

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Scrutiny Board held on 18 November 2014

Present

Councillor Shimbart (Chairman)

Councillors Cousins, Galloway, Keast, Lenaghan, Perry, Smith D, Smith K, Tarrant and Turner

25 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors F Ponsonby and P Buckley.

26 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Board held on 9 September 2014 be approved as a correct record.

27 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

28 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest from any of the members present.

29 Chairman's Report

The Chairman reminded members that they are encouraged to work from home and as closely as possible with their scrutiny lead when conducting scrutiny work.

30 Grants Scrutiny Update Report

The Board considered a report from the Community Service Manager regarding the progress to date of the recommendations arising from the Grants Scrutiny Report from 2011.

The Community Service Manager and the Cabinet Lead for Economy and Communities were invited to answer questions from the Scrutiny Board regarding the report. From the original recommendations it was outlined that the overall level of grants had decreased and grants were paid on a 6 month basis. It was also commented providing grants brings more revenue into the borough.

Concerns were raised over the sizeable grant given to Community First and what work they do. It was advised that information regarding Community First

and the work they complete would be circulated after the meeting for members' attention.

Members' queried how many organisations that receive grants also rent properties owned by the council and the level that rent is set. Concerns were raised over the level of maintenance council employees provide these properties and the cost of these repairs to the council. The Chairman asked if figures regarding these properties could be circulated to all members for their information.

It was highlighted that Staunton Country Park was not included on the list of organisations that have grants provided as Havant Borough Council have no control over how much is paid, instead an invoice is received. It was outlined that this was a historical agreement that would be coming to an end in 2015 where it could be revised.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Lead and Community Service Manager for the informative update.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) The Board considered the report and noted progress to date in taking forward the recommendations arising from the Grants Scrutiny review.

31 Community Development Scrutiny Review

The Board received a report and presentation from the Environment and Neighbourhood Quality Scrutiny and Policy Development Panel in connection with its review of the Community Development Team.

The panel produced a presentation consisting of a short video outlining the work undertaken by the community development team and the impacts caused within the local community and upon local organisations.

Concerns were raised over the figures of salaries provided within the report and specific attention drawn to numbers outlining that 1% of a Beachland Officer's time equates to £577. It was advised by officers that the figures included in 'costs' included an officers salary as well as any other additional incurred on costs of work undertaken. It was then highlighted that the scope of the work undertaken by the Scrutiny panel did not include any financial aspects. The Chairman asked if a breakdown of figures could be produced for further transparency.

The board thanked the community development team for their hard work and input into the review.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:

- (1) Community development work continued to be delivered

- (2) The option of establishing an integrated community service across the public and voluntary sector is investigated;
- (3) An officer led review is undertaken of the Council's community development service; this review to include recommendation (2) above.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) The Governance and Logistics panel be tasked with investigating the method of recording officer time.

32 Review of Outside Bodies

The board considered a report from the Governance and Logistics Scrutiny and Policy Development Panel following the review of outside bodies.

It was commented that there was no function for members to report back to the council on the business of outside bodies and decisions taken forward from outside body meetings.

The Chairman invited the Leader to address the panel in regard to the report and ask questions. The Leader drew attention to the lack of feedback from individual councillors on the activity of outside bodies to which they're appointed. It was suggested that members could complete feedback forms regarding outside bodies after individual meetings and accompany these forms with minutes of the meeting. Members also commented on the viability of providing minutes and feedback forms and the role Democratic Services would play in this process.

During the course of discussion the Board queried how confidential issues would be dealt with when individual members provide feedback on the activity of each outside body and it was advised that confidential items would remain confidential and only public minutes would be provided to the council for publication.

RECOMMENDED to the cabinet that:

- (1) All Councillors appointed to an outside body be required to complete a feedback form after each scheduled meeting in order to ensure that each appointment continues to represent value for the council
- (2) The guidance Code for Councillors on Outside Organisations contained within the Council's yearbook is circulated to all Councillors sitting on an outside body as the Council's representative.

and

- (3) From the start of the next municipal year all outside bodies be requested to advise Democratic Services of any future meetings programmed and forward on any future sets of minutes.

33 Late Item(s)

Personalisation

The Board received a report from the Marketing and Development Scrutiny and Policy Development Panel on Personalisation. The panel were joined by the Cabinet Lead for Operational Services, Executive Head for Environment and Neighbourhood Quality, and the Service Manager for Operational Services to answer questions from the board.

Concerns were raised by the Board about the lack of financial evidence incorporated into the report and members queried if there was evidence collected in background research when outlining recommendations, specifically kerbside glass collection. It was advised that the panel had only been looking at glass collection in relation to the personalisation project; it had not been investigated as a standalone project. The panel representatives insisted that, in order to enable agile working, there was no need to continue investigation into incorporating roadside glass collection into the personalisation project. A member of the Board suggested that there may be some value in the investigation in the kerb side glass collection as a separate scrutiny project, to be undertaken by the appropriate scrutiny panel.

Members raised concerns over the viability of introducing council run MOT services into the borough and some potentially high set up costs. It was advised by officers present that a MOT service may be a viable option in the context of an in house service, but until such time as the current review of service options was complete, it was premature to investigate the vehicle workshop business case.. The Chairman suggested to the Scrutiny lead that it would be prudent to reconsider this matter once decisions had been made regarding council run services.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Environment and Neighbourhood Quality Scrutiny & Development Panel conducts a review on kerbside glass collection.

and

2. The Marketing & Development Scrutiny & Development Panel bring an updated report on personalisation of council services to the Scrutiny Board in early 2015.

34 Scrutiny Board Work Programme - 2014/15

The Board was given an opportunity to review progress with regard to the work undertaken by the scrutiny/policy development panels since the last meeting

and to identify any additional matters for inclusion in the Board's work programme.

RESOLVED the progress to date with regard to the Board's work programme be noted and that no additional matters be selected for scrutiny/policy review at the present time.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and concluded at 7.20 pm

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Chairman