



SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16:30 to 18:55

10 January 2013

Present: Councillors Stephenson (chair), Manning (vice chair), Bradford, Brimblecombe, Button, Galvin, Grenville, Lubbock, Manning, Sands (M), Stonard, Storie, Howard

Apologies: Cllr Gee

1. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings held on 6 and 20 December 2012

4. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED:

- a) to add city deals to the work programme at a date to be confirmed; and
- b) that the scrutiny committee will review the first two tranches of the Switch and Save energy incentive prior to another tranche being carried out,

5. OVERVIEW OF THE CORPORATE PLAN 2012 – 2015

The executive head of strategy, people and democracy introduced the report, informing members that this was an opportunity for them to gain an overview of the corporate plan and ask for any information required before scrutinising the corporate plan in February. The leader of the council then explained the proposed amendments to the corporate plan.

Members discussed the reduction of recycling waste targets. It was explained that targets were based on weight, not volume and the reduction of weight of packaging was a contributing factor to missing the existing target. It was confirmed that recycling of street sweepings was not currently compatible with Norfolk County Council's programme but options for the future were being considered. It was also explained that the recycling contract would be relet as of 2014 and may well lead to changes in approach.

In response to questions, the executive head of strategy, people and democracy explained that the corporate plan only showed overall performance measures and that services would also monitor a range of service measures .

The committee considered the different measures of performance for waste and recycling and noted that the sustainable development panel was to look at this in more detail.

The executive head of strategy, people and democracy confirmed that the draft budget will be sent out to scrutiny members for the 7 February, alongside the corporate plan (the overarching policy framework) which would allow members to see how any proposed changes may affect the budget.

Members were given the opportunity to comment on any other part of the corporate plan. They discussed whether a stronger commitment should be made in the corporate plan to introducing 20 mph zones in the city with a view to reduce road casualties.

Responding to a member's question on the performance targets for the tourism information centre, the executive head of strategy, people and democracy offered to arrange for more information to be circulated on this to committee members.

RESOLVED to:-

- a) note that the dependence on food waste to boost recycling rates may not be sustainable
- b) recommend to Cabinet that the wording of the corporate plan is amended to state that the council seeks to achieve 20 mph zones across the city;
- c) recommend to Cabinet that a reference to the healthy city programme is included in the corporate plan and ask officers to look at how to do that

- d) recommend to Cabinet that officers add context to the corporate plan on how the wider economic position is impacting on new house building; and
- e) request that officers circulate a note regarding section 106 agreements not being met as they are not making the sites economically viable for developers, to allow members to understand more about this process – to include an explanation of how the district valuer reaches a valuation of sites.

6. COMMUNITY RIGHT TO CHALLENGE PROCESS

The executive head of business relationship management introduced the report.

The deputy leader of the council followed this with a summary of the proposed member involvement in the process. He explained that the role of the members would be crucial when an expression of interest (EoI) is being assessed by the council and an approach that involved members at an earlier stage in the process was needed. He suggested using the contracts working party (although the name could be changed if needed) should be involved as the receipt of a valid EoI would trigger a procurement process. It was also discussed that this would need to include representation from all three parties. The contracts working party would make a recommendation to scrutiny which would then go onto be considered by cabinet. An annual standing item on the July scrutiny agenda would be necessary for this process.

The executive head of strategy, people and democracy confirmed that where a service was provided on behalf of another organisation, the EoI would need to be submitted to the organisation within which the function and decision making process belonged.

A member expressed concerns that large private sector organisations may use smaller, local organisations as a front to run local services. The executive head of business relationship management stated that there was no provision to stop this happening, but did remind members the relevant body that put in an EoI were not guaranteed to win the contract. He also confirmed that once a relevant body had won the right to deliver a service, Norwich City Council may draw up a contract which might include indemnities against default or inability to meet the contractual arrangements. Within this contract, the length of service would also be set out. He also said that the cost of the community right to challenge was currently an unknown quantity as there was no indication of take up. This had been factored broadly into the reserves needed by the council.

RESOLVED to:-

- a) ask officers to reword Item 7, paragraph 7 for clarity;
- b) include a Liberal Democrat member in any contracts working party convened to consider expressions of interest.

CHAIR