

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held
at 10.00 am on Wednesday, 12 February 2020

Present:

Members: Councillor R Singh (Chair)
Councillor J Blundell
Councillor R Brown
Councillor B Gittins
Councillor R Lancaster (substitute for Councillor F Abbott)
Councillor D Skinner (substitute for Councillor T Sawdon)

Members of the Business
Economy and Enterprise
Scrutiny Board (3) invited
for items at Minute
numbers 28 and 29:

Councillor M Heaven
Councillor T Jandu
Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor B Singh

Councillor J Mutton (Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance
and Resources)

Employees:

People: D Ashmore, M Burn
Place: V Castree, C Sinclair, S Weir

Apologies: Councillor F Abbott, R Lakha, A Lucas, P Male and T Sawdon

Public Business

26. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

27. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2020 were signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

28. Review of Social Value Policy

The Board considered a briefing note and received a presentation on the proposed changes to the Social Value Policy.

The Social Value Policy had been adopted by Cabinet on the 11th February 2014 and incorporated the Public Service (Social Value) Act 2012 that came into force on 31st January 2013. In July 2019 a progress report was taken to Scrutiny Board 1 (Minute 3/19 refers). Following a recommendation of Scrutiny Board, the Cabinet Member (Finance) requested that Officers draft a revised Social Value Policy.

The policy would be presented to the Cabinet and Council for their approval in June 2020.

The Social Value Working Group had reviewed the Policy and were proposing a new and extended policy, including an increased focus on Sustainability. It was proposed that the policy was also renamed as the Social Value & Sustainability Policy (the draft policy was appended to the briefing note).

The key changes were:

- A focus on sustainability.
- Social value and sustainability outcomes based on priorities aligning with the One Coventry approach and that these outcomes would be delivered through the following channels:
 - Procurement and commissioning
 - Major Development Project Planning
 - Anchor Institutions/Partners

The new policy would:

- Replace the Council's Energy and Water Management Policy
- Include a commitment to pay its directly employed staff the Living Wage Foundation 'Real' Living Wage.
- Adopt objective measurement/monitoring tools

Members asked questions and received answers on a number of aspects arising from discussion including:

- How the policy would be applied in situations where major planning projects owned by the City Council were situated outside the City Boundary.
- How the shared set of social value and sustainability principles with partners are monitored.
- The need to emphasise in the new definition that the policy was local and arising from subsequent discussion agreed that, within the paragraph on definition the word "Organisations" be replaced with the word "Council".

The Chair of Scrutiny Board 3, Councillor McNicholas, referred to community wealth and the need to focus on community wealth building in the City and proposed a recommendation for the Cabinet Member that the already-established Task and Finish Group be asked to support the work with anchor partners on community wealth building.

RESOLVED that the Board welcome the draft Social Value and Sustainability Policy and recommend that Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources ask the SB1/SB3 Task & Finish Group, established to review Community Wealth Building, support the work to develop community wealth building in Coventry in partnership with anchor institutions within the One Coventry approach.

29. Procurement Strategy

The Board considered a briefing note and received a presentation outlining the proposed new Procurement Strategy 2020-2025.

The policy would be presented to the Cabinet and Council for their approval in June 2020.

The current Procurement Strategy was based on the National Procurement Strategy 2014 and the following 4 key themes: Making savings; Supporting local authorities; Demonstrating leadership and Modernisation

Building on the current strategy's themes of driving efficiencies and good governance, the 2020-2025 strategy strengthened and broadened the Council's focus through a greater emphasis on creating community benefits and delivering social value. The 2020 – 2025 strategy (which was attached as an appendix to the briefing note) dovetailed with the three fundamental themes within the National Procurement Strategy (NPS) 2018. The NPS 2018 strategy described the good progress Authorities had made against the 2014 strategy and the major theme of making savings. However, it recognised that Councils continued to work in very challenging financial environments, with rising demands for public services and increasing cost pressures. The City Council had retained the efficiency and value for money theme from the current strategy, with all four themes also supported by our One Coventry Plan and the One Coventry approach.

The 2020-2025 procurement strategy themes were:

Efficiency and Value for Money

- Governance and Showing Leadership
- Achieving Community Benefit
- Behaving Commercially – including Contract Management

In addition to these themes, the strategy adopts two enablers;

- Digitalisation
- Capacity and Capability

The 2020-2025 strategy set out the high-level ambitions in more detail and demonstrated the specific deliverables for each of the key themes and enablers.

The Board asked officers a number of questions on matters relating to:

- Modern slavery: data collection/sharing and training
- Contract management
- Possible opportunities in respect of planning - particularly in terms of the Community Infrastructure Levy

RESOLVED that the Board note the draft report and officers commit to improving metrics relating to the Procurement Strategy.

30. **Work Programme and Outstanding Issues**

The Work Programme was noted.

31. **Any other items of Public Business**

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 12.10 pm)