

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11 MARCH 2020

PRESENT

Councillor D. Acton (in the Chair).

Councillors J. Lamb (Vice-Chair), J. Holden, R. Thompson, A.J. Williams, B.G. Winstanley, A.M. Whyte and J.D. Newgrosh.

In attendance

Councillor Ross	Executive Member for Finance and Investment
Nikki Bishop	Corporate Director of Finance and Systems
Jane Le Fevre	Corporate Director of Governance and Community Strategy
Sharon Walls	Head of Operations and Service Improvement

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B. Shaw, Dr. K. Barclay and D. Western

9. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held 15 January 2020 be agreed as an accurate record.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

11. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A question had been submitted to the Committee which was read out by the Chair. The Committee were asked to approve that the question be sent to THT in writing asking that they provide answers to the questions to the Committee and to be relayed to the public at the next meeting. The Committee agreed for the questions to be sent and for the response would be read out at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the question from the public be sent to Trafford Housing Trust and the response read out at the next meeting of the Committee.

12. EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO BUDGET SCRUTINY

The Executive Member for Finance and Investment informed the Committee that the Executive welcomed the Budget Scrutiny report and it was hoped that the Committee were satisfied with the Executive's response. The full response had been sent to the Committee as part of the agenda and the Executive Member for Finance and Investment provided a brief overview at the meeting. The Executive had noted a request for information regarding demand led services within the report and in response the executive informed the committee that reports on these areas were already being provided the Executive and the Accounts and Audits

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Committee. The Chair agreed with the Executive response and requested that Scrutiny receive the same reports on demand led services for information as they were of key importance to the Council delivering its budget.

Councillor Williams noted that a number of the responses were to note scrutiny's comments and asked whether more robust responses which included timelines for completion could be provided. The Chair responded that he agreed with what Councillor Williams said but recognised the time restraints on the executive in producing the budget and the response to Scrutiny. The recommendations and the responses would be tracked by the Committee and developed prior to the start of the new municipal year.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Executive response be noted.
- 2) That Scrutiny be sent the reports on demand led services that go to the Executive and Accounts and Audit Committee for information.
- 3) That the Executive responses be developed further prior to the new Municipal year.

13. HIGH RISE CLADDING

As no officers from Trafford Housing Trust were in attendance the Chair read out a written update that had been provided. The Chair suggested that the in addition to the question to the public being sent that the Committee request a timeline for the completion of works to replace the cladding.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the update be noted.
- 2) That the Committee request a timeline for the completion of works to replace the cladding from Trafford Housing Trust.

14. CRM SYSTEM

The Corporate Director of Governance and Community Strategy introduced the CRM report which provided an update following on from work done by the Committee's task and finish group in 2018. The task and finish group report had three recommendations. The first recommendation had been completed as the Council's system was working and provided a portal for residents to report incidents. Recommendation 2 was ongoing as the review of the Council's approach to the procurement of large IT contracts was a continual process. The third recommendation was to receive the update that had been provided for the meeting.

The Corporate Director of Governance and Community Strategy informed the committee that there had been a delay in the roll out of the system which had involved a change in provider, as Civica had replaced the original company. When Civica took over the contract they suggested that the administration of registrars should be done through their bespoke system rather than C360, which they

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provided free of charge. This required an amendment to both the system and the Contract but at no additional cost to the Council.

Following the introduction Councillor Winstanley asked what had changed on the customer side and was the system now producing the right outcomes. The Councillor gave examples of instances where residents had logged issues using the system but the issue had only been dealt with once the Councillor was involved.

The Corporate Director of Governance and Community Strategy responded that it was not clear whether those issues were due to technical problems within the system or an issue with the Council's provider. The Corporate Director of Governance and Community strategy stated that she would discuss the issue with the Head of Customer Services to find out where the problem was. The Corporate Director of Governance and Community Strategy asked that Members contact her with details of any issues so that they could be addressed.

Committee Members raised a number of issues where residents reporting issues had not led to service delivery. While Members recognised that the issues might not be linked to the system, but the services who were to action the reported issues, they were concerned that if this continued residents would lose faith in the Council. The Committee were particularly concerned about messages being sent telling residents a job had been completed but when it was checked the work had not been done. The Chair requested a detailed response regarding the issues that had been raised on the number of requests by residents, the number that had been completed, and how many of those were accurately reported.

