

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY (VALUE FOR MONEY COUNCIL SERVICES) COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny (Value for Money Council Services) Committee held in the Coltman VC Room, Town Hall on 28th September 2022 at 6.30pm.

Present:

Councillors R. Lock (Chairman), L. Beech, S. Gaskin, R. G. Grosvenor, T. Hadley (via Zoom) P. Hudson and S. McGarry.

Officers Present:

Sal Khan (Head of Service), Mark Rizk (Head of Service), James Abbott (Corporate and Commercial Manager), Simon Allaway (Leisure Services Contracts Officer) and Monica Henschcliffe (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Ms A Legg.

12/22 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest at the commencement of the meeting.

13/22 **MINUTES**

Resolved:

That the public minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th June 2022 be approved as a correct record.

14/22 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business submitted to the meeting pursuant to Rule 12.

15/22 **UPDATE FROM A REPRESENTATIVE FROM TRENT AND DOVE REGARDING DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT**

Members received a short presentation from Jennifer Tenant-Foster, a representative from Trent and Dove to update the Committee on the disabled facilities grant scheme.

She reported on the visions for their adaptations as Trent and Dove were committed to help people to live independently in their home. They provide advice on equipment and/or adaptation for home to support people and their family's needs. They also offer advice and support on alternatives if adaptation is not possible.

Trent and Dove's approach is based upon:

- Risk, vulnerability and capacity
- Participation, inclusion and equality
- Planning and decision-making processes
- Innovation, knowledge and technology
- Adaptive management
- Learning, use of data, capacity building and knowledge management

Integral to what they offer are:

- Suitable access to impartial/independent information and advice about what adaptations would suit the customer best
- Transparency
- Open and clear processes
- Good communication
- Professionals who listen
- Trustworthy

She also provided an update on the Disabled Facilities Grant as at September 2022 following their attendance at the Scrutiny Committee in March 2022.

She reported that communications have been improved, customers who are refused are called and given an explanation as to why their application was unsuccessful, by an administrator who works within the Tenancy Sustainment team who supports this process. Trent and Dove's Occupational Therapist also contact the customer to discuss as to why they hadn't been accepted and are signposted to agencies that may be able to help them.

Also they were committed in March to do a complete review of how Trent and Dove manage adaptations, considering waiting times shared at the last scrutiny meeting, and evidenced by some Members receiving complaints from residents in their ward. The review was underway, and improvements have already been made. A vision of the adaptations which have been the guiding principles was circulated prior to the meeting.

She reported that Trent and Dove had refused three disabled facilities grant and the reasons had been given to the customers and their next step going forward. Trent and Dove has also committed £100k per year to fund adaptations, and data showing the agreed adaptations were circulated prior to the meeting.

Trent and Dove's Older Persons Strategy had been written and adaptations was the key element of the document. This officially starts in quarter 3 by way of a formal register when the new CRM system was implemented in April 2022. The vision is to have an adapted register running alongside the stock register.

She reported that Trent and Dove are working with their Development Team to ensure that the properties that are newly built meet the needs of their customers. They also had a customer insight strategy supporting all current and future development programmes.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED

16/22 **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 1**

The Report of Sal Khan, Head of Service, regarding the quarter 1 performance report was considered. The Corporate and Commercial Manager provided an overview of the report to the committee.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED

17/22 **UPDATE ON THE ONGOING REVIEWS**

The Chairman updated the Committee on the ongoing programme of scrutiny topics.

IT – delayed due to the impact on officer’s resource. The manager’s survey will be sent out shortly, and the benchmarking survey has been sent out to other Councils. The sub-group leader envisaged that the review would be completed by December 2022/January 2023.

Mayoralty – informed the Committee that a working document is in progress and that consultation had been held with the current and former Mayor, and the sub-group would bring a report to the next meeting of the Committee.

Disabled Facilities Grants – following this meeting the sub-group would meet and bring a report to the next meeting of the Committee.

Civil Enforcement – data gathering is underway. This is likely to be a large review and could run a long time.

18/22 **SCRUTINY REVIEW PROGRAMME**

The Chairman informed the Committee that they did not have the capacity to take on a new review at present, but requested that Members gave consideration to any further topics that they would like to add to the review programme.

Discussions took place.

It was noted that Councillor Lock suggested that the Planning Fees be considered and placed on the list.

Councillor McGarry also suggested that the Cemetery Fees could also be considered.

NOTED

19/22 **PUBLIC EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORDS**

Members considered the Public Executive Decision Records.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED

20/22 **QUESTIONS**

There were no questions submitted to the Committee prior to the meeting.

21/22 **DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved:

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on 16th November 2022.

22/22 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved:

That, in accordance with Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting during discussion of the following items as it would likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the

proceedings that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets before each item number on the Agenda:

LEISURE SERVICES CONTRACT REPORT

PRIVATE EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORDS