SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD
16TH AUGUST 2017

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Miah)
The Vice-chair (Councillor Shepherd)
Councillors Bebbington, Jukes, Parsons and Seaton

Councillor Morgan, Cabinet Lead Member for Communities and Customer Service (for item 6 on the agenda)
Councillor Vardy, Cabinet Lead Member for Planning and Inward Investment (for item 9 on the agenda)

Chief Executive
Head of Landlord Services
Head of Neighbourhood Services
Head of Planning and Regeneration
Improvement and Organisational Development Manager
Community Safety Manager
Senior Planning Officer (GB)
Democratic Services Officer (LS)

Inspector Barker (Leicestershire Police)

APOLOGY: Councillor Smidowicz

11. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th June 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed.

12. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTEREST

Disclosures of personal interest were made as follows:

(i) by Councillors Miah, Seaton and Shepherd, in respect of items 9 and 10 on the agenda, as Leicestershire County Councillors;
(ii) by Councillor Miah, in respect of item 6 on the agenda, in respect of an employer referred to on page 7 of the report. He stated that the interest was not prejudicial.

13. DECLARATIONS – THE PARTY WHIP

No declarations were made.

14. QUESTIONS UNDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PROCEDURES 11.16

No questions had been submitted.

Councillor Parsons and Inspector Barker arrived at the meeting at 6.05pm.

15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

Considered a report of the Head of Neighbourhood Services providing a review of the work of the Community Safety Partnership so that the statutory responsibility to scrutinise the Community Safety Partnership, at least every six months, was undertaken and to ensure the continued monitoring of incidences of crime in Charnwood and the identification of issues requiring further scrutiny (if any) (item 6 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Cabinet Lead Member for Communities and Customer Service, the Head of Neighbourhood Services, the Community Safety Manager and Inspector Barker assisted with the consideration of the report.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason

To acknowledge the work undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership and to ensure that the statutory responsibility to scrutinise the Partnership is met.

16. CORPORATE PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

Considered a report of the Chief Executive presenting the annual performance information for 2016/17 which evaluated how effectively the Council had delivered the themes set out in the Corporate Plan 2016/20 (item 7 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Improvement and Organisational Development Manager assisted with consideration of the report.

The Board asked that the following matters be considered for the Corporate Plan Annual Report 2016/17:

- the importance of referring to positive outcomes or work, even where a target had not been met. For example, although only 45 (of the target of 50) empty homes had been brought back into use in 2016/17, empty homes work had identified 253 properties as occupied for which Council Tax was now being paid;
- attention be given to the tenses used in the wording of the report. For example, so that planned future actions were not stated as “what we did”.

The Board also commented that quarterly performance information was sometimes stated as a cumulative figure and sometimes not. The Improvement and Organisational Development Manager agreed to look at whether a more consistent approach would be appropriate. She also agreed

to arrange for Councillor Bebbington to be sent information on the reasons why remaining empty homes in Charnwood continued to be so.

RESOLVED that the report and the comments made be noted.

Reason

To acknowledge the Council's progress in delivering the themes set out in its Corporate Plan, to provide clarity of when the Council aims to deliver its objectives and initiatives and to ensure that the Board's comments for the Corporate Plan Annual Report 2016/17 are taken into account. In particular, the Board commented that the revised way of presenting information to it in this year's report was more useful and appropriate to its role of reviewing delivery of the Corporate Plan.

17. NEW HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME (DECENT HOMES) CONTRACT

Considered a report of the Head of Landlord Services providing information on (i) the procurement process for the new housing capital contract undertaken to date and (ii) how the recommendations and issues identified previously by Scrutiny in respect of the new housing capital contract have been taken forward through the procurement process, to enable scrutiny of this matter prior to Cabinet deciding on the award of the new contract at its meeting in October 2017 (item 8 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Head of Landlord Services assisted with consideration of the report.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason

To acknowledge the procurement process undertaken to date for the contract and how issues identified previously by Scrutiny have been taken forward through that process.

18. PARKING MATTERS IN LOUGHBOROUGH (PLANNING AND REGENERATION)

Considered a report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration setting out, in detail, work undertaken and progress made in respect of parking matters in Loughborough, as requested by the Board at its last meeting and detailed in Scrutiny Management Board Minute 8.9 – 14th June 2017 (item 9 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Cabinet Lead Member for Planning and Inward Investment, the Head of Planning and Regeneration and the Senior Planning Officer assisted with consideration of the report.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason

To acknowledge the work undertaken and progress made in respect of parking matters in Loughborough.

19. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY GROUPS AND PANELS

Considered a report of the Head of Strategic Support to enable the Board to agree the Scrutiny Work Programme, including considering requests from other scrutiny bodies and updates on the delivery of the Work Programme, and identify Key Decisions on which scrutiny could be undertaken, also to consider whether scrutiny of any procurement activity should be programmed (item 10 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Chief Executive assisted with consideration of the report.

RESOLVED

1. that the following items be removed from the Board's Work Programme:

   (i) Reviewing the effectiveness of the role of the Voluntary and Community Sector Development Officer;
   (ii) Local Area Co-ordination Project;
   (iii) Community Safety Partnership – Recording of Anti-social Behaviour;

2. that forthcoming Executive Key Decisions or decisions to be taken in private by the Executive, set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and scheduled scrutiny of those matters, be noted;

3. that the following item, to be considered by Cabinet on 21st September 2017, be added to the Overview Scrutiny Group's Work Programme for pre-decision scrutiny:

   Choice Based Lettings Allocation Policy;

4. that the Annual Procurement Plan and additions to the Plan, set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be noted;

5. that a briefing note be emailed to all members of the Board as soon as possible following this meeting setting out the relationship between the Council and Registered Providers (of social housing) and, in particular, the regulation of those providers, with a view to the Board deciding at its next meeting whether a scrutiny panel or other consideration by scrutiny is appropriate;

6. that the Scrutiny Work Programme, set out in Appendix 3 to the report, be noted and updated in accordance with decisions taken above and at this meeting.

Reasons

1. (i) To avoid duplication, as since the matter was added to the Board's Work Programme in January 2015, the Budget Scrutiny Panel has undertaken scrutiny of the matter (3rd January 2017).

   (ii) The Board considered advice from the Head of Neighbourhood Services that the Local Area Co-ordination Project is a Leicestershire County Council project to which this Council does not contribute funding and concluded that it is not appropriate for it to scrutinise the matter.

   (iii) The Board concluded that scrutiny of this matter is no longer necessary. The reason for scrutiny had been to ensure that comprehensive recording of anti-social behaviour and information sharing was taking place. However, in agreeing at its meeting on 29th March 2017 that decisions taken by Cabinet in respect of the recommendations of the Empty Homes Scrutiny Panel had been fully implemented, the Board was informed that the Cabinet had noted that the issue of anti-social behaviour incident recording is being managed and addressed by the County Anti-social Behaviour Strategic Group, of which all district partners and Leicestershire Police are members, and that the Group has agreed to purchase an IT interface between the Police's Command and Control system (STORM) and the partnership ASB recording system (SENTINEL), the aim of this initiative being to ensure all recorded incidents of ASB will be retrievable through SENTINEL. The Board was also informed that the Cabinet had noted (but not actioned) the Empty Homes Scrutiny Panel recommendation that the Leader write to the Police on this matter, as a result there is no response to report to the Board.

2. To ensure timely and effective scrutiny.

3. To ensure timely and effective scrutiny of the matter, having identified the matter from the forthcoming Executive Key Decisions or decisions to be taken in private by the Executive, set out in Appendix 1 to the report. Reference was made at this meeting to the experience of those bidding for Council properties and the need to ensure that expectations were appropriately managed in that respect.

4. The Board has decided to consider the Annual Procurement Plan and Quarterly Updates (submitted to Cabinet) to ensure that timely and effective scrutiny of any procurement activity is programmed or to ensure that the Cabinet is informed of any views of the Board on procurement matters.

5. A member of the Board raised concerns at this meeting that tenants, and herself as ward councillor, were having considerable difficulty contacting and resolving issues with a particular Registered Provider that owned properties in her ward. The Board wished to receive the requested briefing note to better understand what could be done to improve the position and to assist it in deciding whether scrutiny of the matter by this Council would be beneficial.

6. To ensure that the information contained within the Work Programme is up to date.

NOTES

1. No reference may be made to these minutes at Council on 6th November 2017 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 ordinary meeting of Scrutiny Management Board.