



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 16th SEPTEMBER 2024

PRESENT: Councillors C Dean, D Foster, B Clarke and L Smith

The following officers were present: Stephen Gabriel (Chief Executive), Zoe Wolicki (Assistant Director People), Tracey Pointon (Legal Admin & Democratic Services Manager) and Laura Sandland (Democratic and Executive Support Officer)

42 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N Arkney and S Daniels.

43 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 8th August 2024 and 29th August 2024 were approved as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor B Clarke and seconded by Councillor L Smith)

44 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

45 QUESTION TIME:

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC NO. 1 Under Schedule 4, 13, Huw Loxton will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor C Dean the following question: -

At the corporate scrutiny meeting on the 5th September, both yourself and the portfolio holder, Councillor Smith, made it very clear you felt the Tamworth Information Centre in the assembly rooms is an unsuitable venue for residents to go with council enquiries. Could you therefore please explain why you intend to continue offering the full customer service offer from this venue, alongside the planned reopening of a council reception at Marmion House?

Response

The primary function of front-facing customer services at the TIC will continue to be delivering box office and information centre services. However, our goal is to resolve enquiries at the first point of contact. Therefore, the same trained officers will answer questions and support residents wherever they visit, ensuring a customer-centred approach. It is acknowledged that for certain types of enquiries, the TIC venue has been unsuitable due to its open space and limited private areas. In such cases, Marmion House offers a more suitable environment.

This approach enhances the service by offering a broader range of options and opening hours. The assembly rooms' location is a sensible choice for continuing to provide information centre services, such as bus passes, parking permits, seasonal trails, local information, and guides. This is especially relevant given the ongoing regeneration work and anticipated changes in footfall.

Supplementary

Are you able to defer the decision for 6 months to do a full engagement with the public and other stakeholders and to give all 30 Councillors an opportunity to have their say at a future meeting.

Response

Thank you for your comments and I appreciate where you are coming from but in answer to that I would say we have consulted quite widely, every time we go out and speak to people on the doorstep they want to see those front facing services back at Marmion House, and only today at the tenants conference when they were told about it, there was a round of applause, there is a real appetite for this to happen and I understand your concerns about the whole building and those plans that were made to decommission a while ago but there were no plans in place for where the council's forever home was going to be there were only plans for an interim office space which would have cost a lot of money, much more than we are spending on opening the front desk up. As I say this is something we are being asked about continually and its something that our whole group are committed to do and it is one of our manifesto pledges and we will be carrying on and we will take this thorough as arranged.

46 MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES

None

47 MARMION HOUSE RECEPTION AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Report of the Leader of the Council to update on details for a proposal for reopening reception at Marmion House and the steps needed to make this area fit for purpose for our customers once again. The report also proposes to relocate all Committee meetings from the Town Hall to the council chamber at Marmion House. And proposes to update audio visual technology to enhance meeting delivery and undertake minor refurbishment work to the current chamber.

RESOLVED: Cabinet

1. Agreed to reopen the reception area at Marmion House to provide face-to-face customer services which meet the needs of the whole community as follows: Monday, Wednesday, Friday between 10.00am and 2.00pm & Tuesday and Thursday 2.00pm - 6.00pm
2. approved the addition to the establishment for up to two years 0.92 (Full Time Equivalent) Customer Experience Assistant, 0.6 FTE Customer Service Officer funded from reserves.
3. Approved the redesign of the reception area to support the customer service offer which will open within four months of Cabinet approval (subject to contractors).
4. Agreed to review opening hours, usage, and customer feedback on a weekly basis with a full review at six months.
5. Agreed to continue to develop the service to explore and incorporate co-location working with statutory partners, the voluntary sector and community groups.
6. Agreed to continue to deliver the full customer service offer from the Tamworth Information Centre at the Assembly Rooms during their opening hours.
7. Agreed to relocate all council meetings to Marmion House upon completion of audio-visual technology installation and minor refurbishment of the council chamber, except for the civic ceremonies; and
8. approved the repurposing of capital funds identified for Recovery and Reset and Town Hall improvement projects to fund refurbishments to the chamber and Marmion House reception.
9. A further recommendation was added that Cabinet

Agreed to consider the option in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder of the sustainability of the re-opening of the front door with the aim to negate the environmental impact.

(Moved by Councillor B Clarke and seconded by Councillor L Smith)

The Chair thanked Officers for the work that has been put into the report.

Leader