

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 28 NOVEMBER 2017

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Value for Money and Customer Service Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Item under consideration: Strategic Review Update

Date considered: 30 October 2017

Background: The Committee received an update on the progress that had been made with implementing the Strategic Review Action Plan. Members noted that some good work had been done in relation to how the Council works, but felt that the strategic direction was still not clear.

Members felt that the Council needed to be clear about which direction it would be taking, whether this be through being more commercially-focused, developing more partnership working, or generating savings through reducing discretionary services. Officers reported that the Executive was working on its strategic vision, and that this would be presented to Overview and Scrutiny members at a series of workshops in November.

Recommendations: **The Value for Money and Customer Service Overview and Scrutiny Committee made the following recommendation, that:**

- 1. the Executive be asked to clearly develop and publicise the strategic direction of the Council and include clear timeframes for when the strategic vision will be in place.**

Community Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Item under consideration: Waverley Training Services

Date considered: 20 November 2017

Background: The Committee received a presentation from Kelvin Mills, the Head of Community Services and Adele O'Sullivan, the Centre Manager for Waverley Training Services, on the main risks associated with the delivery of the service and the mitigations that were in place to make improvements. Members noted that it was a period of great change and that 2018 would be an exciting year.

Recommendations: The Community Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee asked to receive the Waverley Training Services Business Plan at its next meeting in January 2018 and an update following the next inspection from Ofsted in 2018 and also made the following recommendation to the Executive, that:

1. improved communication of the role of the service with key stakeholders and promotion in the community of the service's benefits for young people should be put in place.

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date considered: 13 November 2017

Background: Members of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee discussed the Draft Charging Schedule for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and the Planning Services Review, which included the review of the Development Control function. The observations and recommendations are included in the respective reports on the Executive agenda.

Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Item under consideration: Customer Service Project - Housing

Date considered: 14 November 2017

Background: The Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee was pleased to see the good progress being made on Service Plan objectives to improve customer service in Housing. However, the Committee was frustrated that the interface between Orchard and Agresso had still not been fully implemented. This had meant that Housing Customer Service Officers were spending time authorising invoices separately in Orchard and Agresso instead of focusing on customer-facing services.

Recommendations: The Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee made the following recommendation, that:

1. the Orchard – Agresso interface be expedited as a matter of high priority, to release staff resources from unnecessary invoice administration, and to ensure that Waverley's management accounts accurately reflect order commitments.

Item under consideration: Housing Service Performance Management Report Q2

Date considered: 14 November 2017

Background: The Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewed performance management indicators for the Housing Service for Quarter 2, 2017/18 and was pleased to see the good performance overall. In particular, the Committee congratulated Officers for getting the void re-let performance back on track in the second quarter.

The Committee noted that rent collection was slightly below target due to work undertaken to get rent accounts into credit, and that Waverley's rent arrears amounted to less than 1% of the rent roll, which was one of the best performances in the country. The Committee was concerned about the impact of the roll-out of Universal Credit on rent collection, and felt that it was important to monitor rent arrears as part of the suite of performance management indicators, as well as rent collection.

Officers proposed a more sophisticated approach to the management of rent accounts, and were investigating specialist rent arrears management software.

Recommendations: The Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee made the following recommendation, that:

- 1. funding be prioritised in the 2018/19 budget for specialist rent management software to support officers to maintain Waverley's good performance on rent collection, bearing in mind that rental income drives the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.**

Item under consideration: Future of Waverley's Sheltered Housing Schemes

Date considered: 14 November 2017

Background: The Committee considered the proposals being developed to ensure the sustainable future of the Council's Sheltered Housing Scheme following the withdrawal of Housing Related Support funding by Surrey County Council from April 2018. The feedback from residents during the County Council's consultation in the summer had confirmed how much they valued the presence of the Scheme Manager, and retaining an on-site manager for each scheme had been a priority in developing proposals.

The Committee noted that whilst it was not possible to avoid the legal constraints on the Housing Revenue Account being used to fund 'support and care', the role of the Scheme Managers could be developed in such a way as to ensure that they

continued to operate from each of the Sheltered Housing Schemes. Their role would support the health and wellbeing of residents collectively, as well as promoting the schemes to prospective residents and developing the schemes as community hubs. This could be funded from the HRA, and there would be a growth bid in the 2018/19 budget of £150 -170,000..

Recommendations: **The Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee asked the Executive to take note of the following comments:**

- 1. the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the proposed development of the service to address the cut in funding from Surrey County Council, and the necessary growth bid within the Housing Revenue Account;**
- 2. the proposed re-branding as *Senior Living Schemes* was supported, although it was suggested that a more 'homely' alternative to *Schemes* would make them sound more attractive; and**
- 3. members to be advised of the dates and times of consultation meetings to be held at each of the Sheltered Housing Schemes, so that they could attend and provide reassurance to residents of Waverley's commitment to the Sheltered Housing Service.**

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