

# Bristol City Council

## Minutes of the Resources Scrutiny Commission

20 February 2017 at 9.30 am



### **Members Present:-**

**Councillors:** Graham Morris (Chair), Stephen Clarke (Vice-Chair), Donald Alexander, Tom Brook, Barry Clark, Helen Godwin, Geoff Gollop, Tim Kent, Afzal Shah and Craig Cheney

### **Officers in Attendance:-**

Denise Murray (Service Director Finance), Nancy Rollason (Service Manager - Legal), Rob Logan (Service Manager - Contracts & Quality), Tariq Rizwan (Head of Citizen Services), Andrea Dell (Service Manager – Democratic Engagement ), Johanna Holmes (Policy Advisor - Scrutiny), Sarah Wilson (DLT Support Manager - Business Change) and Louise deCordova (Democratic Services Officer)

## **1. Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information**

The Chair led welcome and introductions.

## **2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Nicki Beardmore, Interim Service Director: HR, Change and Communications.

## **3. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Brook declared an interest in Atkins as a company which engaged with the Council's procurement process.

## **4. Chair's Business**

There was no Chair's Business.

## **5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**The Commission resolved:**



To agree the minutes of the last meeting as a correct record.

## 6. Action Sheet

Members considered the update on actions from the previous meeting.

In discussion the following points were raised:

Care contract: Out of Hours liability. Netta Meadows to meet with Cllr Barry Clark for an update. **Action: Netta Meadows**

Members IT

It was confirmed that an ICT Members steering group had been convened and would be formally approaching members with a survey of equipment and future training needs.

## 7. Public Forum

Public Forum had been received from VOSCUR and the Federation for Small Business in relation to item 10 Social Value Policy : One year on. It was confirmed that the public forum statement would be taken before the item it related to.

## 8. Work Programme

The Chair asked members to note that a number of items would be added to the future work programme:

- Business Rates retention
- Governance : New approach to track revenue and capital efficiency to ensure savings captured and delivered.
- Income generation report March – update

A income generation working group had been set up to capture and share commercial ideas and concepts, which resources scrutiny commission could help to shape.

It was confirmed that OSM would consider the Review of 2016/17 Forecast Budget Deficit Report and members would have an opportunity to take part.

It was confirmed that a Member's 'Hothouse' would look at the structure of Scrutiny to confirm whether scrutiny was working for the organisation and bring ideas forward for how the service could change.

April meeting date to be rescheduled. **Action: Scrutiny Officers**



In response to Members questions it was noted that business rates retention would include the Enterprise Zone which would be piloting 100% retention of business rates early. It was noted that this was a change from the original City Deal and it was important to understand the mechanics of the process as a whole and review the interdependencies to ensure the Council was not losing out.

## 9. Channel Shift

The Commission considered a report from the Service Director, Citizen Services presented by Rizwan Tariq – Head of Citizen Services. The report set out the current approach to channel shift and use available data to manage demand, reduce failure, inform Citizen service redesign through digital channels where possible.

In discussion and in response to Members questions the following points were raised:

- a. Customer Services operatives were employed after a comprehensive recruitment and selection process and undertook a rigorous training programme to ensure that the service was deploying compassionate and effective people. In addition regular policy training was undertaken each week.
- b. For citizens who found it difficult to get to the customer service point, a telephone service was available, which could provide an automatic call back to citizens on request to save them waiting in a call queue.
- c. A trial tracking system was available on some services such as waste to enable customers to track the progress of their requests.
- d. As citizen outreach work was taking place such as through the Clean Streets Campaign, it may be possible to use these opportunities to alert citizens to digital forms of self-service with the Council through an ongoing citizen engagement strategy. In the future it may be possible to equip officers in the community with the equipment such as iPads to demonstrate this first hand.
- e. Work was ongoing to ensure that the Council's duties were met under the equalities act to mitigate against groups which were adversely affected by the changes. Officers liaised with advice agencies to provide them with the information they need to support citizens where they are.
- f. A new telephony system would be in place during May/June with more functionality. Officers to note how call data analysis was presented by the Energy company as this had proved to be a useful format. **Action : Rizwan Tariq**
- g. It was confirmed that non English speakers had access to interpreters and multiple language speakers through 3-way phone calls. Officers to provide data to Members **Action : Rizwan Tariq**



- h. Officers confirmed that the Department for Work and Pensions were moving the Job Centre into the Temple Street site but this was separate to the customer service point. It was noted that there could be opportunities for joint work with citizens where appropriate.
- i. Officers to confirm to Councillor Shah the current status of the Council's website via Jacqueline Miller. **Action : Rizwan Tariq**
- j. Officers to confirm who was leading on the work to develop an online citizen account and portal and whether there were opportunities for online assistance for SMEs. **Action : Rizwan Tariq**

## 10. Social Value Policy: One Year On

The Commission considered a report of the Social Value Advisory Group presented by Rob Logan- Service Manager, Contracts & Quality. The report set out the Social Value Policy one year on and proposed next steps.

In discussion and in response to Members questions the following points were raised:

- a. Concern was raised that smaller specialist contractors found it difficult to compete due to large aggregated contracts which demanded greater financial capability to meet the criteria. It was confirmed that there was an effort to replace citywide contracts with three geographic zones.
- b. Councillor Clarke declared an interest in the Bristol Pound.
- c. Concern was raised that a trick had been missed by not promoting local trade more. It was felt to be important to improve the percentage of SME's that were based in Bristol, as micro organisations added real value in the City demonstrated by the multiplier model. It was noted that tenders could not restrict applicants by geographic location but that it was a priority to engage smaller and more local organisations.
- d. It was considered that Bristol organisations could offer more social value because of where they were based, with the ability to prioritise jobs in Bristol through the Social Value and Procurement policies and further to prioritise not-for-profit and local business.
- e. Members raised concern about the difficulty experienced by officers in capturing essential information about supplier's geography manually rather than through electronic means, and that a lack of data may impact decision making.
- f. It was noted that a balance sheet was not of substantive value when assessing an organisations ability to deliver a contract and requests to meet this type of criteria demonstrated a continual preference for larger businesses.



- g. There was an opportunity to capture and drive the social value agenda through the Medium Term Financial Plan, making use of flex in financial regulations to set proportional criteria which encouraged and incentivised the local market. It was not possible to require suppliers to use the Bristol Pound however it could be evidenced that use of a local currency could demonstrate social value.
- h. There was a need for a strategic road map to engage BME and women SMEs. It was noted that a peer to peer engagement event was being planned by VOSCUR and FSB.
- i. Resources Scrutiny Commission to refer a note to Cabinet to express and reconfirm their continued support and the high level of importance of the Social Value Policy with Cabinet Members. **Action: Johanna Holmes**

**The Commission resolved:**

**To note the report and presentation, and the comments and actions arising.**

**11. Resources Period 8 Finance Information (Draft Extract)**

The Commission considered a report from the Service Director, Finance. The report set out the relevant Business Change/Resources extracts taken from the Period 8 Finance Report.

In discussion and in response to Member's questions the following points were raised:

- a. It was confirmed that the cost of the Mayoral Combined Authority, once constituted, was still to be fully quantified. A Mayoral fund and a Combined Authority fund would be funded by each constituent Local Authority.
- b. It was noted that a customer relationship management system which councillors could interrogate to support casework with constituents would be welcomed. It was acknowledged that the project which had formed part of the implementation of the citizen's services programme had been put on hold due to affordability.

**The Commission resolved to note the report.**

Meeting ended at 12.10 pm

**CHAIR** \_\_\_\_\_



