

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Date and Time:** Tuesday 16 June 2020 at 7.00 pm

**Place:** Council Chamber

**Present:**

Axam, Davies, Dorn, Drage, Farmer, Lamb, Makepeace-Browne, Smith, Wildsmith, Worlock (Chairman) and Wright

**In attendance:** Crampton, Forster and Radley

**Officers:** Hughes, Phillips, Vincent and Wood

### **1 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

Members agreed to the suspension of Standing Orders nos 9.3 (Show of Hands for Voting), 22.1 (Standing to Speak) and 22.2 (Chairman Standing).

### **2 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Smith was elected Vice Chairman.

### **3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of 18 February 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **4 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None received.

### **5 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Worlock thanked Councillor Crookes for his hard work as Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee last year and welcomed all new Members.

### **6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Farmer declared he is the Chairman for the Swimming Club based at Hart Leisure Centre and Councillor Wildsmith declared he is the Treasurer for the Aid Relief Group.

### **7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)**

None.

## 8 COUNCIL RESPONSE TO COVID-19 AND NEXT STEPS

The report provided an overview of the Council's work to support the district during the outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and also provided details on the Council's emerging recovery plan to support the district in the coming months.

The report only represented an initial, high level assessment of the current position. It was a 'holding' report. The situation was still live, the pandemic was still ongoing (albeit apparently decreasing in intensity), and more work was required to give a more informed assessment of the implications for the Council. Furthermore, informed reports particularly on the financial implications and the Recovery Plan would be prepared for consideration in due course.

*NB. Appendix 2 was Confidential.*

Members discussed the speed and effectiveness of response by Hart District Council and decisions made, in particular, point 5.7 on the report in relation to Business Grants. Particular issues associated with the distribution of the Grant were discussed including the lack of any business rate infrastructure and flexibility in service delivery following the outsourcing of the business rate function, the need to use the current service provider to distribute the Grant, the lack of communication from the supplier, and the frustration that this all caused to businesses who could not make contact with the supplier.

Members also discussed section 5.6 of the report and Hart's quick response to emergency discharge from hospitals. Members asked if we can improve our responses if there is a second peak and it was confirmed that a staff survey has been carried out regarding business continuity.

Members discussed the financial impact of the pandemic on the service delivery and how staff resources had been dispersed across the Council. It was agreed that a more informed report would be prepared for a later meeting of the Committee to consider the longer-term implications of the pandemic and its impact upon Council resources going forward.

Members were advised that Hart were guided by the LRF (Local Resilience Forum) who's objectives and goals are very similar to the rest of the County. Recovery is community assessed and there is a Community Impact Assessment Survey coming out shortly.

Hart will come out of the response phase and into recovery phase as guided by the LRF. Hart's recovery will continue in shadow until a decision is made when to move fully into the recovery phase.

The Chairman reiterated that when the response phase closes and Hart enters the recovery phase this will be subject to further scrutiny and Members will have the chance to further assess the decisions made during this emergency situation.

## **DECISION**

Appendix 1 – Recovery Plan was agreed.

Appendix 2 – Members noted that it was intended that a more detailed Financial Report would be prepared for the Committee to be considered in August once finalised by the Council's Finance Team

## **9 MEMBERS WORKSHOP**

The O&S Work Programme for the coming year 2020/2021 was discussed and considered.

### **DECISION**

The Committee Members agreed to assist Cabinet and help with their ambitions, initiatives and policies being discussed going forward.

Cabinet suggested assistance with:

- Becoming more efficient with budgets and the challenges they bring.
- Digitalise initiatives.
- Reorganisation of development control and planning, focusing in particular on CIL.
- The way in which we deliver CCTV, its benefits to our community, safety and costs involved.
- Fleet Town Centre Regeneration which is important to our residents.
- To go back a couple of years and look at old work programmes to ensure nothing has been forgotten.

The meeting closed at 9.33 pm