

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 MARCH 2019

PRESENT

Councillors D. Acton (in the Chair), C. Boyes (Vice-Chair), R. Bowker, J. Coupe, J. Holden, A. New, B. Shaw, S. Taylor, S. Thomas and A.J. Williams

In attendance

Timothy Rhodes	Principal Solicitor of Place
Graeme Bentley	Head of Financial Management
Fabiola Fuschi	Democratic and Scrutiny Officer
Alexander Murray	Democratic and Scrutiny Officer.

Also Present

Councillor M. Cordingley Executive Member for Finance

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Young, R. Chilton, and D. Western.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings held 9 January 2019 and 12 February 2019 be agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No additional declarations were made.

6. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

No questions were received.

7. EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO BUDGET SCRUTINY

The Executive Member for Finance stated that the Executive had answered all of the questions raised at the budget scrutiny sessions within their response. The area that had the most resonance was closing the estimated gap for 2020/21 and 2021/22 of £29m. There is significant uncertainty surrounding local government funding in 2020/21 caused by the anticipated reset of the business rates system, review of needs and resources and the comprehensive spending review.

The Chair asked when the Council will get more information regarding the future position. The Executive Member informed the Committee that more information was scheduled to be released in the autumn. The Chair added that all members were concerned about the impact of cuts upon demand led services and the Chair

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requested that these services continue to be carefully monitored by all three of the Council's Scrutiny Committees.

The Vice Chair noted that there had been an increase in population across the borough which was faster than the national average and they asked whether the growth was changing the demographic make-up of the area. The officer in attendance answered that this was something that was being continually monitored and that the Council were moving toward providing full demographic break downs of areas of the borough rather than just levels of deprivation.

RESOLVED: That the response be noted.

8. OVERVIEW REPORT

The Chair went through the overview report and drew particular attention to the task and finish group work that had been done over the year. The Amey task and finish group had completed their report which was going to the Executive meeting in March and the Committee would receive a response early in the next municipal year.

The housing Task and finish group had met with the Corporate Director of Place and the Council's Housing Strategy Officer. Following the meetings the Chair of the Group had asked a series of follow on questions to officers and received answers to their questions as well as data from Trafford Housing Trust. However, there were fifteen social housing providers in the area three of which had large stocks within Trafford and the officers were looking at how to get data from those providers.

The Chair informed the Committee that the Climate Change task and finish group had met on the 11 March 2019. The with a GM officer who gave the group an outline of the plan which was of great assistance to the group so that they could start to look at how Trafford can link into that plan. The Group were also going to look into what Trafford could do to reduce their carbon footprint locally. The Chair stressed that while it was a large piece of work it was essential to ensure that there will be a future for people's children and grandchildren to enjoy. The targets set within Trafford and GM were very challenging were going to require huge shifts in perspective and practices in order to for them to be achieved.

Following the overview the Chair asked if there were any questions. A Member of the Committee stated that when they looked around the borough there was not much renewable energy production in the area and the Member then asked whether this was something that the group were looking at. The Chair responded that this was an area that had already been identified as an issue within Trafford as the borough was a long way behind other areas in this respect. One aspect was to look at the possibility of the Council having renewable energy in all of their buildings along with buildings of other public services such as schools and NHS partners.

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Another Member mentioned that they had links with groundwork which was an organisation already working within Trafford who would be a good organisation to link with on this work.

A Member of the Committee asked about the update on cladding and fire safety which was requested at the last meeting of the Committee. The Democratic and Scrutiny Officer responded that they had made contact with the relevant officers and while it was not done in time that it could be brought to the meeting it had been scheduled for the first meeting of the new municipal year. The Chair added that they would like a full report from the fire service at that meeting in relation to the retrofitting of sprinkler systems.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the update on cladding and fire safety and a report from the fire service be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and finished at 6.58 pm