

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 9 September 2015 from 14.00 - 15.44

Membership

Present

Councillor Brian Parbutt (Chair)
Councillor Glyn Jenkins
Councillor Azad Choudhry
Councillor Georgina Culley
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan (Vice Chair)
Councillor Neghat Nawaz Khan
Councillor Anne Peach
Councillor Pat Ferguson
Councillor Leslie Ayoola
Councillor Josh Cook
Councillor Mohammed Ibrahim
Councillor Patience Ifediora

Absent

Councillor Ginny Klein
Councillor Corall Jenkins

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Gill Cooke - Executive Officer
Richard Henderson - Head of Transformation
Helen Hill - Research Engagement and Consultation Manager
Rav Kalsi - Senior Governance Officer

6 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Ginny Klein – other Council business

7 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

8 MINUTES

The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2015 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

9 NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL'S SUMMER OF ENGAGEMENT

Richard Henderson, Head of Transformation and Gill Cooke, Executive Officer, delivered a presentation on Nottingham City Council's Summer of Engagement programme for 2015, highlighting the following:

- (a) In November 2014 Overview and Scrutiny were updated on the Council's progress from 'Good to Great' and it's proposals to put citizens at the heart.

Part of this journey is supported by a great workforce providing great services to its citizens and contributing to Nottingham being a great city. The previous focus had been on fundamental topics such as cleanliness, crime, education, transport and infrastructure. Allied to the process is the process of department restructure and improving the Council's and the city's reputation. A great Council will enable a new business economy, ensure Nottingham's workforce is skilled and establish a reputation for business innovation;

- (b) The Council will lead the city in bringing businesses and partners together, set the long-term strategic direction for the city and support vulnerable people. A 'great' vision includes being honest about the services the Council can provide and empower communities to be independent by raising aspirations;
- (c) The focus for the Summer of Engagement for 2015 has been the Council's future workforce. Nottingham City Council colleagues have been asked to discuss "how do we create a workforce that's right for our citizens?"
- (d) The programme aims to engage with over 800 colleagues, involve discussion with the Council's Corporate Leadership Team, include discussions with a range of employee networks, such as disability forums and the black and minority ethnic forum;
- (e) Discussion with Council colleagues will help shape the Council's approach to creating the workforce of the future, provide feedback to senior managers to improve their understanding of how it feels to work for the Council. This feedback will not only influence the review of the Council's equality objectives but it will inform decision makers on how they make the Council more diverse;

In response to questions the Committee raised the following points:

- (f) Citizens of Nottingham expect the Council workforce to be efficient, provide a consistent service and in particular circumstances, citizens will expect service from the same people. There is also an expectation that the Council's workforce should be representative of the community it serves, across all tiers of governance. In the past, communication from local councils has been difficult to digest and complex. In light of this, it is crucial that councils communicate in plain English and in a way that citizens understand;
- (g) There is an expectation that the citizens want Council staff to operate as an information hub with the ability to signpost citizens to the right area. There is an expectation that the Council will share relevant data with other Council departments to avoid duplication and confusion;
- (h) With recent Council reorganisation, Council workers who leave the authority after many years often do so with years of experience and knowledge. The Council should be thinking about how it efficiently captures the knowledge of staff that leave the authority. There is also a perception that Council workers remain in local government for life which is not necessarily the best thing. It could be argued that a more productive option is to develop staff members for 3-4 years and let staff move on;

- (i) It could be argued that the younger demographic in the city are not attracted by working for the city, both in terms of reward and a perceived stigma that local government work is not appealing. To attract a more representative and diverse workforce there would need to be a healthy turnover of Council staff.

RESOLVED to

- (1) Thank Richard Henderson and Gill Cooke for their informative presentation and facilitated discussion;**
- (2) Review the outcome of the Summer of Engagement programme in 12 months and receive an update on the Council's workforce transformation.**

10 CITIZEN SURVEY

Helen Hill, Research Engagement and Consultation Manager, delivered a presentation on the results of the Citizen Survey 2014, highlighting the following information:

- (a) Nottingham City Council commissioned Information by Design in 2014 to conduct the survey and the field work was undertaken in October and November 2014. The field work involved face to face interviews with 2,107 citizens (approximately 100 per ward, depending on size). This is the same methodology used in 2011, 2012 and 2013 surveys enabling directly comparable results;
- (b) The survey is used to gather citizens' perceptions on a variety of subjects including quality of life, health and wellbeing, community cohesion, feelings about Nottingham and experiences due to the economic climate;
- (c) Overall, results from this year's survey are similar to last year with a couple of notable improvements which is positive in light of the current challenging economic climate and difficult budget decisions;
- (d) In relation to citizen's perceptions about their local area, 87% of respondents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, compared to 88% in 2013. Currently, 75% are satisfied with the cleanliness of the local area, compared to 74% in 2013 and 82% are satisfied with the city centre cleanliness. 90% of respondents feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together which is a figure Nottingham should be proud of. Similar to results in 2013, there is a strong correlation between respondents satisfied with their area and those satisfied with the cleanliness of their area;
- (e) When questioned about the perceptions of the Council, 65% feel the Council provides value for money, compared to 57% in 2013. 73% of respondents are satisfied with the way the Council operates and the feeling that the City Council provides value for money has increased significantly since last year. Although satisfaction with the Council remains the same as last year, there is

a variation between areas, such as 69% in Area 7 to 78% in Area 4. Last year, Area 7 recorded the highest level of satisfaction within the Council;

- (f) In responding to questions around equality, 90% of respondents think that local public services treat all types of people fairly. This is a significant increase since last year and is the highest results obtained by the Council for this question;
- (g) When discussing citizens' experiences due to the economic climate, 30% have said that they are keeping up with bills but sometimes or constantly find it a struggle. 1% said that they are falling behind with bills and as a direct response of the current economic climate, 61% said they had made at least one change. Results from this area suggest that those who are unemployed or otherwise not in paid work and those with disability or long term illness seem to be having the most difficulty keeping up with bills and credit commitments.

Following comments and questions from the Committee, the following information was provided:

- (h) Field workers use a methodology where they visit every 4th house on a set of streets and where a citizen does not speak English, they arrange for a visit from someone who speaks their language. Information by Design, who were commissioned to carry out the survey in 2014 use local people from communities to conduct part of the field work;
- (i) All results are published on Nottingham City Council's website and respondents are asked if they would like to subscribe to the Council's Stay Connected feed which includes updates on consultation and engagement events.

RESOLVED to thanks Helen Hill for the information presentation and to report the results of the survey in 2015 to the Committee.

11 PROGRAMME FOR SCRUTINY

Rav Kalsi, Senior Governance Officer introduced the report of the Head of Democratic Services setting out the programme of activity for this Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Review Panels for 2015/16.

RESOLVED to

- (1) agree the work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Review Panels for 2015/16, as summarised in the report;**
- (2) appoint Councillor Brian Parbutt to chair a review of the use of enforcement agents in Nottingham on Monday 26 October 2015, 10am.**