

TRAFFORD PANDEMIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

27 MAY 2020

PRESENT

Councillor D. Acton (in the Chair).

Councillors Dr. K. Barclay, Miss L. Blackburn, G. Coggins, J. Dillon, J. Holden, J. Lloyd, J.D. Newgrosh, A. New, R. Thompson, D. Western, A.M. Whyte, A.J. Williams and B.G. Winstanley

In attendance

Jane Le Fevre	Corporate Director of Governance and Community Strategy
John Addison	Statutory Scrutiny Officer
Alexander Murray	Governance Officer

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S.B. Anstee and B. Shaw.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made:

- Councillor Thompson in relation to her employment at St John's Centre in Old Trafford which was one of the Trafford response Hubs.

Councillor Lloyd enquired as to whether being a governor of a school needed to be declared if schools became part of the discussion. The Corporate Director of Governance and Community Strategy responded that it would only be required if the Committee were to discuss the particular school that a Committee Member was involved with.

2. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

No questions were received from the public.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED: That the Terms of Reference be noted.

4. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the Membership of the Committee was noted.

5. POST DECISION SCRUTINY

The Chair explained that this item and the one following on the agenda were to discuss how the Committee would conduct pre and post scrutiny at the remainder of their meetings. A guidance note had been circulated to Committee Members which suggested ways that they could undertake both forms of scrutiny.

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The Corporate Director of Governance and Community Strategy gave a brief overview of the guidance note. The note built upon the Committee's terms of reference and the report to Council which created the Committee. Detailed descriptions of pre and post decision scrutiny and suggestions of how the Committee could practice them were contained within the appendix of the guidance note.

For pre-decision scrutiny it was proposed that the Agenda Setting Panel select from a list of upcoming decisions which ones the Committee would consider. This would enable the Committee to have input prior to decisions being made and to add value to the decision making process. Members were told that effective pre-decision scrutiny would reduce the need for post decision scrutiny and enable the Committee to fulfil its role as a critical friend.

Post decision scrutiny would look at key and other relevant decisions made between the Committee's meetings. This was to include urgent decisions taken in relation to the COVID 19 Pandemic for example the creation of Trafford response hubs. The decisions would be listed and detailed within the agenda for each meeting. The Agenda Setting Panel would receive the list of decisions in advance of the meeting so that they could ask for an Executive Member or Officer to attend to provide more detail at the meeting.

Additional items relating to COVID 19 were to be suggested and agreed by Committee Members. These items would then be scoped out by the Agenda Setting Panel and the relevant Executive Member or Corporate Director would attend to provide an overview. Due to the regularity of the Committee meetings and taking into account the workload due to COVID 19 reports and/or presentations were to be provided by exception for items where they were deemed necessary by the Agenda Setting Panel.

Following the overview Committee Members were given the opportunity to raise questions. The Vice Chair raised concern that the guidance was weighted towards pre and post decision scrutiny. The Vice Chair felt that the meetings should have a greater focus upon the areas that Committee Members were concerned about in relation to COVID 19 rather than pre and post decision scrutiny.

Councillor Barclay noted that the guidance spoke about Executive Members and Officers and hoped that representatives of the Council's partner organisations would also be able to attend. The Corporate Director responded that the guidance spoke about Executive Members in relation to the pre and post decision scrutiny elements of the Committee's role. The Corporate Director assured the Committee that they would be able to invite representatives of partner organisations and relevant experts to meetings as they saw fit.

Councillor Williams asked how the pre decision scrutiny was going to operate. The Corporate Director responded that the agenda would contain decisions which were to be made by the Executive following the Pandemic Scrutiny Committee meeting. The Agenda Setting Panel would review the list of upcoming decisions and select any that were of interest to the Committee. The relevant Executive

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Member would then attend the meeting to provide an overview of the decision. This would give the Committee an opportunity to provide challenge for example if they felt options had not been considered or key people had not been consulted. The Corporate Director added that the pre decision scrutiny would work in a similar way to the annual budget scrutiny exercise.

The Chair noted the importance of cross party working among the Agenda Setting Panel to ensure that the Committee made the most of the meetings that they had. In addition, it was of key importance that sufficient information was given to the Committee in advance to ensure that they could spend the meeting asking questions and scrutinising rather than receiving information within the meeting.

Councillor Coggins noted the importance of the Agenda Setting Panel and that it only represented the two larger parties in the Council. The Councillor asked that this be taken into consideration in terms of how the Committee functioned. The Chair responded that he noted the difficulty and assured Councillor Coggins that consideration would be taken to the views of two parties not represented on the Panel.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Guidance note be updated to reflect the suggestions made by the Committee.
- 2) That following the revisions an updated version be circulated to Committee Members.

6. PRE DECISION SCRUTINY

This item was covered under agenda item 6.

7. ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chair introduced the item and informed the Committee that prior to the meeting he had spoken with the Members of the Labour Group and they had identified the Council Budget and Pandemic Spending, and the decision taken on pupils going back to school as items to be looked at by the Committee.

The Vice chair had also consulted with the Conservative Group leading up to the meeting and they had put forward a number of items that they would like the scrutiny committee to consider. Two of the items were the same as those put forward by the Labour group. They specifically wanted to look at the impact of COVID 19 upon the investment management strategy, economic recovery, and disadvantage children in the area.

Councillor Barclay proposed health as a topic specifically testing, tracking, and isolation within the area as this would be of key importance to the areas COVID 19 response and recovery. As the Council's director of public health would be leading on this Councillor Barclay asked that the Committee be kept up to date with the work they were doing.

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Councillor Dillon proposed a specific item within schooling regarding the relaxing of the rules around EHCPs for Children with special educational needs. The Councillor felt that this needed to be scrutinised closely to ensure that the pandemic did not disproportionately affect the most vulnerable children in the borough.

Councillor Winstanley enquired about the decisions that had been made around adult social care following the changes to the Care Act by the Secretary of State. The Corporate Director for Governance and Community Strategy responded that the Corporate Director of Adult Services could attend a meeting to provide an overview of those changes. Councillor Holden informed the Committee that an update on adult social care had been delivered to the Health and Wellbeing Board at their recent meeting. Officers informed the Committee that a video of the meeting was to be uploaded to YouTube and it was agreed that a link would be sent round to Committee Members after the meeting.

The Corporate Director for Governance and Community Strategy informed the Committee that a report on the Council's finances and the impact of COVID 19 had been delivered at the last Executive Meeting and could be circulated to Committee Members after the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That finance, education, public health, and adult social care be agreed as items for Committee Meeting agendas.
- 2) That a link to the Health and Wellbeing Board Meeting 22 May 2020 be circulated to the Committee.
- 3) That the Finance Report which went to the Executive meeting 24 April 2020 be circulated to the Committee.

The meeting commenced at 16:00 and finished at 17:05