

CORPORATE AND EXTERNAL ISSUES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING, 6TH OCTOBER, 2014

Present – The Mayor, Councillors Sherrington (Vice-Chairman), Ayub, Bury, Cox, Critchley, Evans, Francis, Greenhalgh, Hayes, Rushton and Watters.

Also in attendance

Councillor Morris	-	Executive Cabinet Member Leader's Portfolio
Councillor Adia	-	Executive Cabinet Member Regeneration and Resources Portfolio
Councillor Lewis	-	Cabinet Member for Housing and Social Inclusion
Mr. K. Davies	-	Director of Development and Regeneration
Mr. J. Lord	-	Chief Executive Bolton at Home
Mr. G. Gallagher	-	Accommodation Manager
Ms. M. Giluley	-	Principal/Chief Executive Bolton College
Mr. P. Green	-	Head of Economic Strategy
Ms. S. Johnson	-	Borough Treasurer
Ms. H. Gorman	-	Borough Solicitor
Mrs. J. Pollard	-	Head of Strategic Finance and Accountancy
Mrs. V. Ridge	-	Deputy Democratic Services Manager

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Darvesh, I. Ibrahim, Iqbal and Parkinson and the Chief Executive.

Councillor Sherrington in the Chair.

15. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18th August, 2014 were submitted and signed as a correct record

subject to the inclusion of Councillor Evans in the list of apologies.

16. THE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2014/2015

The Borough Solicitor submitted a report which outlined the proposed work programme for 2014/2015.

Resolved – That the proposed Work Programme for 2014/2015 be approved.

17. HOUSING SERVICES AND BOLTON AT HOME

Mr. J. Lord, Chief Executive of Bolton at Home and Mr. G. Gallagher , Accommodation Manager gave a presentation to members which outlined the work undertaken by Housing Services and Bolton at Home.

Information was provided in relation to the following areas, viz:-

- A structure chart for Housing Services;
- The services provided by Advice and Options and how they linked into Bolton at Home;
- The areas provided by Accommodation Services and how these linked into Bolton at Home;
- The additional links from Bolton at Home to the Council;
- The current situation with regard to the 5 year Offer Document;
- The improvements to services delivered by Bolton at Home and the numbers of physical improvements to homes;
- The amendments which had subsequently been made to the Offer Document; and
- Statistical information in relation to the work completed on the various elements of the Offer Document.

In conclusion members were advised that Bolton at Home was currently on track to achieve all the elements contained within the Offer Document at the end of the 5 year period and strong links between Bolton at Home and the Council had been maintained.

Following the presentation, the following comments/observations were made:-

- Issues associated with the refugee service;
- The reasons for the overspend on accommodation for the first quarter of 2014/2015;
- A request that Bolton at Home be represented on the Health and Wellbeing Board;
- What happened when the Offer Document ended after the five year period;
- The reasons behind the amendments to the Offer Document and the impact of this; and
- The large remit of Bolton at Home.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

18. SKILLS STRATEGY AND COMMUNITY LEARNING

Mr. P. Green, Head of Economic Strategy, gave a presentation to members which provided information in relation to the Skills Strategy and Community Learning.

Information was provided on the following areas, viz:-

- Growth and Reform which was the context behind the Skills Strategy;
- A reminder about the aim of the Skills Strategy which was launched on 1st April, 2013;
- The achievements to date;
- The current delivery plan for 2014/2015;
- Details about the Working Well Programme which was launched in March, 2014; and
- Community Learning and statistical information on it's performance.

Following the presentation the following comments/observations were made:-

- At a future meeting it would be helpful if more data information could be provided to allow members to assess performance against the outcomes;
- Concern that schools were not fully engaged in apprenticeships;
- The occupational areas which were being looked for higher level apprenticeships; and
- The methods used for employee engagement.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

19. DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION DEPARTMENT INCLUDING HOUSING SERVICES FINANCE – QUARTER ONE 2014/2015

A report of the Director of Development and Regeneration and the Borough Treasurer was submitted which provided information relating to the quarter one financial position for Development and Regeneration including Housing Services for the 2014/2015 financial year.

Members were advised that in respect of the revenue expenditure there currently was an underspend of £104,000 after reserve movements and in terms of capital expenditure this stood at £1,072,000 against a budget of £13,292,000. The department's general reserve had a projected final outturn of £1,154,649.

The report also stated that the budgeted efficiency savings for the department were £1,368,000 and all planned efficiencies had been achieved. With regard to risk, it was explained that specific areas of financial risk related to loss of income due to the economic downturn and loss of grants.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

20. AGMA BUSINESS SUMMARY REPORT

The Borough Solicitor submitted a report which set out the appointments made by the Council to the various joint

authorities and also gave a summary of the business considered at the authority meetings.

Members were reminded that part of the remit of this Scrutiny Committee was to monitor and review and, where appropriate, make recommendations regarding the work of outside organisations. The report focused on one aspect of this, in terms of the added value by the AGMA bodies, including AGMA Executive Board, The Combined Authority, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority and Transport for Greater Manchester Committee.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

21. MEMBERS BUSINESS

The Committee received the extracts of minutes of other meetings of the Council relevant to the remit of this Committee:-

- (a) The Executive Cabinet Member Leader's Portfolio held on 18th August and 15th September, 2014;
- (b) The Executive Cabinet Member Regeneration and Resources Portfolio held on 18th August and 15th September, 2014; and
- (c) The Cabinet held on 18th August, 2014.

Resolved – That the minutes of the various meetings be noted.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 p.m. and ended at 6.40 p.m.)

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