

Notes OF AN INFORMAL MEETING OF



Listening Learning Leading

Scrutiny Committee members

HELD ON MONDAY 27 JUNE 2022 AT 6.00 PM

VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

The recording can be watched here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1s83Cti7B4>

In attendance:

Councillors: Ian White (Chair), Mocky Khan, Stefan Gawrysiak, Alexandrine Kantor, David Turner, Jo Robb and David Bartholomew

Cabinet members: Councillors Maggie Filipova-Rivers (Community Wellbeing) and Andrea Powell (Corporate Services)

Officers: Harry Barrington-Mountford (Head of Policy and Programmes), Jayne Bolton (Community Wellbeing Manager), Suzanne Malcolm (Deputy Chief Executive – Place), Candida Mckelvey (Democratic Services Officer), Adrianna Partridge (Deputy Chief Executive, Transformation and Operations), Shona Ware (Comms and Engagement Manager), Ben Whaymand (Leisure Facilities Team Leader)

45 Urgent business and chair's announcements

None.

46 Declarations of interest

None.

47 Minutes

An amendment was requested on page five, bullet point two. Democratic Services Officer shall look at the last sentence and amend it accordingly so that it reads clearer. The sentence was “Can members identify areas of the report they wish to investigate further?” Clarity was asked for on ownership of the comment.

The amendment will be sent onto Councillor Bartholomew and the Chair for agreement.

48 Public participation

None.

49 Work schedule and dates for all South and Joint Scrutiny meetings

None.

50 Public Consultations

This item was opened by Cabinet Member for Corporate Services. This report was a post-Covid review of what the council does to consult the public. This included bringing back face-to-face consultation as well as making the most of technical and online tools to reach more people. There was a desire to invest in better tools for consultation. Communications team had recently recruited a new member of staff to support this work.

Members commented on the report and the main points were:

- The ambition for consultation was admired, but councillors queried whether we would over-consult – ‘consultation fatigue’. Keeping consultation brief but simple was mentioned as a method to avoid this.
- Suggestion of having non-English speaking/reading options such as translated documents and surveys considering the community diversity in Didcot (for example), and to hold drop-ins.
- Committee were informed about Chelsea’s Story, an engagement activity that was successful with young people.
- Where will general customer feedback feed into this? For example, council tax, to claim a rebate etc. Cabinet Member explained that the triage customer service desk dealt with these, and there was an ongoing snap survey for ongoing feedback from customers. Officer explained there was intention to collate service specific feedback received, for corporate view / analysis.
- Cabinet member added that the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy will be reviewed through the democratic process soon and linked to and supported this work.
- Discussion about analysing how well we consult. What defined a good consultation result or not? It was responded that the council does benchmarking work.
- How can we better engage young people who don’t normally engage? It was suggested by a member that organisations who consult young people could be used. Officer commented that this was considered in particular with online tools and social media. There was a newly recruited officer who would assess the best tools for the various consultee groups identified.
- It was responded that digital accessibility was ensured, and this included consideration of people with sensory disability and impairment. The Community Wellbeing teamwork with related organisations.
- Chair suggested a short summary paragraph to mention success criteria on consultations.

Resolved:

Committee noted the report. Chair thanked the officers and Cabinet Member for their work.

51 Active Communities Strategy

Cabinet member for Community Wellbeing opened this item.

This strategy had been created with the increasing wellbeing agenda, prevention of poor physical and mental health, and health inequalities in mind. This was a coherent

framework with a baseline study to map what we have in terms of community resources for wellbeing, such as open spaces, leisure centres, and resources never considered before. The policy landscape was changing locally and nationally, and this strategy had been developed with these aspects in mind. There were six themes in the strategy, which pulled in other council strategies, as shown in the document. We will look to identify gaps and aim to close them. The strategy will evolve over time, and we will take care to consider how accessible facilities are by walking and cycling.

Committee comments and suggestions:

- A member of the committee expressed the importance of mental health and how it links to physical wellbeing. Suggested partnership work with mental health charities / external partners
- Concern raised about deliverability however the ambition was admired.
- Cycling and walking routes were discussed. A member asked for more attention to rural areas. What can we do as a district where it was County Council responsibility?
- Walking and cycling: access to the countryside, right to roam – can we map the changes over time to public access across the district? Cabinet member added that OCC had conducted some work on this
- Can England have a right to roam, as in Scotland – we should support this
- A member commented that hopefully this strategy could feed into planning, and Didcot Garden Town. The mapping should help us to see what people living in built up areas have access to without getting into their car
- Suggestion of road closure for cyclists, a day to celebrate cycling / free cycling mornings
- Promote and link with natural land management groups, such as coppicing, hedge laying etc
- Consider age and gender gaps in the range of resources and activities. Work with schools if possible
- Network for safe jogging
- Bike hire / refurbish older bikes for hire
- A member commented that they would like to see a timeline of what happens next
- AONB collaboration

Councillors Khan and Bartholomew had to leave part way through this item at 19.15. Cabinet member reminded that the mapping work was already in progress by officers. The Cabinet member and officers were thanked for their work, which was well received by the committee.

Resolved:

Committee noted the report and Active Communities Strategy

52 Quarter 4 Corporate Plan Performance Report

The committee reviewed the quarter 4 report and the annual report 2021/22 together. The item was introduced by the Cabinet member for Corporate Services. The council now had a full year set of activity. The quarter 4 report showed progress of projects in the quarter, and the annual report was an assessment of progress, rather than the narrative and detail in the quarterly reports.

The committee focussed on the annual report. There was a RAG rating system added. A definition would be added. Cabinet member explained that green meant on target by the deadline or the end of the corporate plan period. Amber meant on track, but potential delay foreseen, with action being taken to remedy. Red meant significantly behind schedule of the stated deadline or by the plan end date. The inclusion of the definitions was considered helpful by committee.

Resolved:

This item was noted by committee. Cabinet member and officers were thanked for their work on the quarter 4 report and the annual report 2021/22.

53 Exclusion of the public

Resolved:

Committee agreed to move into confidential session.

54 Covid-19 Leisure Support Package update

Resolved:

The committee noted a report on the Covid-19 Support Package, for which negotiations had been completed. The officers involved and the Cabinet member were thanked for all the hard work that went into negotiations and committee felt that the outcomes were positive. Chair motioned to give thanks to their hard work and determination to reach agreement.

Chair hoped to see the annual monitoring report brought before committee in due course.

The meeting closed at 20.07

Chair

Date