



GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Scrutiny Committee

Minutes

Tuesday, 20 June 2023 at 18:30

PRESENT:-

Councillor Williamson (in the Chair); Councillors Cordiner-Achenbach, Grant, Galer, Hammond, Jeal, Mogford, Murray-Smith, Thompson, Wainwright & Waters-Bunn.

Councillor Boyd attended as a substitute for Councillor Freeman.

Councillor Wells attended as an observer only.

Ms C Whatling (Monitoring Officer), Mrs S Wintle (Corporate Services Manager) & Mrs C Webb (Democratic Services Officer).

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Freeman & Robinson-Payne.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared at the meeting.

3 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME SETTING

The Chairman welcomed all Members present to the first Scrutiny Committee meeting.

The Chairman asked the committee to consider the suggested work programme he had outlined:-

Standing Items

- (i) Quarterly Financial Reports,
- (ii) Quarterly Performance Reports

These two items would be considered at the meeting on 26 September 2023.

From these standing items members may wish to identify issues that require improvement, constantly missing Performance Indicators/low performance; and

- (iii) Any item or issue from the Annual Action Plan which may require further investigation/scrutiny by the Scrutiny Committee. The Annual Action Plan would be submitted to the Committee at its meeting in March 2024.

Other possible matters to be considered by the Committee:-

- (i) Social Housing Applications.
 - Review of implementation, capacity, uptake, numbers waiting, criteria and its application in specific circumstance, satisfaction of customers. This to be considered at the meeting of 12 December 2023.

Members raised concerns that health issues were not being given the appropriate weight during the application process.

- (ii) Social Housing Assets Data and Strategic Planning of Repairs and Maintenance.
 - % re criteria such as damp homes, houses waiting for repair et
 - % Re history of repairs of housing stock re type of remedial action required and location in the Borough.
 - Briefing on data base and how the metrics are used to assist the below issues.
 - Strategic planning / identification of work required.
 - Performance reports on fulfilling required targets.

Members requested sight of the baseline data as a matter of urgency. Members were unanimous that clear communication to our customers must be a priority. Members were aware that Chris Furlong must be allowed to complete the asset transfer and the new system must be given time to bed in. The Corporate Services Manager advised that the Sheltered Housing Review would come to the committee. This item to be considered at the meeting on 24 October 2023.

- (iii) Review of Planning /Development Management.
 - Capacity, need, timelines.
 - Data on decisions within recommended periods.

Councillor Wainwright proposed that this item should be scrutinised first and that this could be a "quick fix" for the committee. Councillor Grant asked that a review of planning enforcement should also be included. This item to be considered at the meeting of 26 September 2023.

- (iv) The Environment Act 1990
 - How the act controls issues which impact on local residents. Disposal of waste, burning of waste, bonfires etc.
 - Does GYBC require a policy re particular issues in line with other LEAs.

The Chairman reported that the review was not aimed at the Act itself, but that individual concerns, for example, bonfires, should have an advisory leaflet produced in line with a specific policy. This to be considered at the meeting of 28 November 2023.

The Committee agreed with the suggestions put forward by the Chairman. The Chairman asked if Members wished to add any further items for consideration bearing in mind that the Committee might need to address call-ins and referrals from Cabinet.

Members suggested the following items:-

- (i) Community Centres and Communal Rooms.

Councillors Jeal & Waters-Bunn were concerned that although these were Council assets they were run by volunteers who the Council had no control over since the Neighbourhood Manager posts had been deleted.

- (ii) Delivery of Affordable Homes in the Borough.

Councillor Grant asked that this be added to the timetable to ensure that as many affordable homes could be built in the Borough, especially in the rural areas.

- (iii) Play Parks.

Councillor Waters-Bunn requested that this item be put on the work programme to address the lack of suitable play parks in the borough and their repair and maintenance.

- (iv) Retrofits on Council homes.

Councillor Galer reported that it was imperative that the Council monitors new innovations to improve thermal efficiencies on Council stock.

The Chairman reported that he had taken the views of Members on board and that he would work with the Corporate Services Manager to produce a draft work programme for approval at the next meeting.

The Corporate Services Manager informed the Committee that she would send a template out to the Members which they would need to complete as the first step in having their item considered by Scrutiny.

The Chairman asked Members if they were happy holding the meetings in the Council Chamber or whether they would prefer to hold them in the less formal Supper Room. Members responded that they were happy for the meetings to be held in the Council Chamber.

The Corporate Services Manager reported that she would update the dates in the Work Programme as requested at the Committee and circulate the updated document to the Committee.

RESOLVED:-

That the Corporate Services Manager to update the Scrutiny Committee Work Programme which would be presented to the Scrutiny Committee for approval.

4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman reported that there was no other business being of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration at the meeting.

The meeting ended at: 19:20