

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee held at 10.00 am on
Wednesday, 6 April 2022

Present:

Members: Councillor N Akhtar (Chair)

Councillor L Bigham
Councillor J Clifford
Councillor G Duggins
Councillor C Miks
Councillor R Singh
Councillor C Thomas (Substitute for Councillor J Innes)

Other Members: Councillor G Duggins, Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership

Employees (By Service Area):

Communications N Hart

Education and Skills K Nelson (Director and Chief Partnership Officer)

Health and Well-Being A Duggal (Director), V De Souza, K Larson

Law and Governance S Bennett, G Holmes

Apologies: Councillors M Ali, J Lepoidevin and G Ridley

Public Business

56. Declarations of Interest

The Committee noted that Councillor L Bigham was a member of the West Midlands Air Quality Committee

57. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March, 2022 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

58. Coventry & Warwickshire Health Inequalities Strategic Plan

The Committee considered a Briefing Note of the Director of Health and Well-Being, together with a presentation at the meeting, which outlined the Coventry and Warwickshire Health Inequalities Strategic Plan, which is required to be provided by the Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care System (ICS) to NHS England.

The Plan must depict a locally agreed strategic approach for addressing health inequalities within 5 nationally determined clinical priorities and must be led by the Local Director of Public Health and owned by decision making bodies within the developing ICS. A programme of engagement was currently underway with partners and key NHS workstreams to develop the Plan and the Plan had been considered by the Health and Well-Being Board at their meeting on 4 April, 2022.

The Plan must apply the national “Core 20+5” model, with action to improve access and outcomes for people living in the most deprived areas (Core 20: most deprived fifth of the population) and for locally determined priority population groups (“+” groups) across the 5 clinical areas. Recommended local priority “+” groups for Coventry are transient communities and people on long-term sickness benefits. The Local Plan will build on existing work which aims to embed consideration of and action on health inequalities in all we do and shift how we work with local communities.

The Briefing Note covered:-

- Progress to date
- Health inequalities in Coventry
- Local Priority Population Groups:-
 - Transient communities
 - Refugees/migrants
 - Asylum seekers
 - Gypsies/Travellers
 - People who are experiencing homelessness
 - People on long-term sickness benefits
- Next Steps and timescales

The Committee asked questions, sought assurances and made comments on a number of issues including:-

- Partnership working on aspects of the Plan including air quality and planning
- How the Plan will be scrutinised in the future and the need for the Plan to have measurable objectives
- The role of the Director of Health and Well Being in dealing with health inequalities
- How the Director works with partners in the NHS and can be a conduit in relation to raising Members’ issues and concerns with NHS partners
- Concerns regarding current access to primary care, particularly in relation to the accessibility of GP appointments
- Applying a One Coventry approach to work being undertaken in relation to health inequalities
- The possibility of using volunteers in sports related activities to encourage public participation
- The importance of living in a clean and tidy environment

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee:-

- 1) Notes the requirements for a Coventry and Warwickshire Health Inequalities Strategic Plan**
- 2) Supports the recommended local priority population groups for the Strategic Plan (covering transient communities and people on long-term sickness benefits)**
- 3) Requests that the following additional Recommendations be forwarded to the appropriate Cabinet Member/officer as part of the development of the Plan:-**
 - i. That air quality targets have measurable, interim targets**
 - ii. That the protection of green spaces is considered as part of the Planning process**
 - iii. That the public health aspect in relation to the approval of hot food takeaways be considered as part of the Planning process**
 - iv. That consideration be given to increasing the budget for street cleansing**

59. Consultation Process

The Committee considered a Briefing Note of the Director of Health and Well-Being, together with a presentation at the meeting, which outlined the current consultation process and activities used in the promotion of consultations.

The Insight Engagement Team provides an oversight and advisory role across the Council and works with service area leads to ensure that methods used are fit for purpose, that the Council seeks to engage with people that are most affected and involve stakeholders with an interest in the outcomes. A Consultation Plan Template was appended to the Briefing Note.

There is a dedicated Engagement Manager for Regeneration, Highway, and Air Quality schemes who is involved throughout the duration of the project and is a member of the Project Teams. A consultation process document was also appended to the report. Additionally, there is a Children's Champion who focuses on consultations with young people.

All consultations involve working closely with the Community Resilience and Engagement and the Communications teams, as well as the service areas themselves. Discussions are held outlining possible online promotion, offline promotion, and community network engagement opportunities. In the case of large-scale citywide consultations, communication/engagement action plans are produced.

The Briefing Note indicated that whilst every endeavour is made to promote all consultation/engagement opportunities as widely as possible, there is no guarantee that people will want to engage and take part.

The presentation covered:-

- The principles of consultation
 - Dynamic dialogue between individuals or groups
 - Genuine exchange of views with the objective of influencing and informing decisions, policies, or programmes of action
 - NB: There is a decision to be made and opportunity to influence this
 - Engagement
 - Actions or processes undertaken to establish effective relationships with individuals or groups so that more specific interactions can then take place
 - Aim is to foster effective relationships.
- Consultation is undertaken to give stakeholders a genuine opportunity to influence the Council's decision making and the follow apply:
 - Consult when there is a legitimate expectation to do so
 - Consult before taking decisions when proposals are still at a formative stage
 - Provide enough information for intelligent consideration
 - Allow enough time for responses to be made
 - Decision makers to consciously consider the findings
- Information relating to "Lets Talk Coventry" – the Council's engagement platform which hosts all consultations
- How the Insight Team provide guidance and support to service areas to ensure that there are both offline/online mechanisms opportunities to enable the public to participate in consultations
- Areas identified for improvement:-
 - Continue to work to ensure consistency of approach to consultation across all Council departments through supporting best practice
 - Consistently share findings and intelligence from consultations both internally and with partners if appropriate
 - Improve feedback mechanisms: "you said, we did"
 - Mobilise wide range of internal and partner networks to promote consultations as appropriate

The Committee asked questions, sought assurances, received answers and made comments on a number of issues including:-

- How best to change the perception that consultations are tick box exercises and the provision of case studies to assist with this
- The use of Citizens Assembly Panels to assist with consultation. It was noted that these have been used by the Council in the past for specific consultations

- The need to use a wide range of mechanisms to reach as many different members of the public as possible, rather than just attracting responses from the same group of people
- The Committee noted that often there is a significant amount of work undertaken to engage with and consult with service users/key partners before a formal consultation takes place, which may explain lower responses to formal consultations
- Applying the One Coventry approach to consultations. It was noted that the One Coventry Plan Refresh was on the Committee's Work Programme
- In relation to questions regarding resourcing of the Team, it was noted that the Team provides a core service to Departments and shares knowledge, expertise and good practice across the Council
- Engagement with partners across the City via Communications groups
- The use of "Jam Boards" to communicate messages
- Engagement with local, regional and national broadcaster

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee:-

- 1) Notes the information provided in the Briefing Note**
- 2) Requests that details of consultations on the Council's website are forwarded to the Political Groups**
- 3) Requests that the Committee receives details on the proposed public consultation process for the One Coventry Plan as part of the report on that Plan to be considered by the Committee as part of their Work Programme for 2022/23**

60. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Outstanding Issues and Work Programme 2021/22

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance which detailed the Work Programme and Outstanding issues for the current Municipal year.

The Committee noted that outstanding issues would be carried forward to the next Municipal year.

RESOLVED that skip/ pavement crossings/highway licensing be included on the Work Programme for the appropriate Board for 2022/23.

61. Any Other Items of Public Business

There were no other items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 12 Noon)