

Scrutiny Committee

Minutes

Thursday, 22 October 2015 at 18:30

PRESENT:-

Councillor Williamson (in the Chair); Councillors Collins, M Coleman, Grant, Fox, Jeal, Jones, Mavroudis, Sutton, Thirtle, T Wainwright and Walker.

Councillor B Coleman attended for Item 5.

Mrs J Beck (Director of Customer Services), Mr R Hodds(Cabinet Secretary), Mr T Chaplin (Housing Services Group Manager), Mr S Mutton (GYB Services), Mr C Rowland (Corporate Policy & Performance Officer) and Mrs C Webb (Senior Member Services Officer).

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no Declarations of Interest declared at the meeting.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lawn and Stenhouse.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman reported that following a changes to the Committee allocations as a result of recent party changes, the current Vice-Chairman was no longer a member of the Committee.

The Chairman asked for nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the 2015-16 Financial Year.

Councillor Fox was duly nominated and seconded.

Following a vote, it was RESOLVED:

That Councillor Fox be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the 2015-16 Financial Year.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2015 were confirmed.

5 OUTSIDE BODIES

Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust

Councillor M Coleman gave a report on recent projects undertaken by the Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust :-

- 133 King Street
- 135 King Street
- The Cemeteries
- Hopton Ruined Church
- Town wall Towers
- Vauxhall Bridge
- International Partnership; and
- The Waterways.

The Chairman thanked the member for her informative report.

Great Yarmouth Sports and Leisure Trust

The Chairman read out an e-mail he had received from the Leader of the Council which stated that as the Trust's Management and Funding Agreement with the Council had terminated earlier this year, in the circumstances, as there was no ongoing contractual relationship for services provided by the Trust to the Council, it would appear unnecessary for him to attend the Scrutiny Committee.

Councillors Grant and Mavroudis reported that they were unable to give an update as there had been no further meetings of the Trust since July.

A Member reported his concerns that the Trust were holding on to funding amounting to £400,000 and wanted to know the Trust's intentions for this money as he knew of several sporting/leisure activities in the Borough which could benefit from some of this funding.

A Member asked if Council could obtain all Councillor attendance records held by Outside Bodies to provide statistical analysis. A Member reported that he had been appointed to Outside Bodies who had never informed him of their meeting dates. The Cabinet Secretary reported that Member Services wrote to each Outside Body every year informing them of the Council appointments.

RESOLVED:

(i) That the reports in respect of the GYPT and GYSLT be noted

(ii) That the Leader of the Council be invited to attend the next Scrutiny Committee to give a report on the activities undertaken by the Great Yarmouth Sports and Leisure Trust.

6 GYB CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

The GYB Services Manager reported that GYB Services had been examining methods of how initial Satisfaction Surveys might be undertaken within the context of available resources.

Historically, GYB Services had tapped in to the Council's Citizen Panel which is now defunct.

With regard to individual customers, it was intended to contact 25 customers a month who had requested/received a service from GYB Services. With the services that do not come through Customer Services eg. footway lighting, they will randomly sample 5 of these a month.

With regard to Business customers, it was proposed to undertake a Stakeholder Focus Group with GYBC managers on operational issues.

A Member reported that as a Ward Councillor he received very few complaints regarding GYB Services. However, another Councillor reported that he did not think that GYB Services responded well to the litter/detritus produced by the seasonal influx to the Town, especially over the bank Holiday periods.

The Director of Customer Services reported that seasonality was taken into account and that GYB Services worked hard throughout the year.

The Director of Customer services reported that there was the possibility of using "My Account" via e-mail to obtain customer feedback in the future. It might be feasible to organise a leaflet drop as a first hit and build this into an annual survey via e-mail to provide a longer period of more sustained information.

A Member reiterated that the Council must obtain meaningful data to ensure value for money for our taxpayers with regard to the work carried out by GYB Services through the Joint Venture.

The Chairman reported that he looked forward to GYB Services's report this time next year with the appropriate data included which had been requested by the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the report from GYB Services be noted.

7 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee received the Quarter 1 Performance Report.

Members were concerned regarding CM34 Percentage of Contact centre Calls answered as a % of all calls offered as this quarter it had dropped to 54%.

The Director of Customer Services reported that this dip was caused by several members of staff from the Contact Centre moving on to different jobs in the

organisation and although new staff had been employed it took several months to train them. However, as an interim fix, two new staff had been taken on and trained to answer general calls and the Council was working hard to resolve the issue.

A Member asked that the Director of Customer Services bring an update report to the next meeting and that the total number of calls be reported to put the performance indicator figure CM34 into perspective.

A Member raised concerns that 21 performance indicator's had deteriorated in Quarter 1. The Chairman suggested that the Cabinet Portfolio Holder should investigate this concern and report back at the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

(i) That the Quarter 1 Performance Report be received.

(ii) That the Director of Customer Services bring an update report regarding performance indicator CM34 to the next Scrutiny Committee.

(iii) That the Cabinet Portfolio Holder give an update report on the position of the 21 deteriorating performance indicators highlighted at this meeting at the next Scrutiny Committee.

8 GREAT YARMOUTH MARKET GATES ELECTRONIC TRAVEL INFORMATION

The Committee considered the report from the County Officer.

The Chairman reported that the bus terminal lacked a main display screen detailing all bus service times as was available at Norwich.

A Member also requested that more bus shelters be provided to keep travellers dry in inclement weather. Another Member reported that this was an issue across the whole Borough and should be looked at by the Committee.

The Chairman reported that this issue would be best dealt with by Parish Councils and Ward Councillors working together.

RESOLVED:

That Norfolk County Council be asked to revise the specification of the electronic signage provided at market gates to include a master information screen.

9 REVIEW OF ALLOCATIONS SCHEME

The Group Manager Housing Services reported the salient areas of his report on the Revised Housing Allocation Scheme to the Committee.

The Chairman asked the Group Manager to supply the Committee with the actual number of applications, as a percentage, from workers who had subsequently been awarded a Council dwelling and the rejection rate, as a percentage, of the total number of housing applications.

A Member asked how the Group Manager perceived the present housing need in the

Borough. The Group Manager reported that the need fluctuated with regard to the type of properties required and it was therefore difficult to be specific. He did have concerns regarding the level of new affordable housing being built for the future.

A Member suggested that the Scrutiny Committee should look at the Housing Strategy Policy which had recently changed.

The Chairman reported that the building of affordable homes had been part of the planning application for the Beacon Park Housing Development.

RESOLVED:

That the Group Manager (Housing Services)' report be noted.

10 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2015-16

The Cabinet Secretary updated Members on the proposed Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2015/16.

The Cabinet Secretary reported that a Budget Monitoring report should have been presented at the meeting but as the Chief Finance Officer had recently left the post, this would now be reported at the next meeting.

The Chairman suggested that a representative of the Broads Internal Drainage Board be one of the Outside Bodies to be invited to give a report of their activities to the next meeting.

The Chairman reported that he would like the new Interim Chief Executive Officer and the Transformation Manager to attend the next meeting to give an overview of how Shared Services would affect the Transformation Programme.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that there was no other business as might be determined by the Chairman of the meeting as being of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

The meeting ended at: 20:05