

FINANCE, RESOURCES AND PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 12th December, 2016

Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

Present:-

Councillor Joan Winfield – in the Chair

Councillors

S Hambleton, T Hambleton, Holland, Loades, Pickup, Proctor, Waring and Wright

Officers

Executive Director (Operational Services) - David Adams,
Jayne Briscoe - Scrutiny Officer,
Phil Jones - Head of Communications and
Executive Director (Resources and Support Services) - Kelvin Turner

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Frankish and Spence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2016 be agreed as a correct record.

4. COMMUNICATIONS - MOVING FORWARD

The Head of Communications presented this report which outlined proposals for enhancing the way the Council communicates with residents, elected members and staff whilst at the same time delivering efficiency savings as part of the budget proposals for 2017/18.

The main focus of the discussion was The Reporter. Although a number of members voiced support for the proposals outlined in the report on the future direction for The Reporter, that it be printed on a twice yearly basis and made available for public collection at locations around the Borough, other members suggested that it should no longer be produced in any format and the additional £12,210 savings this would generate put towards the Medium Term Financial Strategy budget funding gap for 2017/18.

Although some support was voiced for the proposals there were concerns expressed that the circulation method proposed would not work and that if The Reporter was to continue to be produced then it should be on a basis to that currently used where arrangements were in place with a distribution company to deliver the publication to the majority of addresses in the Borough.

Agreed That the comments of Members be referred to Cabinet.

5. SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

With respect to the proposed changes to market stall charges which were verbally reported at the meeting by the Portfolio Holder members of the Scrutiny Committee were unable to scrutinise this information due to lack of prior notice.

A member was disappointed at the budget proposals which were considered to lack new initiatives to generate income and failed to include examples of where marketing skills could be used to help mitigate the forthcoming funding changes. This view was supported and it was suggested that the Authority should be looking at ways to generate a continuous income stream.

Continuing the scrutiny of the revenue generated by car parks and some licence fees and the costs of provision and enforcement revenue, a member suggested that a review be carried out into the cost effectiveness of the service which was delivered by the Borough and whether, in the case of car parks, this could be done better in partnership with an external operator. The Chair cautioned against this approach as it was considered that this may lead to increased charges and a possible reduction in consumer footfall.

At this point in the meeting the Chair reported on correspondence received from the BID concerning a lack of consultation with the business community around the issue of car parking charges, which was a matter for Cabinet to address.

Agreed That the comments of this Scrutiny Cabinet be conveyed to Cabinet members.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

7. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Business.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING -25 JANUARY 2017

The next meeting of this Scrutiny Committee will be held on 25 January, 2017.

9. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

Resolved That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item because it is likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

10. TRADE REFUSE SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

This report related to the proposed scale of fees and charges relating to the trade refuse collection service.

Agreed That the report be noted.

11. TRADE REFUSE - SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

COUNCILLOR JOAN WINFIELD
Chair

Meeting concluded at 8.10 pm.