

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 17 March 2021 at 2.00 pm in by Video Conference.

Present: Councillor Robert W Bayford (Chairman); Councillors Currie, Boyd, Coleman-Cooke, Huxley, Paul Moore, L Piper, Roper and Scott

In Attendance: Councillor J Bayford

293. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Keen.

294. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

295. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REFRESH 2021-24

Tim Willis, Deputy Chief Executive and S151 Officer introduced the item and said that the aim was to monitor performance on areas that mattered most to residents, businesses and councillors. Past performance monitoring had always been retrospective and reported quarterly. However in future the plan was to produce as much information as was possible in real time and make such information always available on the council's website. This would increase transparency and accountability of the council and hopefully help reduce the burden of responding to freedom of information requests. These proposed changes would also improve the scrutiny of the council's performance.

Hannah Thorpe, Director of Communications then introduced the main issues of the report and made the following points:

- The new performance reporting format would produce as much information as is possible in real time and this would be shared with residents on the council website;
- The objective of the new approach was to improve the way the council managed the corporate performance as well as improving information sharing with residents;
- The approach would follow a set of principles that included the following:
 - Transparent;
 - More engaging;
 - Focus on things that matter;
 - Move away from (just a focus on) numbers;
 - Demonstrate that the council was effective (in delivering services to residents);
 - Demonstrate that council's activities were having an impact on the lives of local residents.
- The proposed changes included the follows:
 - Reduce the number of measures;
 - Align measures to corporate objectives (environment, communities and growth);
 - Include measures which demonstrate efficiency;

- Publish live data on the website – shift the focus of the reports and enhance the role of Scrutiny;
 - Create interactive data;
 - Remove targets – move to acceptable/good baseline;
 - Put more emphasis on customer satisfaction;
 - Reduce the frequency of reporting.
- The number of measures of performance would be reduced and they would be aligned to corporate objectives;
 - Performance Targets would be removed. Good baseline information would be established to inform the performance monitoring;
 - The measures would include those that demonstrated efficiency;
 - Live performance data would be published on the website;
 - More emphasis would be put on customer satisfaction;
 - Members would be able to call on Service Directors to attend Panel meetings to respond to service specific performance issues arising from the performance reports;
 - Panel members were invited to take part in a dry run of the proposed web page before it went live;
 - The new reporting framework would be in place in April 2021-2024.

The detail of the proposed performance reporting framework is in the slides presentation attached as an annex to this minute item.

Members asked questions and made comments as follows:

- The timescales for the houses being empty was reflected in the annex as six months. How was this solution arrived at?
- Publishing live data on the council website was a good idea;
- Would enforcement action and fines be published on the website as part of that live data as well?
- How often would the live data be refreshed?
- Would recycle rates be published as part of the live data?
- Would greenhouse gas emission from council housing stock be part of the performance data?
- Some Members were concerned about the removal of targets;
- Since targets would be removed, who would decide on the quality and make value judgments about the performance?
- How would the council let residents know about the web page?
- There would be a need to carry out a critical review of the new format after 12 months of implementation;
- Under the proposed Growth indicator, the council would like 'residents to have thriving towns.' However this indicator is not reflected in the detail as to how it would be measured;
- Were annual residents' surveys adequate or should we have rolling surveys to assess residents' satisfaction perception about the services provided by the council?
- Would complaints be captured in the new reporting format?

Hannah Thorpe, Nathaniel Fisher, Business Analyst and Tim Willis responded to Member questions and comments as follows:

- The six months rule was an industry standard. Baselineing would be informed by benchmarking. It was hoped that this would allay any concerns about the limited number of stats that would be used in the new approach;
- Enforcement data could be reflected in the live data on the council website;

- With regards to incineration and recycling; KCC was the disposal authority. This meant that any data produced by KCC would not necessarily reflect the performance by TDC;
- The issue regarding measuring emissions produced by council housing stock would be referred to the appropriate Service for a response;
- With regards to value judgments, a number of organisations were now moving more towards a qualitative understanding of issues affecting communities;
- Conducting a 12 month review of the new approach would be a good idea;
- The indicators for growth would be reconsidered by officers to add more detail on these would be measured. This could entail a look at how this indicator could be linked to community;
- In addition to snap surveys, the council would also like to conduct customer satisfaction surveys;
- The survey that was used to inform the new framework was conducted on 6,000 residents with a one in six response rate. This was a random survey based on postcodes to get a fair reflection of the district;
- Officers would go back to consider the issue regarding how best to reflect the number of complaints received by the council.

The Chair summed up the discussion by saying that the Panel was supportive of the new approach and requested officers to take away the comments and suggestions that came from Members during the course of the discussion.

Thereafter members noted the report.

Meeting concluded: 2.55 pm