

Minutes

of the Meeting of the

Community and Corporate Organisation Policy & Scrutiny Panel

Tuesday, 14th March 2017

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

Meeting Commenced: 2.30 pm Meeting Concluded: 4.30pm

Councillors:

P Terry Porter (Chairman)

P David Oyns (Vice-Chairman)

P Peter Burden

P James Clayton

A Peter Crew

A Colin Hall

P Richard Nightingale

P Mark Canniford

P Sarah Codling

P Bob Garner

P John Ley-Morgan

A Jerry O'Brien

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

Other Councillors in attendance: Felicity Baker, Donald Davies, Ann Harley, Jill Iles, David Jolley, Reyna Knight, Dawn Payne, Deborah Yamanaka.

Officers in attendance: Jo Buchan, Jo Mercer, Julia Parkes, Philippa Penney, Mike Riggall, (Corporate Services), Mandy Bishop, Fay Powell, Colin Russell (Development and Environment), Louise Freeth (Liberata).

CCO Declarations of Interest by Members (Agenda Item 3)

16

None

CCO Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 November 2017 (Agenda Item 4.1)

17

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

CCO Universal Credit – Benefit Service (Agenda Item 6)

18

The Client Specialist for Revenues and Benefits presented the report and gave details of new benefit and how this will affect customers. Universal Credit will encompass Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, Income Based

Job Seekers Allowance, Income Support, Income related Employment Support Allowance, and Housing Benefit. This was currently available to all single people making a first claim in respect of any of these benefits and was to be rolled out in North Somerset to all working age claimants including couples and families; again only those making a first claim. Any existing claimants will continue to claim their current benefits until their circumstances change, with a view to all claimants moving to Universal Credit by 2022. Weston Job Centre will start the process in June 2017 followed by Clevedon in July 2017.

Members expressed their concerns over the delay in the Housing Benefit element of this as residents could wait for six weeks for this to be paid which could lead to arrears and financial hardship. They also commented on the fact that any emergency accommodation costs would increase. Whilst a claimant could apply for an advanced payment, this would be considered a loan. Any such loan would have to be paid back by the claimant, and therefore may not be recoverable. The Local Authority will have little information concerning individual claimant's details, however, Members were reassured to hear that officers will be trained to give as much assistance as is possible.

Concluded: that the Panel considered the council's preparations for the Universal Credit implementation and agreed a further meeting in June for Councillors would revisit this subject to consider the impact on service users.

CCO 19 Members' ICT (Agenda Item 7)

The Client ICT Manager presented the report and referred to progress with Members' ICT development to date.

Office 365 was discussed as offering a solution to many of the issues raised by Members regarding document access and storage, and also access to information available on the intranet.

Members also discussed the availability of a system akin to the paperless meetings app for working group and other informal meetings, and it was agreed that a meeting of the Members' ICT Steering Group meeting should be held to address this.

Concluded: that the Panel noted the progress being made in regards to the development of ICT services for members, and agreed that the issues raised should be included on the agenda of the next Members' ICT Steering Group.

CCO 20 Development of a joint North Somerset Community Safety Plan (Agenda item 8)

The Safer and Stronger Communities Service Manager presented the report outlining the development of the local version of the community safety plan arising from the Police and Crime Plan as considered by the Panel in July 2016.

Members were pleased to note the inclusion of drug and alcohol related crime within the plan.

Members agreed to establish a Community Safety Scrutiny Steering Group, which could not only consider not only the detail of the local plan, but also the wider aspects of community safety that affect North Somerset. This would include site visits to see the operation of some of our community safety activities across the district.

Concluded: That the Panel

- (1) Noted the intention to develop a joint North Somerset Community Safety Plan with the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner;
- (2) Noted the priorities in related plans (North Somerset People and Communities Strategy and Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Plan) and provides any feedback to inform the development of the new joint Community Safety Plan
- (3) Agreed to establish a Community Safety Scrutiny Steering Group to review the development of the joint plan and also to consider the wider aspects of community safety in North Somerset.

CCO 21 **Community Access Review (Agenda Item 9)**

The Assistant Director (Operations) presented the report, highlighting the progress being made in Phase 1 of the review, and reminding Members of the areas identified for Phase 2. The review continued to look at opportunities for providing relevant and integrated services whilst remaining mindful of the need to reduce costs.

Members remained supportive of the review, and raised a number of questions regarding services in their own ward areas, which the Assistant Director undertook to address on their behalf.

Members thanked the Assistant Director for the thorough and comprehensive consultation and engagement with Members throughout the entirety of the review to date, which they considered as the blue print to follow.

Concluded: that the panel supported the progress being made with regards to the delivery of the agreed outcomes of the Community Access Review, and noted the excellent consultation and engagement with Members throughout.

CCO 22 **Community Response (Agenda Item 10)**

The Community Response Manager updated Panel Members with the progress of the shared working arrangements with other agencies and teams.

Members discussed the increased presence of homelessness in Weston Town Centre, and were encouraged to hear how council officers had been working with the community safety team, police, charities and housing to address the issue.

The Community Response team welcomed information from Councillors regarding any other issues they may be experiencing in their wards. Members agreed to continue working closely with the team through the Community Response Scrutiny Steering Group.

Concluded: that Members continued to support and monitor the progress of Community Response.

**CCO
23** **New Recycling and Waste Contract (Agenda Item 11)**

The Recycling and Waste Services Manager presented the report, highlighting the service changes under the new contract, including the introduction of green waste wheelie bins.

Members applauded the Recycling and Waste Services Manager, and congratulated him and his team on the huge effort that had been made in communicating the changes to residents, enabling as smooth a transition period as possible.

The Waste Scrutiny Steering Group would continue to monitor performance as the contract embeds, and will be visiting the new waste transfer station site.

Concluded: that the Panel noted the commencement of the new recycling and waste contract on 1st March 2017, and agreed to continue to monitor performance as the arrangements under the new contract embed, as included in the terms of reference of the Scrutiny Steering Group.

**CCO
24** **The Panel's Work Plan (Agenda Item 12)**

Members discussed the work plan, as presented by the Scrutiny Officer. Members were reminded of the workshop being held on 3rd May to discuss the responses received from the Public Space Protection Order consultation.

Members also agreed to include the Field Officer Review on the work plan following its commencement later in the year.

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

Chairman
