

# Minutes

## OF A MEETING OF THE

# Scrutiny Committee

HELD ON TUESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 6.30 PM

## VIRTUAL

Watch the recording: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k\\_hZ2tbJ9A4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_hZ2tbJ9A4)

### Present:

Ian White (Chair)

Mocky Khan, Anna Badcock, Sam Casey-Rerhaye, Stefan Gawrysiak, Alexandrine Kantor, George Levy and David Turner

### Apologies:

none

### Officers:

Emily Cockle, Simon Hewings, Suzanne Malcolm, Adrianna Partridge, Candida Mckelvey, Melanie Smans, Michelle Wells.

### Also present:

Cabinet members Robin Bennett, Maggie Filipova-Rivers, Andrea Powell and Leigh Rawlins

## 49 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 8 July were agreed as a correct record and will be signed by the chair as such.

## 50 Declarations of interest

None.

## 51 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

None.

## 52 Public participation



Listening Learning Leading

None.

## **53 Work schedule and dates for all South and Vale scrutiny meetings**

It was asked whether the item on civil parking enforcement (CPE) could be brought to a separate meeting of south scrutiny committee (currently it is going to the joint meeting). Relevant officers to be asked.

## **54 Revised budget**

Cabinet member for finance and corporate assets, Councillor Leigh Rawlins, introduced the revised budget report.

The budget has been revised mid-year due to the coronavirus pandemic. Grant funding is not enough to plug the gap in terms of additional expenditure and lost income. If the additional budget is insufficient then a further report may need to go to Council in February 2021.

The report in this item is going to Cabinet to recommend changes to 2020/21 budgets to reflect the financial impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, and other matters, on the council. Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council that it:

1. Agrees that the net revenue expenditure budget for 2020/21 be increased to £16.177 million with the increase to be funded from revenue reserves.
2. Agrees the additions to the capital programme as detailed in Appendix 2 of this report to be funded from capital receipts.

Scrutiny were asked to review the report and the Cabinet member for finance and the Interim Head of Finance were present to answer questions.

## **55 Establishing a delivery vehicle**

Cabinet member for economic development and regeneration, Councillor Robin Bennett, introduced the paper on “establishing a council-owned delivery vehicle”.

Scrutiny Committee is asked to review the proposal to develop a Business Case to establish a council-owned delivery vehicle and to provide any recommendations to Cabinet on the approach.

This proposal is to move forward on affordable housing aims, but caution is needed since the impact of the pandemic. External advice was commissioned and it was advised that in light of changes, the delivery vehicle should cover broader projects. This is a value for money requirement for the business case for a council-owned company. Broader projects include regeneration, community projects and affordable housing.

Acting Deputy Chief Executive for Place, Suzanne Malcolm was also present to answer questions. Suzanne explained that this is the first step in the process, and that as the project progresses, it will come back to scrutiny for review.

Questions were asked about the governance arrangements, and it was explained that this will be explored in the next stage.

The business case will be a cautious, step by step approach.

Councillors discussed low social rent as a priority. Councillors were assured that there would be no duplication of work the council are already doing. The report was welcomed by Councillor Gawrysiak, who asked about the timeline – the motion at Council was July 2019. The report includes an appendix showing the sequence of events. Councillor

Gawrysiak suggested setting up a roundtable of councillors to help shape the delivery vehicle.

The committee debated the item and overall supported the proposal, with their priority being social rent, and to be able to be involved in shaping the vehicle. Councillor Khan also added that he thinks residents should be asked their opinion of what is needed of the delivery vehicle.

Recommendation:

That scrutiny committee recommend to Cabinet to proceed to the business case for “establishing a council-owned vehicle” as soon as possible. Recommendations on approach include clarity over finances, asking for resident’s views on what is needed, and a roundtable for councillors to help shape the delivery vehicle. Scrutiny are content that the progress will be reported into scrutiny at relevant stages.

## **56 Corporate Plan**

Cabinet member for corporate services, Councillor Andrea Powell, introduced the report. This was an opportunity for the committee to review the draft Corporate Plan 2020-24 themes, programmes, projects and measures after the public engagement exercise and provide any recommendations to Cabinet in advance of Cabinet on 1 October 2020. Points raised are listed as follows:

- The council is committing to open, regular reporting. Delivered projects will be fully scoped with delivery indicators.
- It was clarified that one easy read report was requested.
- No postcode data – a lost opportunity? Can be looked at in future.
- Can CPE be explained.
- The ranking process will inform the scoping of proposed delivery plans
- Discussion about engaging with young people. How do we engage with all communities? Social media is used, but we’ve been hindered by the pandemic.
- It was agreed that improvements can be made in future to reach young people and engage with parish councils.
- Summer is a difficult time to engage due to summer holidays.
- The new Covid-19 community hub will be an excellent resource for reaching out - contact lists.
- Young people who are heading to college/university may choose not to engage as they are leaving the area.

## **57 Exclusion of the public**

**RESOLVED** to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting for the following items of business under Part 1 of Schedule 12A Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 on the grounds that: (i) they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and (ii) the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The meeting closed at 9.06 pm

Chairman

Date