

## Minutes

of the Meeting of the

## Community and Corporate Organisation Policy & Scrutiny Panel

### Tuesday, 12th July 2016

held at the Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset.

Meeting Commenced: 2.30 pm Meeting Concluded: 4.50pm

#### Councillors:

P Terry Porter (Chairman)

P Mark Canniford

P Sarah Codling

P Bob Garner

P John Ley-Morgan

A Jerry O'Brien

- David Shopland

A James Clayton

A Peter Crew

A Colin Hall

P Richard Nightingale

A David Oyns

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

**Other Councillors in attendance:** Chris Blades, David Jolley, David Pasley, Liz Wells

**Officers in attendance:** Philippa Penney, Richard Penska, Howard Potheary, Mike Riggall

#### CCO Declarations of Interest by Members

1

None

#### CCO Minutes of the Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016 (Agenda Item 4.1)

2

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record.

#### CCO Minutes of the Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016 (Agenda Item 4.2)

3

**Resolved:** that subject to Councillor Ley-Morgan being recorded as present and Councillor Jolley's apologies being recorded, the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record.

## **CCO Welfare Changes (Agenda Item 6)**

4

The Head of Support Services Partnership & Customer Services gave an initial overview of the Government changes to welfare benefits expected to be introduced at some time in the autumn. This would create a further cap to benefits, reducing the maximum receipt to £385 per week for couples or households with children (currently £500), and £250 per week if single (currently £350).

Officers have identified the number of households in North Somerset likely to be affected by the changes, and are now considering the social care implications and support available.

Members sought reassurance that debt levels and non-payments of rent were being monitored, and acknowledged that this could be undertaken more easily with social landlords as opposed to the private rented sector.

**Concluded:** that a workshop for all councillors should be held in the autumn to review the impact of the benefit changes.

## **CCO Winter Gardens (Agenda Item 8)**

5

It was agreed to take this as the next item of business.

The Chairman welcomed Ian Porter, a Governor of Weston College. Mr Porter updated the Panel with the rapid progress following commencement of the major refurbishment at the Winter Gardens in recent weeks.

A Community Access Board had been created to advise on promoting effective community use at the Winter Gardens, and the Board had met on three occasions to date.

A number of requests for community use continued to be received for the Winter Gardens, with current arrangements remaining akin to those under the previous management.

**Concluded:** that Members thanked Mr Porter for attending the meeting and giving such a helpful progress report, and welcomed the opportunity to support the development as part of the town's regeneration programme.

## **CCO IT Transformation: progress with the Council's IT Transformation Programme (Agenda Item 7)**

6

The Strategic ICT Client Manager and the Agilisys Head of ICT gave a presentation on the progress with the Council's IT Transformation Programme, a copy of which is filed on the minute book. Members were reminded of the requirement for change, including: an ageing estate unable to embrace new technology and flexible ways of working; that Microsoft had removed support for XP and the windows server operator system; that

demand for storage had greatly increased; and that no capital refresh budget had been integrated into the system.

A large scale refresh programme had now been undertaken including the introduction of cloud computing, additional tools (e.g. skype), and a reduction in the number of corporate applications, thus also reducing costs in licensing and management thereof.

It was acknowledged that the process had entailed a period of disruption, but that this had been necessary in order to achieve a period of stability going forwards. Whilst some disruption had been expected, data analysis demonstrated a direct correlation between the numbers of incidents with the pattern of change. There had also been some unexpected challenges which were not directly related to the transformation programme yet had become reputationally intertwined.

In response to matters raised by Members, it was acknowledged that there were unpredicted and intermittent problems with the planning portal, but that this was being remedied by a replacement system as a priority. Members also encouraged the use of communication tools such as Yamma, and the inclusion of Councillors in such developments. Members also asked for training to be made available as new technologies were introduced.

Members reflected on IT development over the past couple of years and agreed that the level of change had been dramatic and impressive, providing a welcome and flexible working IT environment.

## **CCO 7 'Your Policing Priorities' Consultation by the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner (Agenda Item 9)**

The Community Safety Manager presented the report and outlined the consultation process as identified by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The Police and Crime Plan was a statutory document that set out the PCC's priorities for her present term of office. The refreshed priorities presented a more thematic approach, and it was anticipated that there would be more detail on delivery within the local North Somerset plan in due course.

Members expressed the following comments for inclusion within North Somerset Council's response:

- Disappointment that there was no reference to the third sector;
- Concern that the priorities were merely thematic and were not sufficient to effectively direct resources;
- Concern that there was no mention of drugs within the plan - Members made specific request that this should be included within the local plan for North Somerset.
- That the focus on technology to free up front line police officer time was welcomed, but that this should also include council and partnership staff to enable collaborative working.

**Concluded:** that the Panel

1. Received the 'Your Policing Priorities' consultation which has been launched by the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner and considers opportunities to raise awareness of the consultation within local communities in North Somerset;
2. Noted the opportunity to make individual responses to the consultation, access to which was set out in the report; and
3. That the Panel offers the feedback as set out in the preamble above for inclusion in the North Somerset People and Communities Board response to the Consultation.

## **CCO The Panel's Work Plan (Agenda Item 10)**

**8**

The Scrutiny Officer presented the Work Plan as follows:

- a) Waste – concentration had been on the award of the contract for recycling and waste collection and Household Waste Recycling Centres, for which the council report had now been published. The group will continue to inform development of the medium term options for waste arrangements across the West of England and will also be watching the performance of the new contract;
- b) Community Response – The group has continued to monitor and inform the progress of the joint working arrangements with Avon and Somerset Police and has been reassured by the cooperation between police and council staff. The group is also ensuring that the response officers and enforcement officers work together as closely as possible, particularly considering the implementation of civil parking enforcement;
- c) Digital First – the group has met twice, to review the development of the new website, and also to look at measures encouraging digital inclusion such as eforms and the ease of customer use. The group is to next meet in September/October to undertake user testing once the project has been sufficiently progressed.
- d) Community Access Review (to be added to the work plan) – a group of members had met last week in advance of the 12 week consultation period, which has now commenced. An invitation had been sent to all Councillors to attend a workshop next Wednesday (20<sup>th</sup> July 4.30-6pm NCC). Councillor Nightingale wished to be included in the working group.
- e) Support Services Contract: one year on – this was scrutinised by the panel in the development of the extension of the Council's contract with Agilisys in April last year, with the transfer of additional business support services. It was agreed at that time to review performance one year on, and arrangements have been made accordingly for a meeting in August.

**Concluded:** that the work plan be received and updated as agreed.

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Chairman

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