its rules on procurement and Contract Standing Orders market the opportunity for the delivery of modest refreshment facilities at both Edenbrook and Bramshot Country Parks.
2. The Head of Service for Environment and Technical Services will agree to procure a lease of no longer than one year with suitable providers.
3. The lease is granted on a commercial basis with the contribution from the lease contributing to savings required as part of the budget setting process.
4. Any capital or revenue funding associated with this project goes through the standard budget setting process and is approved as part of the 2022-23 budget setting process.
5. The future Cabinet report will determine whether the leases are extended beyond the first year of operation.

46 FOOD RECOVERY PLAN 2021/22

The Lead Member for Environment and the Environmental Health Manager (EHM) summarised the Food Recovery Plan and report.

The EHM explained that the plan had been produced due to the pressure placed on all local authorities from the Covid-19 pandemic. The manager also highlighted that it is to reset food inspection programs after lockdown, and to ensure that the council complies with national guidance.

Members discussions included:

- Obligations to inspect new or unrated premises – there had been 70 new inspections this year with six outstanding which is on target.
- Inspection phases and how achievable they are.
- It is not a legal requirement to display food hygiene rating stickers in food premises in England.
- That the RIDDOR report covers the reporting of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences.
- The carbon emissions impact that staff may have when travelling to and from premises for inspections in their own vehicles; and the feasibility of electric bicycles or an electric pool car.

The JCX confirmed that environmental factors can be looked at in the climate change working group.

The Lead Member for Environment reminded members that food businesses receive regular newsletters. The Environmental Health Manager also highlighted that the council reacts to alerts on social media about food businesses and responds to reports from members of the public if they have food safety concerns.

The Chairman noted a member's comment that finding food hygiene ratings of premises on the Food Standard Agency's website was not particularly user friendly.

Members asked if there had been a significant increase in food poisoning during the pandemic, with unavoidably longer times between inspections, but the Environmental Health Team confirmed there had not.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee considered the draft Food Recovery Plan 2021/24 and agreed for Cabinet to consider at its meeting in October with the following recommendations:

- Some consideration (if possible) on any potential risks there may be to the delivery phase.
- Detail on the publicity and smaller campaigns that may be used to highlight the plan.

47 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Cabinet Work Programme was noted.

Members wanted to see a review of parking charges and an update on the regeneration of the civic quarter included in the programme.

The Committee agreed that the Chairman would contact the Portfolio Holder for Place regarding the civic quarter.

48 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny work programme was noted.

Members questioned a review of the Local Plan and why it was not on the programme. The JCX confirmed that when appropriate plans were devised for the Local Plan it would come to an O&S committee meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm