



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 15th JULY 2020

PRESENT: Councillor T Jay (Chair), Councillors R Bilcliff, S Goodall, M Oates, Dr S People, P Standen, M Summers and P Thurgood

The following officers were present: Anica Goodwin (Executive Director Organisation), Stefan Garner (Executive Director Finance), Lynne Pugh (Assistant Director Finance), Tracey Pointon (Legal Admin & Democratic Services Manager) and Jo Hutchison (Democratic Services, Scrutiny and Elections Officer)

Apologies received from: Councillor(s) B Price

7 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th June 2020 were approved as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor P Standen and seconded by Councillor Dr S People)

8 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

9 CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair reported that following further discussions he would be proposing that the Assembly Rooms report be brought to an additional meeting of this committee later this month.

10 2020/21 FORWARD PLAN

The committee discussed the appropriate time for it to receive details of write offs given the current COVID-19 pandemic and it was considered that a meeting in Quarter 2 or 3 of this year could be identified and the item added to the work plan accordingly.

11 CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT

The Chair welcomed the Executive Director, Finance and the Assistant Director, Finance who were attending this meeting for this item and invited them to provide a brief overview of the Capital Outturn Report which had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 9th July 2020.

The Capital Outturn Report advised members of the final outturn of the Authority's Capital Programme for 2019/20 (subject to audit confirmation) and requested formal approval from Cabinet to re-profile specific budgets into 2020/21. The Committee noted that Councillor Dr S Peuple had submitted questions and received answers from Cabinet on the content of that report, as set out in minute 7 of the 9th July 2020 Cabinet meeting. Cabinet approved the recommendations are set out in the report.

The Committee sought and received clarifications in the following areas:

- GDPR Compliance (contingency) – it was confirmed that whilst European law had introduced this legislation, it would continue in UK law.
- Refurbishment of Marmion House Reception – whilst this work had been currently paused, an assessment would be required around the access for vulnerable people to services.
- Re-profiling of s106 spend was monitored carefully to minimise the risk that funds would be required to be returned.
- Utilisation of the property funds and the proposed re-profiling. The Executive Director, Finance reported that careful monitoring of these funds was undertaken. The Committee considered that prior to further investments under existing delegations being made a review be carried out.

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Cabinet that a review of property funds be undertaken and it was suggested that such review be scrutinised by the Audit & Governance Committee, before any further investments under existing delegations were made.

(Moved by Councillor Dr S Peuple and seconded by Councillor S Goodall).

The Chair thanked the Officers for their attendance.

12 MEMBER TRAINING UPDATE

The Chair welcomed the Executive Director, Organisation who attended the meeting for this item.

The Executive Director highlighted that this report provided an update to the Committee on member training activities since March 2020, particularly focussed on the impact and response to COVID-19 from a member training perspective.

This update supplemented the Member Induction, Training and MemberZone Report attached as Appendix 1 to the report, which was published with the agenda for the Corporate Scrutiny Committee meeting dated 25 March 2020, which was cancelled due to COVID-19.

The Committee considered and largely supported the recommendations in the report with some amendments, particularly in relation to the publication of details related to member training.

RESOLVED that the following be recommended to Cabinet:

1. The impact of COVID-19 on member training, and in particular on the need to deliver training (online only) for the use of new IT systems and new processes to successfully deliver remote meetings, be recognised. This included the delivery for all Councillors as well as focussed training for Chairs and Vice-Chairs by an external trainer as well as extensive internal training.
2. The member induction programme for 2021/22 be reviewed, updated and implemented, noting that:
 - 2.1 the schedule of induction events should be made available to all election agents as early as possible before election day;
 - 2.2 any initial ICT training of newly elected members should be undertaken on a 1-2-1 basis;
 - 2.3 the importance of the induction training should be emphasised to all new members; in particular Safeguarding and Data Protection / FoI.
3. The member training programme be reviewed, updated and implemented, noting that:
 - 3.1 the schedule of training sessions should be made available to all councillors prior to the start of the municipal year, or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter;
 - 3.2 options to consider training sessions at alternative times of the day (day time / twilight / full day conferences) were not generally supported by the members who responded to the survey;
 - 3.3 shorter and interactive training sessions were recommended where practical;
 - 3.4 refresher IT training is available to all interested members and members should be encouraged to contact ICT support to arrange 1-2-1 support;
 - 3.5 training relevant to specific committee members such as planning, licensing and audit & governance should be scheduled to support members' attendance prior to members making decisions at such committees;
 - 3.6 whilst prior to COVID-19, the use of online training as an alternative to face-to-face training was generally not supported, the need to find alternative delivery methods during COVID-19 had demonstrated that some forms of online training are fully effective and should be incorporated going forwards;
 - 3.7 members who responded to the questionnaire considered that the training programme covered the correct topics, although some members requested more formal training, perhaps utilising external training bodies;
 - 3.8 all members who responded to the questionnaire, felt that the training programme had helped them understand their role and responsibilities as a Councillor and the work of the Council.

4. All members be reminded of the importance of attending training sessions and in particular members of the regulatory committees, additionally, all members be reminded of the importance of attending scheduled regulatory training sessions. Attendance at regulatory training sessions by members of the regulatory committees to be recorded on the Council's website.
5. Planning training to be mandatory for all members given all members involvement in the Local Plan. Remote training and online training options to be made available to facilitate this.
6. New members to be actively encouraged to attend the Local Government Association regional event for new councillors.
7. New members to be invited to an introductory meeting with the Leader of the Council and the Mayor.
8. Members to be encouraged to access and use MembersZone regularly which will continue to be updated and the content widened.
9. Democratic Services, the ICT team and Customer Services be thanked for their role in supporting Councillors in the implementation of remote Council and Committee meetings.

(Moved by Councillor Dr S Peuple and seconded by Councillor M Summers)

13 CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

The Committee considered its work plan, and agreed that an additional meeting should be held on 28th July 2020 to consider the Assembly Rooms item and that the work plan should be updated as follows:

Corporate Scrutiny Work Plan

Work Plan 2020 – 2021		
TARGET MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MEETING WHEN ITEM ADDED TO WORK PLAN
28 th July 2020	The Assembly Rooms – review of project	November 2019
25 th August 2020	Quarter 1 2020/21 Quarterly Performance Report	
25 th August 2020	Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2021 onwards - revisit	November 2019 (date change - June 2020)
25 th August 2020	Solway Trading Company update	December 2019 (date added -June 2020)
10 th December 2020	Review of Legal Services (post implementation)	November 2019

10th December 2020	Quarter 2 2020/21 Quarterly Performance Report	
3rd February 2021	Quarter 3 2020/21 Quarterly Performance Report	
Quarter 4 2020/21	Asset Management update	December 2019
Dates to be agreed		
TBC	Market tender progress Update	August 2019
TBC	Parking Toolkit review	October 2019
TBC	Housing Repairs & Investment Contract Review	November 2019
TBC	Solway Trading Company Update (2x per year)	December 2019
TBC	Gungate Masterplan	January 2020
TBC	Review of Cabinet decisions over previous 12 month period (<i>circulate to members post June meeting for comment</i>)	June 2020
TBC	Review of Write-Offs	July 2020

Upcoming Corporate Scrutiny Committee Meetings

28 July 2020 (new)
 25 August 2020
 8 October 2020
 19 November 2020
 10 December 2020
 3 February 2021
 11 March 2021

Chair

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