

COMMUNITIES & HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting: 20 January 2020

At: 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Helen Foster-Grime (Chair) in the chair; Councillor John McGahan (Vice-Chair); Councillors Dean Fitzpatrick, Adrian Nottingham, Mark Roberts, Andy Sorton, Mark Weldon and Matt Wynne.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 16 December 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors and officers were invited to declare any interest which they had in any of the items on the agenda for the meeting.

The following interests were declared:-

Personal Interests

| <u>Councillor</u> | <u>Interest</u> |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Dean Fitzpatrick and Andy Sorton | Agenda Item 8 – ‘Greater Manchester’s Clean Air Plan – Tackling Nitrogen Dioxide Exceedances at the Roadside – Update’ as an employee of organisation referred to an appendix to the report. |

3. CALL-IN

There were no call-in items to consider.

4. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST TEST

RESOLVED – That in order to prevent the disclosure of information which was not for publication, the disclosure of which would not be in the public interest, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any of the exempt information in Agenda Item 8 – ‘Greater Manchester’s Clean Air Plan – Tackling Nitrogen Dioxide Exceedances at the Roadside – Update’.

5. PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES - THIRD QUARTER UPDATE REPORT 2019/20

A representative of the Corporate Director for Place Management & Regeneration submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing the Third Quarter Update Portfolio Performance and Resource Reports for the Inclusive Neighbourhoods and Sustainable Stockport Portfolios. The report focussed on highlights and exceptions in

delivering the portfolio priorities, reform programmes and other key projects since the Mid-Year Report and included the latest forecast performance and financial data for the Portfolios, along with an update on the portfolio savings programmes.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:-

The Cabinet Members for Inclusive Communities (Councillor Amanda Peers) and Sustainable Stockport (Councillor Sheila Bailey) attended the meeting to respond to questions from the Scrutiny Committee.

Inclusive Neighbourhoods Portfolio

- It was queried what mechanisms were in place to monitor the effectiveness of awards made under the Stockport Local Fund. In response, it was stated that those organisations that had applied as part of the first phase were now taking part in monitoring reviews that would examine the level of spend, its impact and progress.
- It was queried whether the target for the number of employers that participated in the annual jobs fair was increased annually. In response, it was stated that the target had remained static which was increasingly challenging as unemployment figures decreased year-on-year.
- It was stated that there had been a number of well-documented difficulties with the introduction of Integrated Operating Police Operating System. Greater Manchester Police were rolling out an ongoing programme of updates and upgrades combined within training for members of staff. The Greater Manchester Police and Crime Panel were being appraised of the position by way of a standard item on the agenda for each meeting of the Panel.

Sustainable Stockport Portfolio

- It was commented that there were a number of materials that while technically capable of being recycled, were not included within the Council's recyclable waste streams.
- Further information was requested on the background to the relatively high levels of sickness at TLC.
- It was commented that at a recent meeting of the 'Scrutiny Review Panel – Domestic Waste Collection Service' a proposal had been discussed that involved the potential for residual waste bins to have RFID identification chips to be installed as part of a trial to reduce the number of households with more than one bin. It was stated that this proposal conflicted with previous statements made by the Cabinet to the Council Meeting where a commitment had been given that such devices would not be used in Stockport. In response it was stated that no such devices had been installed on any bins in the borough.
- The rollout of carbon literacy training for councillors on the Climate Emergency Task & Finish Group was welcomed, and it was suggested that this should be extended to all councillors as soon as possible.
- Concern was expressed in relation to the number of homes that had been empty for a period of 24 months or longer and what work was being undertaken to use the powers that the Council had to bring those properties back into use. In response it was stated that a report would be brought back to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in this issue.

- Further information was requested on the number of electric vehicles within the Council's vehicle fleet.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

6. HRA – RENT /SERVICE CHARGES 2020/21

The Corporate Director for Place Management & Regeneration submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an illustrative Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2020/21 including the level of rent and service charges. The illustrative budget was based on a number of key assumptions set out in the report regarding income from rent and service charges; expenditure commitments contained within the HRA 30-year Business Plan and Asset Management Strategy and indicative spending requirements to support inflationary pressures and identified investment priorities.

The Cabinet Member for Sustainable Stockport (Councillor Sheila Bailey) attended the meeting to respond to councillors' questions.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

7. SHL NEW DEVELOPMENT LOAN EXTENSION

The Corporate Director for Place Management and Regeneration submitted a joint report of Corporate Directors for Place Management and Regeneration and for Corporate and Support Services (copies of which had been circulated) detailing a proposal to extend the existing rolling loan facility to Stockport Homes to enable development through Viaduct Housing Partnership by £14.9m, from £77m to £91.9m, to continue to enable significant affordable homes to be developed and built up to 2024/25.

The Cabinet Member for Sustainable Stockport (Councillor Sheila Bailey) attended the meeting to respond to councillors' questions.

The level of return on the capital investment in housing stock was queried as any new homes built may be subject to the 'Right to Buy'. In response, it was stated that any new homes built would be owned by Stockport Homes in their own name, and as such would not be subject to the 'Right to Buy' but instead would be available for purchase by tenants under a 'Right to Acquire'. However, as the discounts on such acquisitions were not as big as under the Right to Buy, no homes had yet been lost through this route.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. GREATER MANCHESTER'S CLEAN AIR PLAN – TACKLING NITROGEN DIOXIDE EXCEEDANCES AT THE ROADSIDE – UPDATE

The Corporate Director for Place Management & Regeneration submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) setting out the progress that had been made following the Government's response to Greater Manchester's Outline Business Case to tackle Nitrogen Dioxide Exceedances at the Roadside, and the implications for the 10 Greater Manchester local authorities in relation to the schedule of work and statutory consultation on the Clean Air Plan.

The Cabinet Member for Sustainable Stockport (Councillor Sheila Bailey) attended the meeting to respond to councillors' questions.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:-

- It was queried how much of the initial tranche of £36 million that had been allocated towards developing the implementation and contract arrangements of a charging Clean Air Zone in Greater Manchester had been allocated for Stockport. It was also queried how this initial development work could take place as no decision had yet been taken on the number of cameras that would be required to enforce the Zone, and how the oversight of this expenditure would be monitored. In response, it was stated that there were no imminent plans to sign off any expenditure, however the proposed delegation arrangements were such that officers could only exercise those functions following consultation with relevant Cabinet members.
- Details of the robustness of the various Funds available that aimed to provide financial support for the upgrade of light and heavy goods vehicles, buses and taxis would be circulated to members of the Scrutiny Committee along with details of the funds that had been made available by other local authorities.
- There was a need to increase residential development in areas near to public transport corridors, however these were often the areas with the poorest air quality.
- There remained a focus on goods vehicles within the Clean Air Plan, while it needed to be acknowledged that the biggest contributor to poor air quality was from private cars.
- It was important that the government was advised that this authority strongly objected to the exclusion of Highways England from the scope of the ministerial directive on air quality.
- Work was taking place to improve signage around schools to discourage engine-idling. It was stated that while there was legislation in place to allow local authorities to impose fixed penalty notices for engine-idling, it was currently very difficult to enforce.
- The impact of air traffic was also excluded from the scope of the ministerial directive on air quality, and it was noted that the flight path for Manchester Airport was directly above Stockport town centre. It was also noted that 40,000 jobs in Stockport and the wider conurbation were reliant on the airport.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9. AGENDA PLANNING

A representative of the Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) setting out the planned agenda items for the Scrutiny Committee's next meeting and any relevant Forward Plan items.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.32 pm