

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY WELLBEING
- 15 JANUARY 2020

(To be read in conjunction with the Agenda for the Meeting)

Present

Cllr Kevin Deanus (Chairman)
Cllr Kika Mirylees (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Steve Cosser
Cllr Jenny Else

Cllr Val Henry
Cllr John Robini
Cllr George Wilson

Apologies

Cllr Sally Dickson and Cllr Jacquie Keen

Also Present

Councillor Trevor Sadler and Councillor David Beaman

33. MINUTES (Agenda item 1.)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 November 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed.

34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTES (Agenda item 2.)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sally Dickson and Jacquie Keen. Trevor Sadler was in attendance.

35. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS (Agenda item 3.)

There were no declarations of interests in connection with items on the agenda.

36. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda item 4.)

There were none.

37. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS (Agenda item 5.)

There were none.

38. SERVICE PLANS (Agenda item 6.)

The Committee was presented with the service plans covering the period between 2020-2023. The Service Plans had been prepared by Heads of Service in collaboration with their teams and Portfolio Holders to set out the service objectives for the coming three years in line with the new Corporate Strategy 2019-2023 and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2020-2023.

It was noted that last year the Council reviewed its approach to service planning, changing them from annual plans, to three yearly rolling plans. This approach allowed not only for an easier alignment with the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), but also a better transparency on delivery of multi-year projects and other initiatives.

The Service Plans specific to Community Wellbeing O&S were as follows:

- Commercial Services Service Plan (except for Building Control and Green Spaces)
- Communities only from Housing Delivery & Communities Service Plan
- Licensing only from Environment Service Plan

Councillor Steve Cosser was concerned about going into detail of the service plans without a budget agreed. Louise Norie, the Corporate Policy Manager advised that the Service Plans had been prepared in line with the budget process but there were always things that could come up last minute that might change things.

Kelvin Mills, the Head of Service for Communities and Special Projects gave a brief overview of his service area. They were aiming to expand and enhance Careline, achieve a rating of outstanding for Waverley Training Services which was an ambitious target, move forward with a leisure investment programme Farnham being the first then looking at Godalming and Cranleigh which had more complex issues to resolve. They were aiming to review the Taxi and Private Hire Policy and by 2030 wanted all operating vehicles to be ultra low emission.

Councillor Val Henry asked about progress with the proposals for Cranleigh Leisure Centre. Kelvin advised that they had some prices for the works but they were higher than expected. They would be working with the Parish Council and Places Leisure to discuss the way forward. They would have options for the Executive soon and he would keep advised.

Councillor Stephen Cosser commented on the Cultural Strategy and that there was so much being done in Farnham and Cranleigh but not across all four areas of the Borough. Godalming Staycation though had been very successful. Charlotte Hall, the Community Development Officer, agreed that this was a fair point and they had worked more in the more central cultural centres. She had been looking at other avenues to deliver programmes such as touring theatres to more rural locations as well as projects for older people and this was detailed in, and would be focused on in the Action Plan coming forward.

Councillor Kika Mirylees asked about the number of projects delivered outside of the main hubs. Kelvin advised that the Farnham Maltings was doing outreach work and he could share what work was being done. Cllr Mirylees felt that more should be done rurally. Charlotte advised that they were writing to all Towns and Parishes and there was a willingness just it was difficult to resource it all.

Councillor Kika Mirylees asked about what was happening with the Farnham Museum. Kelvin advised that they were exploring options for the management to take forward whilst keeping the museum in operation. This was a live project that they would keep members updated with. Councillor John Robini commented on Haslemere Museum being self funding and was a model that could be used elsewhere.

Councillor Jenny Else thanked Charlotte for her hard work with implementing cultural activities but recognised that Councillors needed to take some responsibility for smaller villages. Charlotte advised that she would like to meet with Councillors to set up locally based meetings to address culture and local challenges and what would work in their communities.

