

**Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Meeting held on Thursday, 10th January, 2019.**

**Present:-** Councillors Arvind Dhaliwal (Chair), R Sandhu (Vice-Chair, from 6.34pm), R Bains, Minhas, D Parmar, S Parmar, Rana, Sarfraz (until 9.10pm) and Sharif

**Also present under Rule 30:-** Councillor Strutton

**PART I**

**44. Declarations of Interest**

Agenda Item 7: Contract Management, Overall Policy and Repairs, Maintenance and Investment Contract – Councillor Bains declared that a family member was employed by Osborne Property Services Ltd.

Agenda Item 9: Member Call In Chalvey Regeneration Strategy – Councillor Sharif declared that he was a signatory to the Member Call In and would participate in the discussion of the item but not vote on the matter.

**45. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 15th November 2018**

**Resolved** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018 be approved as a correct record.

*(Councillor Sandhu joined the meeting)*

**46. Action Progress Report**

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

**47. Member Questions**

None were received.

**48. Thames Valley Transactional Services Centre- Contract Year 7 Half Year Report April 2018 - September 2018**

The Committee received a presentation from the Council's Service Lead for Customer and Communications, Vijay McGuire, and Arvato's Key Account & Delivery Director, Kurt Goldman, that provided a strategic overview of the contractual performance of the Thames Valley Transactional Services Public Private Sector Partnership for the period between April to September 2018.

In line with previous requests from the Committee, the information provided a high level overview of performance and current issues which is summarised as follows:

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- Collection rates for Council Tax and Business Rates continued to be closely monitored and whilst they were slightly behind the in year targets, Arvato had brought in additional resources to support the successful delivery of the targets by year end.
- There were pressures to meet the 20 day target for the average time to process benefits claims, but the figure was improving. The impact of Universal Credit roll out in Slough since April was noted.
- All transactional finance and 99.8% of transactional HR KPIs had been achieved during the period.
- KPI reporting for IT remained challenging due to system functionality but it was anticipated that a new IT service management tool would address this for future reporting.
- The commitment to deliver 117 apprenticeship opportunities over the contract period was on track with 67 young people benefitting to date.
- The contractual requirement to re-locate the head office to Slough had brought new business to Slough including 300 staff for BMW and 170 for Zara.

The Committee discussed the progress being made to encourage more use of online tools to handle customer enquiries rather than rely face-to-face or telephone contact. It was responded that the number of calls and face to face enquiries was going up and any shift to online would require investment in new technology. The Council was developing a new customer experience strategy and Arvato were engaged in the process and would be important in the delivery of any new approach.

A wide range of other issues were discussed including the delivery of KPIs relating to the number of complaints upheld and the timeliness of issuing Blue Badges. It was agreed that a breakdown of data relating to the KPI on the percent of complaints upheld or partially upheld to be available for Committee Members at a future meeting. Speaking under Rule 30, Councillor Strutton asked about the impact of a new ITIL Certified Service Desk Manager. It was responded that the appointment had only recently been made and the Committee would be provided with further information in the next report.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the report was noted.

**Resolved –** That details of the presentation be noted.

### 49. **Contract Management - Overall Policy and Repairs, Maintenance and Investment Contract**

The Committee considered a report that updated on the Council's contract management procedures and the progress made by the new Repairs, Maintenance and Investment (RMI) service partner, Osborne Property Services Ltd, in the first year.

Members were informed that a significant amount of work had been done to develop and improve the Council's approach to contract management in response to internal audit recommendations. A new corporate commercial

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function had been established along with a new Commercial Strategy which was set out in Appendix A to the report. The Council had considered the options about how best to manage contracts in the future, either through a centralised or decentralised system, and had decided to pursue a hybrid model.

Detailed consideration was given to scrutinising the first year of the new RMI contract. The previous contract with Interserve was not considered fit for purpose and the new contract had been developed following extensive engagement with councillors, staff, tenants and leaseholders to address some of the historic issues that had emerged. Members were updated on the key features of the new contract that had supported improvements including the co-location of the SBC client team with Osbornes at Hawker House; a new payment mechanism; fully functional new IT interface; and strengthened governance arrangements. The progress in achieving key performance indicators was set out and it was noted that resident satisfaction levels, the number of calls to the contact centre lost and the average call waiting time had all improved through the first year. Representatives from Osbornes highlighted that the first year of the contract had focused on operational delivery and as good progress had been made the next year would also focus on the social return on investment.

The Committee discussed the accessibility of the services to elderly and vulnerable residents and it was responded that in addition to the enhanced access through the new app, more traditional methods such as the call centre were still available. A Member highlighted concerns about the data that had been available under the previous contractor and asked whether any further action had been taken to investigate any issues. The previous contractor had had exclusive ownership of the data and as it had not been inherited the priority had been to improve the future position. Huge changes had been made and, for example, residents could now track repairs online and check costs for the first time. An end of contract audit had taken place but this was separate from working with the new contractor to deliver improvements. Other issues discussed included the staffing position of the 108 people who transferred to the new contractor under TUPE.

Speaking under Rule 30, Councillor Strutton welcomed the improved governance and early indications of performance improvements. He highlighted the importance of ensuring suitably qualified staff were sent to make repairs and the process for training and upskilling the workforce was explained.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Chair thanked the SBC team and representatives of Osbornes for the comprehensive report. It was agreed that the Committee receive six monthly updates on contractual performance in the future.