Councillor Williams added that the council's modernisation would shape the Council's digital offer and requested that Scrutiny kept up to date with that programme of work.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That Committee Members are asked to provide details on issues relating to C360 to the Corporate Director of Governance and Community Strategy.
- 3) That a detailed response be provided to the Committee on the performance of C360 including the number of requests raised by residents, the number that had been completed, and how many of those were accurately reported.
- 4) That the Committee receive regular updates on the progress of the Council's Modernisation programme.

15. TRO LIST AND PRIORITISATION PROCESS

The Head of Operations and Service Improvement introduced Keith Harris Senior Engineer from the One Trafford Partnership. The Senior Engineer informed the Committee that TROs were used where parking affects traffic flow and so action needs to be taken. Residents were able to report possible TROs to the Council asking for action to be taken where they deem the traffic flow was being disturbed.

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The report contained a list of the outstanding TROs in Trafford. The appendix to the report outlined the matrix the Council used to prioritise requests and decide which ones would be actioned. The Committee were told that new schemes could not be introduced ad hoc as a scheme could not be stopped once it had been started and the Council had a limited number of projects they could do each year. As requests were ordered using the urgency matrix some requests that had been there for a long time continued to move further and further down the list as more urgent requests came in.

Following the introduction Committee Members asked a wide range of questions about TRO list and the matrix used to evaluate them. Councillor Thompson asked whether the system factored in the location of works done to ensure they were spread across Trafford. The Senior Engineer responded that the matrix did not factor in location and it was based upon the variables listed within the matrix.

Councillor Newgrosh noted the length of the list and asked whether there was another way for requests to be taken off the list other than a TRO being put in place. The Senior Engineer responded that they understood the frustration this practice could cause however the list needed to be kept for reference when repeat requests came in. Councillor Newgrosh responded that he felt that the public's expectations needed to be adequately handled so that they are aware that it was unlikely that their request would be fulfilled.

Councillor Winstanley asked a series of questions about the process and how disabilities and equalities fitted into the matrix. The Senior Engineer explained that those factors were figured in as part of the matrix within section six. Councillor Winstanley noted that due to the waiting of the system and the fact that even minor adjustments required a TRO there were a number of issues regarding disability access across the borough that would never be addressed.

Councillor Newgrosh asked what guidance was available and where could it be accessed. The Senior Engineer responded best way to receive guidance was to contact the One Trafford Partnership regarding the issue and they would provide guidance appropriate to that situation, as it is on a case by case basis.

The Chair asked how Trafford compared to other Councils in terms of length of lists and the matrixes that they were using. The Senior Engineer responded that the lists in other areas were as long or longer and the matrix used by Trafford was more robust than many others that they had seen.

Councillor Holden stated that he found seeing the matrix to be very useful in understanding how TROs were prioritised and asked that he be sent an updated copy if any changes were made. The Chair agreed that the matrix was a useful document and requested that a copy be sent to all Councillors.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That a copy of the matrix be sent to all Councillors.

16. DISABILITY ACCESS TASK AND FINISH GROUP INTERIM REPORT

Councillor Winstanley gave a brief overview of the interim report that had been provided as part of the agenda. The aim of the task and finish group was to ensure that disability access was considered in every aspect of the work of the Council. The work of the group was far reaching and would continue and eventually result in the production of a full report with an extensive number of recommendations. The interim report was being brought to the committee as there were a number of recommendations which needed to be addressed at that time to align with work that was ongoing elsewhere within the Council.

Following Councillor Winstanley's overview Councillor Holden asked whether there was a chance that the Council could be challenged on these points by a developers and that these changes could be overturned. The Corporate Director of Governance and Community Strategy responded by informing the Committee of the law in relation to planning and how it was developing across the area. The Committee were informed that refurbishments were of great concern as they were not required to go through planning. The Chair added that they felt the Council had a duty to uphold the equality act and that the Council should push it forward as much as possible.

The Chair thanked Councillor Winstanley for the excellent work that he had done so far as part of the task and finish group and in producing the interim report.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the Committee agree the recommendations within the report.

17. OVERVIEW REPORT

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

18. SCRUTINY REVIEW 2019/20

The Chair informed the Committee that a review of Scrutiny was to be completed. A questionnaire was to be sent to all Scrutiny Members and Members were asked to complete the questionnaire with their views. The Chair then went through the timeline for the review and asked if there were any questions but none were raised.

RESOLVED: That the timeline for the scrutiny review be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and finished at 8.05 p.m.