

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Tuesday 19 March 2024 at 7.00 pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present:

Butler (Chairman), Smith, Butcher, Coburn, Davies, Harward, Farmer, Vernon and Forster

In attendance:

Bailey, Quarterman

Officers:

Daryl Philips, Chief Executive
Graeme Clark, Executive Director, Corporate Services & S151 Officer
Kirsty Jenkins, Executive Director, Community
Emma Evans, Committee and Member Services Officer

119 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of 20 February 2024 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Proposed by Cllr Butler; Seconded by Cllr Smith.

Unanimously agreed by those at the February meeting.

120 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillors Dorn, Engström, and Thomas.

Cllr Forster was attending as substitute for Cllr Dorn.

Cllr Davies arrived at 19.05.

121 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations made.

122 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements.

123 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)

None.

124 PRESENTATION BY CORE GRANT RECIPIENTS - INCLUSION EDUCATION

Members received a short presentation from Marie Greenhalgh, Innovation and Development Manager of Inclusion Education, a core grant recipient, outlining the impact the core grant has had on their organisation.

Members heard:

- Bespoke and individualised education was provided for young people with both SEND and mental health needs empowering them to reach their full potential
- The need for these services has increased in recent years and they are much in demand
- The Inclusion School in Basingstoke has 35 places currently and receives over 500 referrals. It was rated Good by Ofsted
- The Inclusion College in Hook is a specialised provision and was launched in September 2021, currently has 70 students
- New projects include EB8, a project which supports young people with mental health, neurodiversity and learning needs into the workplace and
- Iris Project, a 6-week suicide prevention project
- Highlighted case study of a young man who had achieved great success through attending the setting.

Councillor Forster declared an interest as a Hampshire County Councillor with responsibility for Education and a Trustee of Sacha's Project. Then highlighted a newly launched Hampshire County Council (HCC) Youth SEND Forum to enable young people's voices to be heard.

Members discussed:

- Space requirements for the premises
- Where most referrals come from and how are they funded? It was advised that predominantly from HCC as pupils need to have an EHCP to attend, however additional fundraising and grants provide support to enable full access for young people and to enhance their experience. The college funding has 30 agreed study programme places where top up funding comes from Education and Skills Funding Agency and other places for young people with different needs funded by the Local Authority.
- Best wishes to be passed to the young person who was mentioned in the presentation.

Members thanked Ms Greenhalgh for her interesting presentation and for the work of the organisation.

Cllr Bailey arrived at 19.19.

125 REVIEW OF HOUSING COMPANY MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Chief Executive, introduced the report to review the governance arrangements associated with the management of managing Hart Housing Property Management Company Limited (trading as Butterwood Homes). He advised that the Scrutiny Panel had been operating well and these recommendations would support the company, which is operating in a slightly different context than originally envisioned. These changes would support a more flexible structure and provide additional resource at a lower level, to improve financial data available.

Members discussed:

- whether the new Director would be appointed with the same conditions
- whether the recharge would be recalculated
- welcomed the involvement of the Portfolio Holder
- clarified there would be one more meeting of the Butterwood Homes Scrutiny Panel before moving to the one meeting a year schedule.

The Committee agreed the report including the recommendation to be passed to Cabinet.

Decision

The Committee supported the proposals and agree the following:

- A. That the independent layperson be replaced by a director appointed from the Council's Finance team
- B. The Portfolio Holder be invited to attend scrutiny meetings between the company and the Scrutiny Panel.
- C. Unless otherwise agreed upon between the company and the Scrutiny Panel, only a single annual meeting is needed.
- D. The terms of reference for the Scrutiny Panel meeting with the company as set out in para 9 of the report, were noted.

126 DRAFT SERVICE PLANS 2024-25

The Executive Director, Corporate Services & S151 Officer introduced the draft Service plans for 2024/25. They set out the key actions necessary to deliver the Corporate Plan. Members were advised that resources were set in the financial

context of the approved budget; any changes recommended will need to be considered against resources and the budget.

Progress against targets will be reported at the Service Panels and then reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee throughout the year.

The Chair advised that Cllr Dorn had sent comments on the plans to be considered.

Place

The Chief Executive introduced the plan, stating that the service had been through substantial changes and that the plan showed additional work that will be undertaken on top of day-to-day operations. He also referred to some of the points raised by Councillor Dorn.

Members queried the Commissioner Review of the Article 4 Directions rating. It was explained that it is operating under old legislation and this needs to be updated. Additionally, it has not been reviewed since some of the Conservation Areas have been updated and so some areas with the same Conservation Area are currently subject to Article 4 and some are not. This created inconsistency and confusion and therefore need to be updated.

A Member advised linking the Article 4 review in with Conservation Area work being undertaken by some Parish Councils. The Chief Executive explained that the legal process associated with reviewing and updating Article 4 Directions was protracted and comprehensive that could take several years to complete.

A request for the review of the development control process to be divided into separate workstreams was received. It was clarified that this is a review to identify what needs to be undertaken and so separation is premature. The Service Panel will be given more information once the process begins.

Other queries requests relating to KPI's submitted by Cllr Dorn,. The Chief Executive advised that he would have difficulty supporting KPI's being more rigorous than the National Standard. Once the review is complete and any changes have been implemented at that stage, they can be reconsidered. He also highlighted to the Committee that KPI's outcomes were produced quarterly and reflected averages. There was no operational purpose to produce the either monthly or weekly. Members also received confirmation that the statutory KPI's were requirements that must be reported on to central government.

Members asked the O&S Committee to review the progress on the Local Plan assessment and its completion date. O&S will be involved in the process, which needs to be completed by March 2025. The impact of a potential change of government on this process was discussed. It was explained that this is a review of whether you need to complete a review of the Local Plan, not a full review of the whole plan itself (i.e. this was a light touch review to assess if a major review of the whole plan was necessary).

A Member asked if the new KPI relating to planning appeals was a government directed target, this was confirmed, and a discussion took place on what constitutes a major decision and the implications of government intervention.

Community

Executive Director, Community introduced the Community Service Plan, several workstreams have been completed and thus are now embedded in the service and do not appear. All the workstreams have financial and people resources identified.

Questions submitted by Cllr Dorn were addressed. It was stated that the requested mid-year update on the Military Covenant was unnecessary as it would be dealt with at the quarterly Service Panels. Ms Jenkins also clarified that although Community would offer a supportive role in the fly-tipping workstream it is a Place led initiative.

Members questioned the implementation date of upgraded CCTV lines and asked for further details regarding the review of CCTV on Fleet Road. It was explained that work is underway however the date of March 2025 is in place as there may be resourcing issues. It was agreed that the nature of the issues relating to the Fleet Road cameras would be sent to Members as this was not readily available.

The March 2025 completion dates of service priorities was questioned. Executive Director, Community advised that the time was needed as the team was small and many of the projects were complex with some anticipated to run into 2025/2026 and progress will be monitored through the Service Panels.

Members asked for clarity on what elements of the Parking Review were being completed by which dates. It was clarified that the charging element would come under the June 2024 date and the wider best practice benchmarking was for March 2025. It was questioned if the March 2025 was advisable as it was after budget setting for the following year. Executive Director, Community advised that a project plan will be developed, and finance implications will be picked up at that stage.

Members questioned the completion date on the Litter Enforcement review and asked when then the current service would end. It was confirmed that it would cease at the end of March 2024, very little notice had been given. An interim provision will be put in place, members will be kept informed, and the review will determine the best long-term option.

Members asked how the Heathlands Project was being resourced. It was explained that an expert resource is being procured to assist and will be overseen by the Housing Development and Strategy Manager.

Corporate

Executive Director, Corporate Services & S151 Officer introduced the Corporate Plan confirmed that as part of the Financial Strategy work is underway to develop the budget strategy considering the medium-term forecast showing a budget shortfall from 2025/26. This will be reported on to O&S in September 2024. Additional stress testing previously recommended by O&S is included as are further electoral system changes that are being implemented this year.

Questions submitted by Cllr Dorn relating to KPI's on waste and recycling were addressed. Executive Director, Corporate Services & S151 Officer stated that HCC have paused the development of their inter-authority agreement whilst they await government announcements on new legislation. Once we have more information, we will be able to update our strategy. He also clarified that an error had been made in the plan relating to CP10 and 11, these should have been defensive targets and not have read data only so will be amended.

Members requested that the priorities in relation to IT security (4 and 6) be quantified further so it was clearer what success would look like. In addition Service Priority 7 on climate change is a key service priority yet no related KPI is in place, the outcomes are vague and asked for an explanation.

Executive Director, Corporate Services & S151 Officer stated that the IT outcomes could be discussed at the Service Panel with the IT Manager. In relation to the climate change plan, it was stated that the intention was to bring a more detailed plan and the request for a Climate Change KPI will be passed to the Officer Working Group to take forward.

A member queried Priority 2 asking of the new corporate financial system related to back-end financials rather than public facing items. Additionally, was this related to the withdrawal from the Capita contract and asked for more information on the implementation timescales. It was clarified that it is mainly back-office but also areas such as supplier payments so there is a customer facing element and ultimately it does affect residents.

It was stated that the procurement process is almost concluded, a new supplier will be chosen in a few weeks, we will then start working with them on implementation with an aim to start on 1 April 2025 with a safety net built in. It is partly related to the ending of the contract but also the inability to extend certain elements of that contract, hence the full procurement process.

A member asked how in relation to the climate change priority are the projects going to be measured, what the outcomes mean and how we will we know if they are being achieved. The completion date of March 2025 was also queried as to whether it related to the Everyone Active project.

Executive Director, Corporate Services & S151 Officer explained that the Portfolio Holder will be bring 2 reports a year to O&S Committee and Cabinet reporting on progress and that comments made this evening will be reflected on

and the next report will be strengthened. The financial progress will also be seen by O&S in the quarterly monitoring reports. The date just relates to the end of this Service Plan the programme of works will continue for up to 15 years. This plan contains what we aim to achieve in this year, which will be partly due to resources and partly due to the ability secure external funding.

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change explained that the most likely scenario is that the plan will never have comprehensive information on all elements. Substantial projects will emerge which O&S can monitor.

Members discussed the need for quantifiable numbers to enable determination of reductions and monitor success and failure and prioritise projects. A member gave an example from a part-Council owned building that emphasised the need for prioritisation.

127 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Cabinet work programme was noted.

128 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny work programme was noted.

The meeting closed at 8.18 pm