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### Resolved –

- (a) That details of the report be noted.
- (b) The Committee note that the RMI report was an indicative report to be reviewed by the RMI Strategic Management Board at its meeting on 24th January.
- (c) That the Committee receive twice yearly strategic overview of contractual performance of the RMI partnership, from April – March to fit with budget monitoring and financial reporting for both partners. A summary report to be provided in May 2019 for 2018/19.

### 50. Childhood Obesity Update

The Public Health Programme Officer provided the Committee with an update on work being undertaken by the Council to reduce levels of childhood obesity.

Childhood obesity remained a local priority for a number of years and was an integral part of the Five Year Plan. Current data indicated that 20% of children in reception year were overweight or obese and this rose to 40% by year 6. It was recognised that childhood obesity was a complex issue and that changing the behaviours of children and families required a long term approach. The Council was seeking to address the problems by providing services in 20 primary schools and children's centre and with a range of programmes to promote activity and encourage healthier food choices.

The Committee discussed the Active Movement behaviour change programme which was originally piloted in two children's centres, five primary and two secondary schools in late 2017. Members commented that the programme was excellent and the Committee supported the roll out and expansion across Slough. Concern was raised about the unhealthy food choices often provided by parents in school lunchboxes and asked what action the Council was taking to address the problem. A healthy lunchbox scheme was adopted by a number of schools and recruitment was underway for two new posts to support schools and address gaps in provision.

The issues of takeaways near to schools and low levels of physical activity were raised and a Member suggested making swimming free at Council leisure centres. It was responded that there were free facilities such as green gyms and multi use games areas in neighbourhoods to promote activity and that behaviour change was the key to improving performance. It was recognised that parents had the most important role to play in this and should therefore be part of programmes to address the problem.

At the conclusion of the discussion the report was noted.

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**Resolved** – That the expansion of the holistic ‘Active Movement’ programme to all early years settings and across all Secondary Schools to ensure that Slough children are provided with the best start in life to be active and look after their weight be supported by the Committee and thus ensure a continuous pathway of behaviour change to reduce sedentary behaviour and inactivity from early years through to primary and secondary schools and on into adulthood.

### 51. Performance and Projects Report: Quarter 2 2018/19

The Performance & Information Manager gave a presentation on the latest performance information for the second quarter of 2018/19; updated on the progress of key projects; and delivery against manifesto commitments.

It was noted that 9 of the 17 high level performance targets in the Corporate Balanced Scorecard were rated ‘green’, with a further 6 ‘amber’ and 1 ‘red’. One of the measures did not have a target assigned. There had been a deterioration in performance of four indicators since the previous quarter relating to child protection plans, uptake of health checks, crime rates and proportion of residents claiming certain benefits. However, there had been an improvement in several indicators including the number of 16 to 17 year olds not in education, employment or training which was 3.2% in Slough compared to 6% nationally.

The one ‘red’ rated indicator related to the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation which had risen significantly in recent years. The Council had taken action to address the problem including investment in James Elliman Homes and this had contributed to the first decline in the number for two years.

An overview of progress of the Council’s 25 key projects was provided and it was noted that they were largely on track. Members were updated on the latest position on the ‘red’ rated projects including some schools projects such as the Grove Academy. The delivery of manifesto commitments was also detailed in the report and of 57 pledges it was reported that 47 were rated ‘green’. At the conclusion of the discussion the report was noted.

**Resolved** – That the Council’s current performance as measured by the performance indicators within the balanced scorecard, the progress status of the gold projects and the manifesto commitments be noted.

*(Councillor Sarfaz left the meeting)*

### 52. Member Call-in: Chalvey Regeneration Strategy

The Committee considered a Member Call-in of the Chalvey Regeneration Strategy considered by the Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

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Councillor Sharif, a ward member for Chalvey, explained the reasons for the Call-in which included the traffic, parking and pollution issues caused by planned major developments in Phase 3 of the strategy including significant new housing at the St Martin's Place and Montem sites, the redevelopment of Tower & Ashbourne Houses and the Grove Academy new through school. The major developments needed to include a corresponding improvement in supporting local infrastructure in Chalvey to avoid adverse impacts on existing residents.

The Director of Regeneration informed the Committee that there was a separate piece of work taking place on traffic and transport infrastructure, including for Chalvey, that would seek to address the pressures caused by regeneration. Councillor Sharif expressed the view that residents had not been fully consulted on the plans and that more engagement should have taken place.

Members agreed that it was important to ensure that the pressures arising from new development were properly addressed in an holistic way and that local residents were consulted. The Committee was concerned that the plans to increase the number of properties in the Tower & Ashbourne House scheme was overdevelopment and agreed to refer this view to the Cabinet. It was also agreed that the Committee state that the redevelopment on the Montem Leisure Centre site should include the provision of appropriate open space.

### **Recommended to Cabinet –**

That Cabinet give consideration to the following comments regarding Phase Three of the Chalvey Regeneration Strategy:

- (a) Redevelopment of Tower and Ashbourne – Subject to planning, this Council led project will see the demolition of the existing tower blocks, to provide circa 195 flats and houses – a net increase of 80-90 units. The Committee considered the proposals as over development of the site and that any final plans to include a children's play area.
- (b) Redevelopment of Montem Leisure Centre. The Committee sought assurance that there would be provision for appropriate green open space within the development.

### **53. Forward Work Programme**

Details of the Work Programme as detailed in the report were considered and noted.

**Resolved** - That details of the Forward Work Programme be noted.

### **54. Members' Attendance Record 2018/19**

**Resolved** – That details of the Members Attendance record be noted.

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### **55. Date of Next Meeting - 31st January 2019**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 9.37 pm)