

FINANCE, ASSETS & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 11th April, 2019
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

Present:- Councillor Mike Stubbs – in the Chair

Councillors:

G. Burnett

J. Cooper

A. Fear

T. Kearon

S. Moffat

J Tagg

P Waring

Officers

Jayne Briscoe - Democratic Services
Officer, Martin Hamilton - Chief
Executive, Karen Hollinshead, Sarah
Wilkes - Finance Manager and Jan Willis
- Interim Executive Director - Resources
and Support Services

Also in attendance the Leader Councillor
S Tagg, Portfolio Holder for Corporate &
Service Improvement, People &
Partnerships.

1. APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Councillor Pickup who was represented by Councillor Moffat.

The Chair welcomed Councillor J Tagg to the meeting; Councillor J Tagg replaced Councillor Harrison who had stood down from the Council. The Committee sent their best wishes to Councillor Harrison.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING - 24 JANUARY 2019

Resolved: That, with the inclusion of an apology from Councillor Proctor within the record of attendance the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2019 be agreed as a correct record.

4. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

In opening, the Chair of the Committee requested that the Leader advise the Deputy Leader of the Council that a question which had been raised at Full Council by the Chairman of Finance, Assets and Performance Committee and in the Chairs opinion not fully answered, was covered in the Quarterly Performance report to Finance, Assets and Performance and could he please ask him to take note of it.

In accordance with a previous request by this Committee (17/12/2019) to scrutinise the performance of the Council against key performance indicators the Chief Executive presented the Quarterly Performance report – Third Quarter 2018/19.

The Leader, took a holistic view of the performance figures, considered the overall picture and indicated that the Borough was heading in the right direction, although there remained areas of concern where work was underway.

Priority 1: Local Services for Local People

- *Green waste.* Members were concerned that semi-composted waste could harm the wellbeing of grazing animals and wished to explore how to convey this message to the general public through education, enforcement and Borough social media.

Take up of the green waste service may be a slow build, if recycling targets failed to be achieved it was suggested that a special offer could be posted later in the summer.

- *Human Resources.* Members had concerns around the nature of illness/sickness absence and asked whether, in the case of mental illness this was as a result of pressure at work. The main areas of sickness related absence concerned the Depot and J2 where the nature of the work may contribute to the absence rates. Members were optimistic that the new sickness policy would have a positive impact. A member highlighted the significance of valuing employees.

Priority 2: A Healthy, Active and Safe Borough

- *ASB cases.* Members asked for a breakdown of the quarterly figures from the Staffordshire Commissioner. The Chief Executive suggested that the speed with which cases were resolved was important.

Priority 3: A Town Centre for All

- A proactive communications strategy would be a useful tool to inform traders and the public of anticipated works around the market area. In this respect lines of communication with utilities and Staffordshire County Council were important.

The Chief Executive explained how the market should be viewed as a single entity and curated as a whole to attract visitors with an attractive unique product.

5. ETHICAL DEBT COLLECTION

Following on from a decision at Council (20/01/2019) which asked this Committee to review the Councils debt collection policies the Revenues Manager submitted a report which provided an overview of these policies and procedures which included information about alternative approaches adopted by other councils.

In reviewing the information Members were sensitive to the individual whilst acknowledging responsibility to Council tax payers in the Borough as a whole.

Agreed: That a local code of practice be developed for scrutiny by this Committee in consultation with the Health, Wellbeing and Partnership Scrutiny Committee.

6. WORK PROGRAMME

Agreed: That, in consultation with the Health, Wellbeing and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee, the 27 June meeting consider reports on: - the Lyme Lottery; The Guildhall and A Local Code of Practice on debt collection.

7. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

8. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 27 JUNE 2019

COUNCILLOR MIKE STUBBS
Chair

Meeting concluded at 8.30 pm