

**CORPORATE, RESOURCE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

Meeting: 26 January 2021  
At: 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Lisa Smart (Chair) in the chair; Councillor John McGahan (Vice-Chair);  
Councillors Malcolm Allan, Lou Ankers, Carole McCann, Iain Roberts, Charlie Stewart,  
Wendy Wild and Matt Wynne.

**1. MINUTES**

The Minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 8 December 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

The following interests were declared:-

**Personal Interests**

<u>Councillors</u>	<u>Interest</u>
Malcolm Allan, Lisa Smart and Matt Wynne	Agenda item 11 'Active Communities: Progressing New Delivery Arrangements' as members of Life Leisure.

**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RESOLVED – That in order to prevent the disclosure of information which was not for publication relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority), the disclosure of which would not be in the public interest, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the exempt information in the 'not for publication' appendices to agenda item 10 'St Thomas's Gardens and all of agenda item 11 'Active Communities: Progressing New Delivery Arrangements'.

**5. DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2021/22**

The Leader of the Council submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) setting out the draft Council Plan for 2021/22. The Council Plan accompanied the budget and set

out a high-level framework for decision making throughout the financial year. It was a public-facing summary document that sat above annual (detailed) Portfolio Agreements.

The Plan had been developed by the Cabinet, supported by Officers, and was an opportunity to reflect on performance to date and policy priorities for the future. Priorities in the plan were included by exception. The Plan did not attempt to describe everything the Council did; only those things that were of crucial importance in a specific year.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- Members commended the use of everyday language in the Plan and the use of language that was accessible to residents with a limited number of acronyms.
- One of the actions on climate change was to increase renewable energy by seeking funding to work with developers and local community groups to install large scale solar infrastructure in three locations within the borough. It was hoped that the Council would also be receptive to working with charities in this regard.
- Of the four key priorities, all had reference to responding and recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic, but only one (Stockport will be a place people want to live) had reference to taking action on climate change.
- The work building upon the existing Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) forums to co-design an inclusive VCSFE assembly, including faith representatives, which celebrated and enabled connectivity across communities was commended.
- Improving residents' contact with the Council was still important.
- Members requested more information about the Census which would take place on 21 March 2021.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That all Members of Council be provided with information about the Census on 21 March 2021, how information about it would be conveyed to residents and the means by which residents would complete the form.

## **6. RESPONDING TO OUR MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN**

The Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning and Governance submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2022/23 as the Council continued its approach to responding to the unprecedented uncertainty, volatility and risk within the financial landscape.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- Despite the problems resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, it would be usual for the Scrutiny Committee to be able to consider the proposals in advance for a longer period of time prior to the meeting of the Cabinet that would be considering them.
- It was queried whether there would be enough time to explore the areas of investment which it was hoped would have a catalytic impact that would enable and sustain the Borough's response and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. More information on the proposed spending from reserves would have been beneficial to Members.

- Concern was expressed that in calculating the Local Government Core Spending Power, the Government had assumed that local authorities would increase Band D Council Tax by the maximum amount allowable without a referendum i.e. 5% in 2021/22.
- It was encouraging that the collection rate for Council Tax was not reducing despite the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Concern was expressed that as the business rates were calculated on the basis of turnover, the amount collected would be reduced as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

## **7. ONE STOCKPORT BOROUGH PLAN**

A representative of the Corporate Director (Corporate and Support Services) and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) detailing how partners had approached the development of a shared borough plan, including an overview of the insight which had informed the development of the priorities, and introducing a draft borough plan for the Scrutiny Committee's comments and consideration.

The Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Devolution and the Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning & Governance attended the meeting to respond to questions from the Scrutiny Committee.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- The consultation with partner organisations and members of the public had been good, and the information and data provided was comprehensive and concise.
- The document required greater analysis, for example drawing conclusions and highlighting issues from the feedback from residents such as how much they valued the greenspace in the borough. The document should focus on how things could be transformed and the practical ways of doing so, and how the actions would be measured.
- Concern was expressed that the One Neighbourhood Partnership model would solely be a plan for central Stockport. The district centres were equally as important.
- Residents who lived, for example, greater than a ten minutes' walk from the town centre did not feel well connected so there was a lot of work to be done in improving the connectivity for those who lived out of the town centre.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

## **8. BREDBURY GREEN CIVIC HALL, AGE CROFT ROAD**

A representative of the Corporate Director (Place) and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) setting out the proposed disposal of Bredbury Green Civic Hall to Mosscafe St. Vincent's (member of Stockport Housing Partnership) for the development of a residential facility for people with a learning disability.

The Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning and Governance (Councillor Tom McGee) attended the meeting to respond to questions from the Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

## **9. AGENDA PLANNING**

A representative of the Strategic Head of Service & Monitoring Officer (Legal & Democratic Governance) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) setting out the planned agenda items for the Scrutiny Committee's next meeting and any Forward Plan items.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted, subject to the addition of the Final Report of the Scrutiny Review Panel – The Council's Relationship with its Health Partners being submitted to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

### Items 'Not for Publication'

## **10. ST THOMAS' GARDENS**

A representative of the Corporate Director (Place) and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on the progress to date in bringing forward the redevelopment of St. Thomas' Gardens, in particular the Academy of Living Well. The approval of the Cabinet would be sought for the Council to commit to the next stage of design and construction.

The Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning and Governance (Councillor Tom McGee) attended the meeting to respond to questions from the Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

## **11. ACTIVE COMMUNITIES: PROGRESSING NEW DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS**

A representative of the Corporate Director (Place) and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report providing an update on progress to establish a new Community Interest Company to deliver active communities programmes and operate Council-owned leisure centres.

The Cabinet Member for Resources, Commissioning and Governance (Councillor Tom McGee) attended the meeting to respond to questions from the Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That a Task and Finish Group be established, comprising one Councillor from each political group, to consider the issues further.

The meeting closed at 8.16 pm