

**OVERVIEW SCRUTINY GROUP
15TH JANUARY 2018**

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Taylor)
The Vice-chair (Councillor Bebbington)
Councillors Bradshaw, Capleton, Gerrard and Jones

Chief Executive
Head of Customer Experience
Head of Neighbourhood Services
Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Manager
Democratic Services Manager
Democratic Services Officer (NA)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Sutherland

Jacqui McKinlay from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) attended the meeting in an observer capacity.

The Chair stated that the meeting would be recorded and the sound recording subsequently made available via the Council's website. She also advised that, under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting, and the use of any such images or sound recordings was not under the Council's control.

63. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillor Bradshaw noted that at the last meeting she was not in favour of the Buy Back of Council Properties scheme and wanted her objection noted.

The minutes of the meeting of the Group held on 11th December 2017 were then confirmed as a correct record and signed.

64. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

No disclosures were made.

65. DECLARATIONS OF THE PARTY WHIP

No declarations were made.

66. QUESTIONS UNDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PROCEDURES 11.16

No questions had been submitted.

67. CHARWOOD GRANTS – STRATEGIC PARTNERS (2018/19 – 2019/20)

A report of the Head of Neighbourhood Services was considered outlining proposals for Strategic Partner Grant Scheme funding for 2018/19 and 2019/20, (item 6A on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Head of Neighbourhood Services and the Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Manager attended the meeting to assist with consideration of the item and gave the following responses to issues raised:

- (i) The Group was satisfied that there was a robust system in place to assess the funding applications and that there was a review of how the partner organisations were performing.
- (ii) The Council was proactive in seeking out new partners and new funding opportunities to ensure the needs of the local community were being met.
- (iii) The Roseberry St Peters Centre was highlighted as they had received provisional funding for 1 year based on their performance. The group was advised of difficulties arising from competition from other venues in the area so the Council was working with them to identify actions and make progress.
- (iv) The Group praised the inclusion of Clockwise Credit Union as a partner as they felt they were doing a lot of good work in the community.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet be informed that the Group supports the recommendations as set out in the report of the Head of Neighbourhood Services.

Reason

Having considered the report and asked questions of the Head of Neighbourhood Services and the Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Manager on the matter, the Group concluded that it would be appropriate for the Cabinet to approve the recommendations set out in the report.

68. DEVELOPMENT OF CHARNWOOD LOTTERY

A report of the Head of Neighbourhood Services was considered seeking agreement to the establishment of a local authority lottery for Charnwood to support the local voluntary and community sector (item 6B on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Head of Neighbourhood Services and the Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Manager attended the meeting to assist with consideration of the item and gave the following responses to issues raised:

- (i) There was concern over the gambling element of the lottery and the potential for members of the public to become addicted to buying tickets and taking part. The Group was assured that individual accounts would be monitored and this lottery was considered low risk due to the minimal

amount of money to be won and the lack of instant gratification. The scheme was also accredited by the gambling association and support would be clearly advertised on the web pages should people need it.

- (ii) The lottery was confirmed as being online although people could sign up and purchase tickets over the phone. There was a minimum sign up of a few weeks but no set amount of tickets applicants needed to purchase.
- (iii) The potential loss of interest in the lottery over time was raised by the Group along with the concern that charities would depend on the money as a reliable stream of income for it then to be lost. The information from Gatherwell, the external provider was that the lottery worked well with the support of the local organisations and the proactive marketing of the lottery. It would also be made clear to organisations that any money received from the lottery was additional to their regular income and should not be relied upon.
- (iv) Aylesberry Vale Council was cited as the example of how the lottery would work. The Group was advised that they were selling an average of 2500 tickets a week and generating an addition of £76,000 per annum for local organisations.
- (v) The Group was provided with a breakdown of how the ticket sales would be split: the breakdown of the ticket sale was based on 50% going to the applicant's chosen organisations and 10% allocated to the central fund operated by the Council. However if the applicant did not make their own choices the 50% of the sale would go into the central fund along with the 10% already allocated making a total of 60% to be used by the Council.

