

CUSTOMER SERVICE AND TRANSFORMATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Customer Service and Transformation Scrutiny Committee of the Bolsover District Council held at The Arc, Clowne on Monday 30th October 2017 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor R.J. Bowler in the Chair

Councillors Mrs P.M. Bowmer, C. P. Cooper, R.A. Heffer, A. Joesbury, D. McGregor, J.E. Smith, E. Stevenson and R. Turner.

Officers:-

S.E.A. Sternberg (Assistant Director – Governance, Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer), P. Campbell (Assistant Director – Community Safety and Head of Housing (BDC)), S. Bentley (Environmental Health Manager), K. Drury (Information Engagement & Performance Manager) and D. Cairns (Governance Manager - Acting).

0340. APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor M.G. Crane.

0341. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

The Chair had consented to the following item of business being added to the agenda as a matter of urgency:

Corporate Plan Targets Performance Update – July to September 2017 (Quarter 2 – 2017/18)

This was considered a matter of urgency as the report needed to be considered by Executive in November 2017 and this meeting was the only opportunity for this Committee to have input into the report.

0342. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

0343. MINUTES – 2nd OCTOBER 2017

Councillor R. Turner requested that it be noted that she had attended the meeting on 2nd October 2017 and had not submitted her apologies, as the minutes showed in error.

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Moved by Councillor R.A. Heffer and seconded by Councillor R. Turner.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of a Customer Service and Transformation Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 2nd October 2017 be approved as a correct record, subject to the amendment noted above.

0344. LIST OF KEY DECISIONS AND ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

Moved by Councillor J.E. Smith and seconded by Councillor R.A. Heffer.

RESOLVED that the List of Key Decisions and Items To Be Considered In Private document be noted.

0345. CORPORATE PLAN TARGETS PERFORMANCE UPDATE – APRIL TO JUNE 2017 (QUARTER 1 – 2017/18)

Committee considered a report, which provided an update to Members on performance outturn targets for the second quarter; July to September 2017, in relation to 'providing our customers with excellent service' and 'transforming our organisation'.

The Information Engagement & Performance Manager reported to the Committee the progress achieved at this stage in the year in relation to the 30 targets, of which, 23 were on track, 5 had previously been achieved and 2 had been withdrawn.

Members commented on the performance of the Contact Centre and re-letting of vacated council properties. The Committee were advised that the new void working group of officers and members had held its first meeting and would be reporting back to Members in due course.

The Committee also discussed the achievement of the Member Development Charter and that the Member Development Working Group were going to request approval to withdraw this target due to the changing requirements from East Midlands Councils and that the fees required could be better spent elsewhere.

Moved by Councillor R.A. Heffer and seconded by Councillor R. Turner.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The Information Engagement & Performance Manager left the meeting at this point.

0346. UPDATE ON CORPORATE PLAN TARGET C10 – CARRY OUT 300 DISABILITY ADAPTATIONS TO COUNCIL HOUSES EACH YEAR

The Assistant Director – Community Safety and Head of Housing (BDC) advised the Committee of the processes followed by the Council in dealing with disability adaptations in Council homes. He also provided a breakdown of the types of adaptations carried out in

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2016/17 and the budget allocated for this work within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

The Committee were advised that adaptations within this budget were restricted to the individual needs of a disabled person, as identified by an Occupational Therapist. A Panel meeting with other Occupational Therapists, Adult Social Care and representatives of the Council would determine whether the adaptation should be treated as a priority. All other works would be carried out in date order.

Works to properties, such as hand rails or lights on steps, that were general property improvements would be dealt with separately, following a health and safety assessment if necessary.

Members discussed that the Council had responsibility for paying the service contracts to maintain any equipment installed, such as hoists or stair lifts, as they remained in the Council's ownership.

The Committee discussed whether the budget for disability adaptations within the HRA was sufficient. The Assistant Director – Community Safety and Head of Housing (BDC) advised Members that the budget had been greater in the previous year in order for a backlog to be caught up. The current budget of £250k was considered adequate however it was recognised that the requests for adaptations and the consequent workload varied during the year and was not always consistent year on year.

Members also queried how the Council ensures it receives value for money when using contractors for carrying out adaptations. The Assistant Director – Community Safety and Head of Housing (BDC) informed Members that for specialised work, contracts are awarded through the Efficiency East Midlands Framework and for complex but non-specialised works, the Minor Works Framework is used. Simple adaptations such as the installation of handrails were carried out by the Council's own workforce.

The Environmental Health Manager advised the Committee of the procedures for the administration of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs), providing adaptations in the private housing sector, either private rented or owner occupied properties. DFGs were means tested and the applicant had to meet other eligibility criteria. The adaptations had to be recommended by an occupational therapist. The recommendations were then reviewed by a Panel, similar to the process for HRA adaptations, to consider if the recommended adaptations were feasible and the most suitable options.

Environmental Health officers would then go through the application process with the individual. More complex adaptations, requiring the use of architects, would go through the Derbyshire County Council's Disability Design Scheme Architects, and also go through procurements for the best price for the works.

Members discussed the fact that recommendations for adaptations are assessed by Occupational Therapists from Derbyshire County Council however the budget for Disabled Facilities Grants is administered by the District Council, as well as the budget for HRA adaptations and it was commented that this seemed like a disconnected process.

Moved by Councillor J.E. Smith and seconded by Councillor R.A. Heffer.

RESOLVED that the update be noted,

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The Assistant Director – Community Safety and Head of Housing (BDC) and the Environmental Health Managers the meeting at this point.

0347. WORK PLAN 2017/18

Committee considered their Work Plan which would be updated with items arising from this meeting. Members noted that an informal meeting had been scheduled on 1st December 2017 which would be an opportunity for the Committee to contribute to the Transformation Programme review.

Moved by Councillor J.E. Smith and seconded by Councillor R.A. Heffer.

RESOLVED that the Work Plan be updated as outlined above.

The formal meeting concluded at 1105 hours and Members then met informally to discuss their review work.