

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD ON THURSDAY 10 DECEMBER 2013 AT 4.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PART 1

PRESENT:
Councillors

Dixon, D.I. (Chairman)
Todd, R. (Vice-Chairman)

Morgan, C.W.J.	Spicer, Mrs. A.
Pearson, A.	Stretton, Mrs. P.Z.

14. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors J.D. Bernard, D.N. Davies, Miss M.A. Freeman, M. Grocott, J.T. Kraujalis and P.A. Snape.

15. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restrictions on Voting by Members and Party Whip Declarations

No declarations of interests or party whip declarations were received

16. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 09 October 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed

17. Quarter 2 Performance Report 2013-14

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Policy (Item 4.1 – 4.67 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Policy and Performance Manager advised Members that Cabinet on 21 November 2013 had, subject to the concurrence of the Scrutiny Committee, agreed changes to the dwelling output figures in respect of Disabled Facilities Works and Kitchen Replacements within the 2013-14 Place Priority Delivery Plan.

The revised figures reflected agreed expenditure variations in respect of the 2013-14 HRA Capital Programme and subject to the agreement of the Scrutiny Committee, would be included in the Quarter 3 Performance report.

The Head of Housing and Waste Management informed Members that:-

- (i) There was an increase in the number of disabled facilities works from 80 to 98 reflecting the expenditure increase of £60,000.
- (ii) There was a decrease in the number of kitchen replacements from 115 to 88 reflecting the expenditure saving of £87,690.

The Corporate Director advised Members that they needed to confirm the above changes or refer them back to Cabinet for further consideration.

Indicator - Positive Media Coverage – Target 80%

Councillor Pearson asked why the indicator for media coverage had not been achieved.

The Policy and Performance Manager responded that the measure included local press coverage on Council activities, and in this instance the indicator had not been achieved due to negative coverage received in respect of the Beecroft Road development consultation, however for the year to date, the indicator was above target, at 85% positive coverage.

Councillor R. Todd queried if the Council responded to media coverage received, as there had been a number of occasions in the past where the press have not recorded matters accurately.

The Corporate Director responded that the indicator only measured whether coverage was positive or negative, and did not take account of inaccurate reporting, and advised that the Council does not respond to press coverage.

Indicator - Further develop the 'Blake Area' Asset Register through the inclusion of all voluntary sector assets

Councillor Pearson queried whether meetings of the Members' Board in relation to the Blake Area Asset Register were still ongoing?

The Policy and Performance Manager responded that the Council's representative on the Blake Project had changed from the Head of Housing and Waste Management to the Building Control Manager, following the senior management restructure, and agreed to follow up with him on this matter.

Indicator - % of full plans applications that are assessed within 15 working days of receipt

The Corporate Director raised that following queries on this indicator discussed at the previous meeting, clarification had been sought from the Building Control Manager who provided the following feedback:

“The process for building regulation plans is that these are registered even if not fully complete. Legally applicants can start work within 48 hours of submitting an application; they do have to wait for approval. Legally we have

to have made a decision within 5 weeks of submission, or more normally 2 months as agreed by the applicant.”

RESOLVED:

That

- (A) The performance information and the case studies relating to Priority Delivery Plans as detailed in Appendices 1 to 8 be noted.
- (B) The actions and indicators which are rated Red or Amber and the associated commentary/remedial action proposed by the Lead Officer be noted.
- (C) That the Scrutiny Committee concur with the changes agreed by Cabinet on 21 November 2013 to the dwelling output figures in respect of the 2013-14 HRA Capital Programme for the following schemes:-

Revised Dwelling Outputs

- Disabled Facilities Works - 98
- Kitchen Replacements - 88

18. Scrutiny Work Programme and Working Groups – Update

The Corporate Director advised that there was no update from the Air Quality and Industrial Emissions Working Group. Written information had been provided by the Chairman of the Perception of Crime Working Group at the last meeting and nothing was expected at this meeting.

In respect of the Anti Social Behaviour Working Group, Councillor J.D. Bernard had been meeting with relevant officers, and planned to bring a report to Scrutiny in February 2014.

Scrutiny Review Working Group

Councillor A. Pearson advised that progress had been made with the work of the Group, and arrangements had been made for the Members of the Group to attend Staffordshire County Council’ Corporate Review Select Committee and the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee in January 2014, with an opportunity to discuss with members of those committees the way Scrutiny works.

Councillor Pearson then advised he intended to bring a completed Review Brief to the next Scrutiny Committee meeting, but being conscious that the work of the Group is unlikely to be completed during 2013-14, that the work of the Group forms part of the 2014-15 Work Programme, subject to the agreement of the Chairman.

Delivering Change Panels – January 2014

The Corporate Director informed Members that no saving policy options had been developed by officers this year, as a balance budget existed for 2014-15, as shown in the financial plan approved by Cabinet in November 2013. As a result of this, it was now not necessary for the Delivering Change Panels scheduled for January 2014 to go ahead, unless Members wished to use one of the dates to receive a budget update and the financial plan.

Members were then advised that deficits were however predicted for 2015-16 and 2016-17, and next year's process would see a number of options being considered to reduce the budget gap up to and including 2016-17.

The Corporate Director also informed Members that Cabinet was still awaiting the financial settlement for 2014-15 (and provisional settlement for 2015-16), and would be setting its budget and Council Tax provision on 30 January 2014.

RESOLVED:

That

- (A) The Work Programme update be noted.
- (B) The Scrutiny Review Working Group be included as part of the Work Programme for 2014-15.
- (C) The Delivering Change Panels scheduled for January 2014 be cancelled.

19. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 13 February 2014

The meeting closed at 4:30pm

CHAIRMAN