



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 11th MARCH 2021

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: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive), Anica Goodwin (Executive Director Organisation), Sarah McGrandle (Assistant Director Operations and Leisure), Lorraine Fowkes (Director Legal & Governance, South Staffs), Tracey Pointon (Legal Admin & Democratic Services Manager), Jo Hutchison (Democratic Services, Scrutiny and Elections Officer) and Adam Deakin (Technical Infrastructure Engineer)

Apologies received from: Councillor(s) B Price

67 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the previous meetings held on:

- 28th January 2021; and
- 3rd February 2021

were approved as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor Dr S People and seconded by Councillor S Goodall)

68 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

69 CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair reported that he intended to bring a draft of this Committee's Annual Report to the next Committee meeting, prior to presenting the report to full Council in the new municipal year.

70 RESPONSES TO REPORTS OF THE CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chair updated the Committee on the two sets of recommendations from this Committee which had been presented to Cabinet:

1. Cemeteries Regulations

Following this Committee's consideration of the Cemeteries Regulations, memorial benches at the two January meetings, the Committee's recommendations were brought forward to Cabinet and Council. The Chair reported that:

- at Cabinet on 4th February 2021 Cabinet:
 - a) Noted the recommendation from Corporate Scrutiny that the Cemeteries Policy be referred back to full Council with a recommendation to leave the policy unchanged;
 - b) Accepted that the policy was correct and that Cllr D Cook would write back to Keeley Bunker's family stating a full review had taken place and it was not feasible to place a bench in Wigginton Cemetery and the Leader would work with them to find an alternative place that would be appropriate;
 - c) Agreed that the Cemeteries Regulations be reviewed on a five yearly cycle and;
 - d) Agreed that the Portfolio Holder and Assistant Director would look to pull together realistic options that could be consulted upon with the public potentially in early summer on how we could achieve memorialisation in the town that was appropriate.
- at Council on 23rd February 2021, the Chair updated Council on the outcomes, and in particular that the main policy should remain unchanged, and highlighted the additional recommendations this Committee made to Cabinet regarding alternative memorial options.

2. Quarterly Performance Report

Following this Committee's consideration of the QPR report at the 3 February 2021 meeting, the Chair reported that he brought the Committee's recommendations to Cabinet at its meeting on 18th February 2021. The Committee's recommendations were to include details of the additional information sought by this Committee in the QPR when presented to Cabinet. At its meeting on 18th February, Cabinet approved the recommendation that the additional information which had been sought by the Committee be added to the report in the form of an additional page, and such details had been included in the QPR report which Cabinet considered at that meeting.

71 CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FROM CABINET / COUNCIL

No items were raised.

72 2020/21 FORWARD PLAN

There were no new items raised from the Forward Plan.

73 LEGAL SERVICES REVIEW

The Chair welcomed Ms Anicia Goodwin (Executive Director, Organisation) and Ms Lorraine Fowkes (Director Legal & Governance, South Staffordshire Council) to the meeting, who took the Committee through the report. The report provided an update to the Committee on the first 12 months since the implementation of the shared legal services partnership.

The Executive Director, Organisation provided an overview of the process which had led to the establishment of the shared legal service and an overview of the performance of the service for the first 12 months from January 2020. The impact of COVID-19 on aspects of the service was highlighted, in terms of the planned roll out of the case management system. Areas where additional support was required and also specialist legal support were highlighted.

The Committee also received an overview of the areas for development. The Committee welcomed the detail provided in the report and thanked and congratulated the team for delivering a new service on budget during COVID-19. The Committee sought and received clarification in the following areas:

1. Visibility to the shared service of key corporate projects which could require legal support. It was reported that processes to support this, such as in respect of the Future High Street fund work, were in place and that where specialist advice was required the shared legal service would manage the procurement of legal support.
2. Whether it was planned for there to be a continuation of remote working by legal team to support Committees, and whether any resources (in terms of IT equipment) were available. It was reported that work was underway to ensure appropriate arrangements would be in place post May 2021, and that consideration would be given to ensuring the required IT was available.
3. Whether consideration had been given to broadening the service to other local authorities, which it was noted would be subject to any necessary resources being available.

RESOLVED that the Committee had considered the information, analysis and actions contained within the report.

(Moved by Councillor P Thurgood and seconded by Councillor R Bilcliff)

74 CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

It was agreed that the Chair should continue to use discretion to update the Committee's Work Plan as necessary.

Corporate Scrutiny Work Plan

Work Plan 2020 – 2021		
TARGET MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	MEETING WHEN ITEM ADDED TO

		WORK PLAN
24 March 2021	Gungate Public Consultation Report	
March / June 2021	Review of Cabinet decisions over previous 12 month period	December 2020
Quarter 4 2020/21	Asset Management update	December 2019
June 2021 (tbc)	Review of Write Offs (full update)	July 2020
Dates to be agreed		
TBC	Update on corporate prioritisation	August 2020
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 – March & September)	December 2019
TBC	Gungate Masterplan	January 2020
TBC	Customer Portal - post implementation review	November 2020

Upcoming Corporate Scrutiny Committee Meetings

24 March 2021

75 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That in members of the press and public be now excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and/or 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

(Moved by Councillor Dr S Peuple and seconded by Councillor R Bilcliff)

76 UPDATE ON SOLWAY (TAMWORTH) LIMITED

The Chair introduced Mr Andrew Barratt (the Chief Executive) to the meeting for this item. Mr Barratt updated the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on progress to date regarding Solway (Tamworth) Limited.

The Committee considered the report and noted that this matter would be reported to this Committee on a twice yearly basis.

RESOLVED that the recommendations set out in the report be approved.

(Moved by Councillor Dr S Peaple and seconded by Councillor R Bilcliff)

77 UPDATE ON POTENTIAL LEGAL ACTIONS

The Chair welcomed the Assistant Director, Operations and Leisure to the meeting who provided an overview of the report which provided an update to the Committee on potential legal actions, as requested by the Committee at its meeting in October 2020.

The Committee considered the report and thanked the Assistant Director for her update.

Chair

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