

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Meeting held on Thursday, 11th April, 2019.

Present:- Councillors Dhaliwal (Chair), Minhas, D Parmar, S Parmar, Rana and Sharif

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors R Sandhu and Sarfraz

PART I

75. Declarations of Interest

None were received.

76. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 14th March 2019

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2019 be approved as a correct record.

77. Action Progress Report

The Committee was provided with an update on actions arising from previous meetings. In response to a question, it was confirmed that the report the Committee had requested on the use of Section 106 receipts would be included in the work programme for the next municipal year.

Resolved – That details of the Action Progress Report be noted.

78. Member Questions

None were received.

79. Buses - Fares and Access for Residents

The Transport Strategy Team Leader introduced a report the provided the Committee with a summary of local authority powers and considerations relating to setting bus fares and accessibility.

Members were informed of the limited powers that local authorities had in relation to setting fares. The majority of bus services in Slough were provided by commercial operators who were able to determine the level of fares. The Bus Services Act 2017 provided a means by which local authorities could control bus fares as part of the overall service proposition but only with the consent of the Secretary of State. The Act also strengthened provision to influence fares through partnership working with bus operators but fares could not be imposed through this mechanism. Members noted the position regarding multi-operator ticketing arrangements and that in relation to accessibility the Health Scrutiny Panel's disability and task and finish group had conducted detailed work in this area and would finalise their recommendations shortly.

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The Chair expressed disappointment that the report focused solely on the legislative position and the Committee would not be able to properly scrutinise the issue as it had not been provided with specific information about fares and bus patronage in Slough. Members commented that the Council should use all available means to improve bus services for residents particularly by ensuring the Quality Bus Partnership was effective in influencing operators. It was proposed and agreed that a further report be brought to the Committee in July 2019 to include comparative data on fares with neighbouring authorities, information on routes subsidised by SBC; issues and options on how the Council could promote the improvement of bus services locally; how the Council was working with business/partners and with neighbouring authorities to develop and manage services.

Resolved –

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That the Committee receive a further report early in the new municipal year.

80. Adult Social Care Transformation Programme

The Service Lead Adult Social Care Operations introduced a report that updated the Committee on the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme which covered new ways of working, developing social capital, implementing integrated care and promoting self care.

The report set out the progress made in delivering the Transformation Programme since the last report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in November 2018. Members were reminded that the two key drivers behind the programme were the statutory requirements of the Care Act 2014 and respond to the rising financial and demographic pressures on adult social care. It was noted that the 2018/19 adult social care budget projected an overspend of circa £0.6m due to unavoidable cost pressures and a recovery plan was in place. It was noted that the anticipated Government Green Paper on the reform of adult social care funding had been delayed and a report would be provided to the Health Scrutiny Panel on the implications for Slough once it was published.

Section 5 of the report detailed a wide range of activities in Tranche 2 of the Transformation Programme which included the Integrated Care Decision Making programme as part of the Frimley Integrated Care System. The projects such as Home First, Anticipatory Care Planning and Community Multi-Disciplinary Teams built upon the successful work already undertaken since 2017 to minimise delays in hospital discharges. The work being done on community delivery and engagement and the early intervention work to Make Every Contact Count was explained.

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The Committee discussed the use of direct payments which gave people more flexibility and choice in the services they received. The proportion of clients receiving direct payments had risen from 16.8% to 26% in the past two years and 526 people currently received such support. Members discussed the monitoring and controls in place to ensure they were used on appropriate services. The Committee received assurance that payments were monitored closely to ensure they were not misspent and monies were provided into dedicated bank accounts for which regular statements were provided.

Members asked how often clients needs were reviewed to assess whether they were receiving the appropriate level of care as their needs changed. The Service Lead stated that it would depend on the individual needs of the client but reviews took place annually as a minimum and more regularly if required. At the conclusion of the discussion Members congratulated the team on the progress that had been made in the past two years, particularly in promoting independence for many people. The report was noted and it was agreed to receive an annual update in April 2020.

Resolved –

- (a) That the update on the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme be noted.
- (b) That the Committee continue to receive annual updates with the next report scheduled in April 2020.

81. Performance and Projects Report - Quarter 3 2018/19

The Committee received a presentation that summarised the latest performance information for the third quarter of 2018/19 which included the corporate balanced scorecard indicators, update on the portfolio of key Council projects and the delivery of manifesto commitments.

It was noted that the key improvements since the previous quarter were the percentage gap between disadvantaged pupils and others at Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and maths; the number of adult social care direct payments which had risen above 500 for the first time; and a reduction in the number of households in temporary accommodation which had been a major and growing pressure in the past two years. Four indicators were 'red' rated including the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others at Key Stage 4, uptake of health checks, crime rate and Business Rates income. The context behind the headline indicators and work being done to address performance was outlined. The majority of key projects were rated either 'green' or 'amber' and almost all manifesto commitments were rated green meaning they were largely on track.

Members asked about the reasons why the indicator on Business Rates income had slipped from 'amber' to 'red' and it was responded that it was anticipated it would come back on target by the fourth quarter. The position regarding the 'red' rated Grove Academy Gold Project was raised and it was

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highlighted that planning permission had been approved since the end of the reporting period which was December 2018. A Member raised the issue of air quality referred to the manifesto update. It was noted that the Health Scrutiny Panel had recently received a more detailed report on this issue which Members may find helpful should they require further information on the work being done to monitor and address the problem.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the performance and projects report for the third quarter was noted.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

82. Annual Scrutiny Report 2018/19

The Senior Democratic Services Officer outlined details of the Annual Scrutiny Report 2018/19 for Members consideration. The annual report included a review of the scrutiny work programme for the past year and assessed the impact scrutiny had had on influencing policy and holding the Executive to account. In particular, the work the Committee and panels had done to scrutinise the Council's Five Year Plan and the work of task and finish groups on disability and children centres was noted.

The Chair thanked the Vice-Chair of the Committee and all Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the panels for their support and leadership throughout the year. Officers were also thanked for their contributions to the Overview and Scrutiny function. At the conclusion of the discussion it was agreed to request that Council endorse the Annual Scrutiny Report at its meeting on 23rd April 2019.

Resolved – That the Annual Scrutiny Report be endorsed.

83. Annual Petitions Report 2018/19

The Committee received the Annual Petitions Report 2018/19. A total of 29 petitions had been received for the period April 2018 to March 2019, which was an increase from the 27 in the previous year. A summary of the subject matter and response to the petitions was noted.

Resolved – That the Annual Petitions Report 2018/19 be noted.

84. Members' Attendance Record

Resolved – That details of the Members Attendance Record be noted.

85. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 13th July 2019.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.55 pm)