Councillor Kevin Deanus felt that the comment in relation to Careline and financial targets was not appropriate and lacked a human element. It was also slightly too business like and the people were the most important. They needed to decide whether it was a business to make money or a service for the community and the wording should reflect this. He thanked the officers for their hard work and recognised it was challenging times and they would like to do more if they had the money to do it. A question was asked whether there was any threat to the future of Careline with the more wider use of Alexa. Concerns were noted although they delivered a different type of service but this was something they would need to keep in mind.

Andrew Smith, the Head of Strategic Housing and Delivery, gave an outline of the Housing Delivery and Communities service plan. He advised that a lot of work was being carried out across teams around the ageing well strategy and action plan and disabled facilities grant. A lot of work tied into the service level agreements which a review was currently being undertaken of. Representatives from the Safer Waverley Partnership would be coming to an all Member briefing on 28 January and this would include information on safeguarding.

Katie Webb, the Community Service Manager advised that there had been a lot of changes with the Integrated Care Partnership. They were commencing a new project called Reconnections which was aimed at reducing loneliness and isolation. There was only so much the Council could do and they wanted GPs to work more with them. Cllr Robini asked if people knew what work they were doing and was concerned regarding communications. It was felt that there needed to be a briefing on the changes and for the portfolio holder to consider the issues raised around health and wellbeing and how work being done was communicated. Katie concurred but commented that they could only take responsibility for what they should communicate.

The Committee thanked officers for the Services Plans for 2020-2023 and recommended them to the Executive for approval.

39. CULTURAL STRATEGY (Agenda item 7.)

The Committee was reminded that, at the last meeting, they had received the Cultural Strategy Action Plan and had commented on the progress made. A series of meetings would be taking place over the next quarter with Members and stakeholders in order to establish a new two year Action Plan which, noting previous comments, would look to be more geographically spread. This would be brought to the Committee in June to consider.

Councillor John Robini suggested that all councillors should visit the museums around the borough to get a feel of them. Councillor Steve Cosser questioned the funding and how it was spent around the borough. He felt that they must become a facilitator and enabler and support organisations in both urban and rural areas.

Councillor Jenny Else questioned filming in the Borough, particularly in rural areas and respecting biodiversity. There should be special arrangements for this kind of activity.

The Committee thanked officers for the update and would await a new Action Plan in June 2020.

40. YOUTH PROVISION (Agenda item 8.)

The Committee received a report following a request to look into a potential review into youth services in the Borough. Officers had since met with Councillor Kika Mirylees to get more understanding of the subject area.

The report included background and reported how the duty of youth services was on Surrey County Council. Members were asked that in order to provide value to the Committee and to prevent unnecessary work it was useful for the Scrutiny team to gain an understanding of what the Committee would like to explore further in what was potentially a far reaching subject. Three questions were put to the Committee:□

- What role should the Council have in providing facilities and activities for young people?
- Does the Borough Council have a role, or should it have a role, in improving young people's physical and mental health and emotional well-being?
- What further research would the Committee like to see?

Councillor Kika Mirylees explained her concerns regarding the lack of places for young people to go. However, did not realise that this fell under the responsibility of Surrey County Council and funding was scarce. Councillor George Wilson wanted to see what Surrey had done as he felt that they were falling short of duty. Councillor John Robini raised his concern about the use of Hasleway for vulnerable people and that this was being taken away from them. Katie would look into it. The Chairman concluded that they could only resolve what they had the ability to resolve and if they could share good practice in their own areas for what they had done this may help.

41. BUDGET STRATEGY WORKING GROUP (Agenda item 9.)

It was noted that a report would be going to the Value for Money and Customer Services O&S on 20 January from the Budget Strategy Working Group with its initial findings.

42. WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda item 10.)

The work programme would be updated following the meeting and if Members had anything to add, to be in contact with Yasmine.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and concluded at 9.05 pm

Chairman