RESOLVED

1. that an addition be made to recommendation 5 to include the wording that the criteria used for the inclusion of good causes would be in line with the criteria used by the Grants Panel to assess funding applications.
2. that an additional recommendation be made for a review of the scheme after the first year.
3. that the Cabinet be informed that the Group supports the recommendations as set out in the report of the Head of Neighbourhood Services.

Reason

1. To make clear that the same robust process was being used for the lottery as the existing Grants scheme.
2. To ensure that a formal review is carried out to measure the success of the scheme and its viability for the future.

3. Having considered the report and asked questions of the Head of Neighbourhood Services and the Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Manager on the matter, the Group concluded that it would be appropriate for the Cabinet to approve the recommendation set out in the report.

69. CUSTOMER SERVICE RESTRUCTURE

A report of the Head of Customer Experience was considered setting out the restructure for the Customer and Information Services (item 6C on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Head of Customer Experience attended the meeting to assist with consideration of the item and gave the following responses to issues raised:

- (i) The Group was pleased to know there was not expected to be any compulsory redundancies as a result of the restructure and that there would be training put in place for staff who were redeployed to other areas or to other roles.
- (ii) The restructure was initiated as the Head of Customer Experience explained they were new to the role and had taken time to look at the objectives of the service and whether they were being met. This highlighted certain issues which had been addressed through the proposed restructure.
- (iii) One of the issues highlighted was a skills gap in the current workforce which was being managed through employment of temporary staff. This was hoped to be addressed through a review of the current job roles and an assessment of the requirements. The use of IT user groups and staff attending external training would also help build the knowledge and skills base within the team.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet be informed that the Group supports the recommendation as set out in the report of the Head of Customer Experience.

Reason

Having considered the report and asked questions of the Head of Customer Experience on the matter, the Group concluded that it would be appropriate for the Cabinet to approve the recommendation set out in the report.

70. OVERVIEW SCRUTINY GROUP PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY – CABINET RESPONSE

A report of the Cabinet was considered setting out its responses to the recommendations of the Group on pre-decision scrutiny items (item 7 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

RESOLVED that the Cabinet's responses to the Group's recommendations be noted.

Reason

The Group was satisfied that it added value where appropriate and welcomed the Cabinet's consideration of the Group's views and recommendations as part of its decision making process.

71. WORK PROGRAMME

A report of the Head of Strategic Support was considered, to enable the Group to consider its work programme and forthcoming Key Decisions and decisions to be taken in private by the Cabinet in order to schedule items for pre-decision scrutiny and to provide an opportunity for members of the Group to raise suggestions on issues for scrutiny (in addition to pre-decision scrutiny) which fell within the Group's remit, for scheduling by Scrutiny Management Board (item 8 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Group considered the report (and further information on the forthcoming Key Decisions and decisions to be taken in private by the Cabinet provided by the Chief Executive at this meeting) and agreed to schedule items for pre-decision scrutiny prior to the next Cabinet meeting, but that the following pre-decision scrutiny items should be added to its work programme at this stage:

- Annual Procurement Plan 2018/19 (12th March 2018)
- Housing Capital Programme (12th March 2018)
- Business Plan 2018/19 (9th April 2018)

The Chair advised the Group that with the Vice Chair they would review the 2018-19 General Fund and HRA revenue Budgets and Council Tax Cabinet report to see whether it should be added to the work programme.

RESOLVED that the Group's current work programme be noted and updated following this meeting, in accordance with the decisions taken during consideration of this item and at this meeting and any items of pre-decision scrutiny that require changing due to their reprogramming by the Cabinet.

Reason

To ensure effective and timely scrutiny, either to provide Cabinet with advice prior to it taking a decision or to ensure that the Council and external public service providers and partners were operating effectively for the benefit of the Borough.

NOTES:

1. No reference may be made to these minutes at the Council meeting on 26th February 2018 unless notice to that effect is given to the Democratic Services Manager by five members of the Council by noon on the fifth working day following publication of the minutes.
2. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of the Group.