

CORPORATE AND EXTERNAL ISSUES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING, 29TH NOVEMBER, 2012

Present – Councillors Spencer (Chairman), Gillies (Vice-Chairman), Allen, Ayub, A. Connell, Darvesh, Mrs Fairclough, Francis, Greenhalgh, Hayes, A. Ibrahim, Iqbal and J. Walsh.

Also in attendance

Councillor Morris	-	Executive Cabinet Member - Leader's Portfolio
Councillor D. Burrows	-	Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Police
Councillor Peacock	-	Cabinet Member for Sport, Libraries, Youth and Culture
Councillor Zaman	-	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood and Community Services
Mr. S. Harriss	-	Chief Executive
Mr. S. Arnfield	-	Deputy Chief Executive
Ms H. Gorman	-	Borough Solicitor
Ms S. Schofield	-	Assistant Director, Environmental Services
Mr M. Veigas	-	Assistant Director, Environmental Services
Mr R. Martinez	-	Community Safety Operations Manager
Chief Superintendent Hull	-	Greater Manchester Police
Mrs V. Ridge	-	Deputy Democratic Services Manager

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Adia Executive Cabinet Member for Human Resources and Cohesion.

Councillor Spencer in the Chair.

18. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18th October, 2012 were submitted.

Further to minute 17 of the previous meeting, it was stated that the request for clarification on whether the figures included Area Forum monies to be provided to members had not been received. The Chief Executive advised that he would ensure this information was provided to members.

Resolved – That the minutes be signed as a correct record.

19. MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING

The minutes of the joint meeting of the Corporate and External Issues and Children's and Adult Services Scrutiny Committees held on 18th October, 2012 were submitted.

Resolved – That the minutes be signed as a correct record.

20. MONITORING OF DECISIONS

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report which detailed the progress of the decisions taken by this Scrutiny Committee.

Members enquired as to whether any information had been sought regarding the issue of problems with the tram operating system within Greater Manchester. The Chief Executive advised that he was not aware of any potential problems, however, he would raise the issue at the AGMA meeting tomorrow and report back to members.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

21. THE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2012/2013

The Director of Chief Executive's Department submitted a report which set out details of the updated work programme for 2012/2013.

Resolved – That the updated work programme be approved.

22. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP - UPDATE

The Committee received a joint presentation from Chief Superintendent Hull of Greater Manchester Police and Ms. S. Schofield, Assistant Director of Environmental Services which explained to members the detail of the current Be Safe – Bolton's Community Safety Partnership performance information which included:-

- What was the Community Safety Partnership – Be Safe;
- How the Be Safe Community Partnership had been refreshed including the new work areas;
- The performance in areas namely, victim based crime; burglary; vehicle crime; criminal damage; and anti-social behaviour;
- Examples of positive news stories;
- Issues associated with Domestic Homicide Reviews; and
- The role and work of the newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner and the AGMA arrangements in place to support the Commissioner.

In conclusion, members were advised that there was a strong partnership and engagement at all levels and overall it was performing very well.

Members in their deliberation referred to:-

- The success of PACT meetings and the need to have something similar in place for members;
- Work undertaken with cannabis factories;
- The ability/capability to cope with crime outside of the Town Centre;
- The circumstances around the increase in shop lifting; and
- The challenges being faced by the alcohol/drug misuse services.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted and Chief Superintendent Hull and Ms S Schofield be thanked for their detailed and informative presentation.

23. THE IMPACT OF THE BUDGET SAVINGS

Mr. S. Arnfield, Deputy Chief Executive gave a presentation which provided details in relation to the impact of the budget savings to date.

Members were advised that between 2011/2012 to 2014/2015 there had been savings of a minimum of £95 million which had resulted in the reduction of 850 posts in the first two years and 400 plus over the next two years. In terms of the impact it was explained that this was becoming more clearer in some areas but more difficult to assess in others.

The Deputy Chief Executive then went onto explain in detail the impact of the savings for each individual department, together with, the impact as a result of staffing reductions.

In conclusion, members were informed that the Council's overall philosophy and processes meant that the impact was being mitigated as far as possible, however, reducing universal services and preventative services would have implications including public perception and potential longer term costs. It should also be noted that it was still too early to predict the longer term impact in many areas and it was important not to underestimate the staffing impact and capacity issue.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

24. BOLTON SCENE UPDATE REPORT

The Chief Executive submitted a report which updated members on the implementation of the self-financing model for Bolton Scene.

Members were reminded that in April, 2011 Council approved a report which set out proposals for the retention of Scene as a key communication tool for the Council and its partners which would aim to be self-financing. An update on the model was then considered by this Scrutiny Committee in December, 2011 and a copy of the report was detailed in Appendix A.

Consequently, this report provided a detailed financial position of Scene under the new arrangements and provided a summary of the progress made in delivering the new style Scene.

Members were advised that the evidence suggested that:-

- The self-financing model was being achieved;
- Scene was very focussed on delivering key messages for the Council and its partners;
- Local partners continued to make use of Scene as a significant communication method; and
- It was extremely cost-effective.

It was also proposed that the Bolton Scene survey of readers, which was last undertaken in January, 2010, was carried out in the next few months, in order to provide an updated picture of the effectiveness and value for money received by Council Services and partners.

Members in their deliberations referred to:-

- The surplus figure which had been quoted; and
- The price charged for distribution of Scene.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

25. AGMA BUSINESS SUMMARY

The Director of Chief Executive's Department 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 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, Greater Manchester

Police Authority and Transport for Greater Manchester Committee.

Resolved – That the updated position be noted.

26. MEMBERS BUSINESS

The Committee was informed that a question had been submitted by Councillor J. Walsh for consideration under Standing Order 36.

- Q. Who was responsible for the wrong information on recycling in the current edition of Bolton Scene and what is the cost to the Council tax-payers for the error?
- A. In the current edition of Bolton Scene, unfortunately as a result of human error within the production team this led to a mistake in the recycling information. It is impossible to eliminate all mistakes but lessons have been learned and as a result an extra step has been introduced into the proof reading and checking process. This should reduce the possibility of problems in the future. There has been no cost to the tax-payer as a result of the error.

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

- (a) The Cabinet held on 12th and 26th November, 2012; and
- (b) Executive Cabinet Member Leader's Portfolio held on 22nd October and 19th November, 2012.

Resolved – That the question submitted, and its response, be noted.

(The meeting started at 5.30pm and finished at 7.15pm)