

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee held at 10.00 am on
Wednesday, 22 November 2017

Present:

Members: Councillor R Brown (Chair)

Councillor N Akhtar
Councillor A Andrews
Councillor J Clifford (Deputy Chair)
Councillor D Gannon
Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor M Mutton
Councillor G Ridley
Councillor R Singh

Other Members Present Councillor F Abbot, Cabinet Member for Adult Services
Councillor L Bigham, Cabinet Member for Community
Development

Employees (by Directorate):

Place M Andrews, S Bennett, V Castree

People M McGinty, R Mackenzie – Wilson

Others Present J Breckon (Warwick University)
O Okwuadigbo (Coventry University)

Apologies Councillor J Mutton

Public Business

34. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

In relation to Minute 37 below “Student Accommodation and University City Development”, the Committee noted that Councillor Gannon had been a student at Warwick University and was currently a student at Coventry University.

35. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 October, 2017 were signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

36. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED that approval be given to exclude the press and public under Section 100(A) 4 of the Local Government Act 1972 for consideration of the private matter referred to in Minute 43 below relating to “Preventative Support – Adult Services” on the grounds that that item involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of an organisation and the amount of expenditure proposed to be incurred

37. **Student Accommodation and University City Development**

The Committee considered a Briefing Note of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which outlined the current position with purpose built student accommodation across the City and how that will relate to and support the growth in both the City’s Universities. The Briefing Note also included reference to policies and monitoring requirements within emerging new Local Plan and City Centre Area Action Plan where appropriate.

Nigel Alcock and Obi Okwuadigbo, representing Warwick and Coventry Universities respectively, attended the meeting and were able to provide the Committee with additional information.

The Briefing Note covered the following areas:-

- The Planning Policy Framework
- Current Development Pipeline
- Monitoring and Future Expectations

The Committee questioned officers and the Universities’ representatives on aspects of the Briefing Note including:-

- Information relating to student accommodation contracts, including the length of time contracts are for
- Section 106 agreements linked to planning applications approvals for student accommodation
- The retention rates for students remaining in Coventry once they have graduated
- If business rates can be applied to unoccupied Houses in Multiple Occupation (HIMO’s) and purpose built student accommodation that is used for other purposes outside of term time
- Rental costs for student accommodation in the City
- Work undertaken by the Universities to ensure students act as “good neighbours”, including information provided to students and codes of conduct applied

The Chair, Councillor Brown, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Nigel and Obi for their attendance at the meeting and their contribution to the discussion.

RESOLVED that the Committee receive further information in relation to the following:-

- 1) A list of stakeholders involved in the development of the Local Plan**
- 2) Details of approved Section 106 Agreements linked to purpose built student accommodation applications and the criteria applied to those agreements**
- 3) Retention figures for students from both Universities who remain in the City following the completion of their degrees and information in relation to how those figures are derived**
- 4) The position in relation to whether Council Tax is payable in unoccupied HIMO's and purpose built student accommodation that is used for other purposes outside of term**
- 5) Opportunities to use empty HIMO's to rehouse homeless families**
- 6) A comparative of the nature and costs of student accommodation in other cities**
- 7) The situation in relation to Business Rates payable on areas of student accommodation buildings, such as retail units and leisure facilities**
- 8) A copy of the information provided to new students by the Universities in relation to their accommodation and codes of conduct**
- 9) Powers available to the City Council in relation to landlord responsibility**

38. Preventative Support - Adult Services

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People), which set out the outcome of review work and the proposed changes for preventative support for Adult Services across 4 specific priority areas.

A corresponding private report detailing confidential aspects of the proposals was also submitted to the meeting for consideration (Minute 43 below refers)

The delivery of an effective preventative support was an important element of supporting people early in order to maintain their independence and prevent or reduce the need for social care or health support. Providing support in the way was a key element of the strategy for Adult Social Care as well as enshrined in the Care Act 2014.

Preventative support was currently provided by a range of voluntary and third sector organisations, who were commissioned by both the Council and the Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group (CRCCG) through a range of contracts and grants, all of which were due to expire in March 2018.

In order to ensure that the support provided beyond the end of these existing arrangements remained focussed and delivered positive outcomes for the people of the City with the available resources, the Council and CRCCG undertook a programme of work to review and then re-commission support across four priority groups: carers; people with physical impairments or dementia; mental health conditions; and adults with learning disabilities. Voluntary and third sector providers were fully engaged in the process of the review, including the setting of the priority areas and outcomes. Stakeholder views were also actively sought to support the development of proposals for future services.

As well as targeting support on priority groups, the review work also sought to deliver a saving for the Council of £0.5m for delivery in 2018/19 from the existing Council spend of £3.01m per annum as part of the budget setting process in February 2017.

The Committee questioned officers on aspects of the report, including:-

- Why the decision was taken to grant fund as opposed to commission and the flexibility of grant funding
- The process for publishing the for grant applications
- Whether transition from Childrens to Adult services had been considered
- How does the prevention grant here link with the work of the Sustainability and Transformation Plan and their work streams on prevention
- Process for monitoring and feedback on progress

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee request that a follow up report be submitted monitoring progress following implementation of the new grants.

39. West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Feedback

The Committee received and noted feedback from the Chair, Councillor R Brown, on the West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

40. Outstanding Issues

The Committee noted that all outstanding issues had been dealt with in the Committee's Work Programme.

41. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme 2017/2018

The Committee received and noted their Work Programme for the current Municipal Year.

RESOLVED:-

- 1) That in relation to the meeting to be held on 20 December, 2017, the City's three MP's be invited to attend for the item on Taxi Licensing**
- 2) That consideration of issues relating to parking around schools during drop off and pick up times be added to the Work Programme**
- 3) That consideration be given to raising the profile of Scrutiny via the media and social media**

42. Any Other Items of Public Business

There were no additional items of urgent public business.

43. Preventative Support - Adult Services

Further to Minute 38 above, the Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) that set out confidential aspects in relation to the proposed award of community based preventative support grant funding for Adult Services.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee request that a follow up report be submitted monitoring progress following implementation of the new grants.

44. Any Other Items of Private Business

There were no additional items of urgent private business.

(Meeting closed at 12.00 pm)