

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 14 June 2017 from 2.00 pm - 3.20 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Azad Choudhry
Councillor Josh Cook
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora
Councillor Sue Johnson (Vice Chair)
Councillor Ginny Klein
Councillor Carole McCulloch
Councillor Jackie Morris
Councillor Anne Peach

Absent

Councillor Georgina Culley
Councillor Mohammed Ibrahim
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan
Councillor Brian Parbutt
Councillor Mohammed Saghir
Councillor Marcia Watson

Also Present

Councillor Alan Clark

Portfolio Holder for Energy and Sustainability

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Nancy Barnard - Governance Manager
Shelley Harrod - Research, Engagement and Consultation Manager
Noel McMenamin - Governance Officer
James Rhodes - Head of Strategic Insight

8 CHANGE TO MEMBERSHIP

The Committee noted that Councillor Jackie Morris has replaced Councillor Nick McDonald as a member of the Committee for the 2017/18 municipal year.

9 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Georgina Culley (unwell)
Councillor Mohammed Ibrahim (personal)
Councillor Brian Parbutt – Chair – (leave)
Councillor Marcia Watson (work)

In Councillor Parbutt's absence, the Chair was taken by Councillor Sue Johnson, the Vice-Chair.

10 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

11 MINUTES

Subject to recording Councillor Ginny Klein's attendance at the meeting, the minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2017 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

12 DISCUSSION WITH THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENERGY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Councillor Alan Clark, Portfolio Holder for Energy and Sustainability, provided an update on the key priorities and challenges under his remit within the Council Plan. The following points were highlighted in the discussion that followed:

- (a) air quality has moved much further up the national agenda since the Council Plan was first published. A new national Air Quality Strategy has been published. The proposals include establishing Clean Air Zones, but there is no overarching legislation, and it is unclear whether a 'charge' or 'no charge' approach will be adopted to deal with air pollution caused by diesel engines;
- (b) the roll-out of solar panels on domestic City Council properties is on pause following cuts in national subsidies for solar thermal (photovoltaic) installations;
- (c) however, Nottingham City Council was to the forefront of installing solar panels on non-domestic buildings, including, in addition to Loxley House, the Ken Martin Leisure Centre, Harvey Hadden Sports Village and the new Dales Joint Service Centre. Rather than feeding into the National Grid, electricity produced was used on-site;
- (d) the next significant installation site will be at Southglade Business Park;
- (e) solar canopies are being developed, and placing charging points near to concentrations of panels will be considered;
- (f) it was unclear exactly where air quality problems will be and where best to place air quality monitoring stations for Clean Air Zones. It was reported that Nottingham's previous poor air quality rating partly arose from significant construction work in and around the Victoria Centre in central Nottingham;
- (g) Councillor Clark expressed the view that measures to tackle air quality, including addressing diesel emissions, needed enshrining in national legislation, and could not be effectively delivered within Local Plans alone;
- (h) Robin Hood Energy (RHE) now employed over 100 people, and was building a business base not only in Nottingham but in Leeds, Liverpool and elsewhere.
- (i) RHE, in common with all relative new-comers to the energy market, required heavy initial investment, and it was clear from the RHE Business Plan that the company was not yet expected to reach break-even point. The key point is that RHE has assets that would cover the costs of borrowing and is not overstretched.

RESOLVED to thank Councillor Clark for his attendance and contribution to the discussion.

13 CITIZENS' SURVEY 2016

The Committee received a presentation from James Rhodes, Head of Strategic Insight, and Shelley Harrod, Research, Engagement and Consultation Manager on the conduct and findings of the 2016 Citizens' Survey, highlighting the following points:

- (a) the survey methodology involved conducting face-to-face interviews with just over 2,000 people across the city, with cluster sampling by ward, age, gender and ethnicity;
- (b) the survey gathered perceptions on a variety of issues, including health and wellbeing, community cohesion, satisfaction with the Council and experiences in the current economic climate;
- (c) the survey generated a huge data set, producing robust data at city-wide level, but less robust findings, given the sample sizes, at ward level;
- (d) overall, results were similar to those in 2015, and continue to show high levels of satisfaction or positive outcomes across a broad range of indicators;
- (e) perceptions about local area remained consistently positive, with high levels of satisfaction with cohesion and cleanliness;
- (f) perceptions of the Council are consistent with or more positive than those in 2015, with 71% happy with the way the Council runs things and 85% agreeing that the Council treats them fairly. For those who had contact with the Council, 90% found Council information easy to understand, 73% were satisfied with how their query was dealt with, and nearly 80% agreed that those handling their query delivered what they promised;
- (g) more citizens than ever before (82%) said they would speak highly of Nottingham, while there were high satisfaction levels with Nottingham as a place to live, visit, study and work;
- (h) those who were not in paid work and those with a disability or long-term illness seem to have the most difficulty in keeping up with bills and credit commitments;
- (i) smoking and drinking prevalence remained relatively unchanged, while the average mental health wellbeing score has seen a modest improvement;
- (j) Nottingham continues to perform better than the national average, especially in terms of satisfaction with local area and value for money.

During discussion, several points were made:

- (k) it was confirmed that further work will be done to explore the disproportionate levels of dissatisfaction among those with disabilities;

- (l) it would be difficult to retrospectively contact those with multiple issues to capture their experiences, but such an approach could be used in the future to inform more detailed case studies, bringing the survey outcomes to life.

RESOLVED to thank James Rhodes and Shelley Harrod for their interesting and informative presentation.

14 WORK PROGRAMME

Nancy Barnard, Governance Manager, introduced the report setting out the work programme for the 2017/18 municipal year.

Ms Barnard briefly explained that a Portfolio Holder will attend each meeting to update the Committee on red and amber Council Plan priorities, and that key priorities for scrutiny, including fly-tipping, will be addressed over several meetings.

In response to a councillor's question, Ms Barnard advised that the Committee will engage and communicate with citizens primarily through interest groups, which works well, especially in health scrutiny.

RESOLVED

- (1) to note the work currently planned for the remainder of the 2017/18 municipal year;**
- (2) to agree to add a review of the Remourban Project to the work programme.**