

TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 22nd January, 2014

Present:- Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Shenton – in the Chair
Councillors D Becket, Mrs Burgess, Fear, Hambleton, Mrs Hambleton, Howells, Jones, Taylor.J and Waring

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

It was confirmed that a written response would be provided by Friday in relation to the request on page 3 of the agenda for an estimate of the total staffing cost to run the budget consultation exercise.

A full written response would also be provided to Cllr Becket by Friday in relation to his question submitted at the previous meeting.

Members enquired as to whether the information referred to on page 5 of the agenda in relation to the minutes from the County Council had been provided to Cllr Holland. The enquiry would be passed to the Council Leader for clarification.

A member stated that he did not feel that his views had been accurately recorded in the minutes in relation to the budget consultation exercise and wished to highlight the fact that the consultation exercise was not something he would want to see repeated every year.

Resolved: That the minutes be agreed and the comments from Members noted.

3. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2014/2015

A report was submitted to review progress on the completion of the revenue and capital budgets for 2014/15 following agreement of the 5 year Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Chair provided a summary of points that had been raised at the Scrutiny Café which had been held on 14th January 2014.

The Executive Director for Resources and Support Services highlighted the changes that had been made to the report since the Committee had last seen it.

Members congratulated officers on a well presented and high standard budget report.

Resolved: (a) That the report be submitted to Cabinet

4. SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES 2014/2015

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The Executive Director for Resources and Support Services confirmed that the report had been considered by Cabinet on 15th January 2014.

Members highlighted the charges in relation to pre planning advice and stated that these would have to be implemented sensibly. It was agreed that this comment be taken back to the Leader as it was thought that home owners were entitled to 30 minutes of free planning advice.

Members were pleased that there was no plan to increase car parking fees and feedback in relation to the double ticketing appeared very favourable.

There was some confusion in relation to the collection charges on the restricted appendix. A written response would be provided to clarify these charges.

Resolved: (a) That the report be received.

(b) That clarification be sought in relation to the charges listed on the restricted appendix.

5. BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

A report was submitted to provide the Committee with the Financial and Performance Review, 2013/14 First Three Quarters (April -December).

Members expressed some concern in relation to 1.1.2 in relation to the percentage of food establishments that were broadly compliant with good hygiene law. Members considered that 15% non-compliance was high. It was agreed that this target be taken back to officers and the portfolio holder for consideration.

It was confirmed that the drop in results at 1.3.2 was due to the fact that there were no brown bin collections during the winter months.

Members queried whether the arrow at 2.1.3 should be negative. Officers agreed to investigate this. It was also stated that some of the target figures were reliant on information being received from outside organisations such as the DWP and that this explained the lack of information at 2.1.4. Members requested that further information regarding which other organisations fed into the performance statistics be provided to the next meeting of the Committee.

A request was made for clarity in relation to the figure at 3.2.3 and whether this was total attendances at the theatre or just attendances to watch plays.

Members also raised some concerns in relation to the figures at 3.3.4 but it was thought that this was an issue best considered by another scrutiny committee as it related to access to sports facilities rather than resources or performance.

Resolved: (a) That further information regarding other organisations feeding into the performance statistics be provided to the next meeting.

(b) That officers provide clarity regarding the indicators at 2.1.3 and 3.2.3.

6. UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL PLAN

A report was submitted in relation to the Council Plan that was proposed for the period 2014-15 which was to be used as a preparation year for the council to undertake further work to ensure it was fit for the future and prepared to face the

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expected and unexpected challenges of 2015-20 as part of the on-going 20/20 vision work.

The Head of Business Improvements and Partnerships requested that any comments relating to the plan be fed back to him after the meeting and highlighted the fact that the draft plan circulated at the meeting was a work in progress.

Resolved: That members provide any feedback on the plan to the Head of Business Improvements and Partnerships.

7. REPORT FROM THE CONSTITUTION REVIEW WORKING GROUP

A report was submitted in relation to the work carried out by the Constitution Review Working Group. The Group consists of three Members, Cllr Elizabeth Shenton (Chair), Cllr Mark Holland and Cllr Nigel Jones.

Members requested that clarity be sought from Cabinet as to what it viewed the role of a Cabinet Panel to be.

The Committee thanked Martin Stevenson for his hard work in relation to the constitution review working Group and the preparation of the report.

A final report would be submitted to full council in April stating the working group's recommendations for constitutional changes.

Resolved: That cabinet provide clarity in relation to the role of a Cabinet Panel.

8. WORK PLAN

Resolved: That the names of officers be added to the work plan as well as their job titles.

9. URGENT BUSINESS

10. KEELE GOLF CENTRE

Members of the Active and Cohesive and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been invited to attend the meeting for the discussion of the report on Keele Golf Centre that had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting 15th January 2014.

It was confirmed that a further report would be considered by Cabinet at the meeting due to be held on 5th March 2014.

COUNCILLOR MRS ELIZABETH SHENTON
Chair