

Minutes of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 18 December 2023

Present: Mike Wilcox (Chair)

Attendance	
Tina Clements	Jeremy Pert
Mike Davies	Samantha Thompson (Vice-Chair (Overview))
Gill Heath (Vice-Chair (Scrutiny))	Nigel Yates
Kath Perry, MBE	

Also in attendance: Councillor Alan White

Officers: Sarah Getley and Rachel Spain.

Apologies: John Francis and Bernard Peters.

Part One

26. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

27. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2023

Resolved: – That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

28. People Strategy: 2023 – 2027 Update on Progress

The Leader of the Council introduced the report which summarised the progress made against the 'Our People Strategy' targets. The four key Pillars of the strategy were:

- Attracting and keeping talented people.
- Promoting a positive working environment.
- Developing skills for now and in the future.
- Developing leaders for now and in the future.

The main issues discussed at the meeting were:

- The use of the words equality and equity in strategies and was the council using the right one to achieve the best outcomes for people. The Leader felt that equality was more appropriate as it would ensure that people had the skills they need to succeed and achieve the best that they can.
- Under the 'developing skills for now and in the future' pillar, it was

confirmed that local colleges would be worked with to develop qualifications which would make the Council a more desirable employer.

- The new careers website had been developed and the recruitment team was now in-house and was working with schools and colleges.
- The number of colleagues affected by post covid 19 syndrome would be supplied to the Committee after the meeting.
- The support offered to colleagues on for bereavement issues would be supplied to the Committee following the meeting.
- Mandatory training was normally online and was enforced/supervised by team managers.
- The Peoples strategy was designed to be easy to understand. Each work stream was supported by an action plan which contained deliverable performance measurements. The Integrated quarterly performance reports which was also reported to this committee, monitored actions and any delivery issues would be reported through that report.
- A steering group met monthly and a programme board was being established to provide an extra layer of governance.
- The careers website was now well used and had received over 2,000 hits within the first week of launch. This compared to 4,000 for the previous month. More information on its usage would be provided to the Committee.
- Additional schemes, such as cycling to work or green car scheme were being offered to attract new applicants and retain current employees.
- A Health plan was being established to assist with medical and dental care.

The Chair thanked the Officer for a positive report and suggested that future monitoring of progress should be done through the integrated performance quarterly report.

Resolved:

- a) That the progress made against the year 1 and year 2 priorities of 'Our People Strategy 2023-27' be noted.
- b) That future monitoring of performance be monitored through the committees Integrate performance quarterly report.
- c) That the following detailed information be provided to the committee after the meeting:
 - The number of colleagues affected by post covid 19 syndrome.
 - Bereavement support offered to colleagues.
 - The usage of the new careers website, compared to previous months.

29. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Principles, Objectives and Action Plan update

The Leader introduced the report which listed the progress undertaken in the last 12 months to deliver against the equality diversity and inclusion principles, objectives and action plan.

The work experience offered to care leavers by Amey was thought to be a good opportunity for young people. It was hoped that this could be offered to partners, including the voice project.

The employment broker, which was an inhouse service, works with individuals to secure employment. The service worked with anyone needing extra support such as care leavers, those with a disability or ex-offenders. Information on the success of the scheme was not available at the meeting but would be reported to the committee.

Resolved:

- a) That work experience for care leavers was encouraged with partners.
- b) That the information on the employment broker service and how to works with individuals to secure employment be provided to the committee after the meeting.

30. Medium Term Financial Scrutiny - Draft Working Group Report

The Chair of the Working Group, Councillor Wilcox gave a short summery of the findings and recommendations of the group.

The report would be referred to Cabinet for consideration and a response received within two months.

It was hoped that the Government settlement, would be more favourable than anticipated given the recent number of councils issuing section 114 notices. Members felt that if this was the case, they should be given to opportunity to suggest target areas for investing in properties.

Resolved:

- a) The draft report of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Working Group be approved.
- b) The report be referred to Cabinet at its meeting on 24 January 2024, to be considered as part of the draft budget setting process and that the Cabinet provide an executive response to the recommendations within two months of receipt of the report.
- c) That the working group be provided with a briefing on the governments settlement as soon as available and that any they suggest priority areas of investment for the Cabinet, if appropriate.
- d) That the Chairman be authorised to finalise the final report subject

to any amendments made following the settlement briefing c) above.

31. Work Programme

The Chair informed members that since the last meeting a triangulation meeting had taken place and all items discussed were listed in the work programme for information. Items which had been agreed would be considered by the Committee and had been added to the work programme.

Resolved: That the Work Programme be noted.

Chair