

## **CORPORATE AND PUBLIC SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**07 September 2017 at 6.00pm at the Council House, Walsall**

### **Panel Members Present**

Councillor A. Andrew (Chair)  
Councillor C. Creaney (Vice – Chair)  
Councillor M. Bird  
Councillor P. Bott  
Councillor S. Craddock  
Councillor J. Murray  
Councillor M. Nazir  
Councillor K. Phillips  
Councillor L. Rattigan  
Councillor S. Wade  
Councillor M. Ward

### **Portfolio Holder**

Councillor S. Coughlan – Leader  
Councillor L. Jeavons – Deputy Leader  
Councillor K. Chambers - Personnel and Business Support/Agenda for Change  
Councillor C. Jones – Clean and Green  
Councillor A. Nawaz - Children's Services and Education  
Councillor I. Robertson – Health

### **Officers Present**

Simon Neilson	Executive Director (Economy and Environment)
Paul Gordon	Head of Business Change
Chris Knowles	E&E Finance Business Partner
Irena Hergottova	Corporate Consultation & Equalities Lead
Joanne Cockbill	Environmental Resource Manager
Nigel Rowe	Community Cohesion & Engagement Lead Officer
Craig Goodall	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Matthew Powis	Democratic Services Officer

### **197/17 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Coughlan and Sohal.

#### **198/17 Substitution**

Councillor Murray substituted for Councillor Sohal.

#### **199/17 Declarations of Interest and Party Whip**

Councillor Andrew declared an interest in item 203/17 'CCTV Update' as a Member of Transport for West Midlands.

#### **200/17 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)**

There were no items to consider in private session.

#### **201/17 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**Resolved:**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2017 copies having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.**

#### **202/17 Changes to Waste Collection**

The Committee were provided with an update on the proposal to introduce charging for garden waste collections and the public consultation process regarding this proposal.

The Portfolio Holder (Clean and Green) reported that the consultation had recently closed and the data was still being analysed. He invited the Committee to provide their views on the proposal for his consideration.

The Chair explained that following a request, he had given permission for a public speaker, Mr P Smith, to speak on the item. Mr Smith informed the Committee that whilst he extended his congratulations to the Council for the extension of the Brown Bin service in 2010, he stressed that proposed changes with the service would affect more than 94,000 households in Walsall. He further stated that each year the Council collected 14,000 tons of garden waste and if, as suggested in the report, only 20% of the 94,000 households signed up to the proposed service, there would be an 80% shortfall which could result in households disposing waste in other ways such as fly tipping. He concluded that the financial rewards of the proposals did not outweigh the disruption to residents.

A Member asked the Cabinet Member for Clean and Green if proposals would identify which households paid for the new service and which did not. The Cabinet Member explained an existing system would identify whether households had opted into the service by electronically identifying which households had paid for the service. He added that the Council was not legally obligated to provide a free garden waste collection service as the Environmental Protection Act 1990 gave Councils the option to introduce a charge for the service.

A Member asked whether fly tipping cases would be monitored and if there was any evidence to suggest it had increased. The Cabinet Member clarified that there was no evidence to suggest that fly tipping increased when previous changes to the waste collection service had been made. He further stated that the current garden waste collection service operated for 7 months of the year. The new service would close for one month during December to January but the chargeable service would operate for up to 11 months per year. Anticipated fees for the garden waste collection service were approximately £30-35 for a new waste bin followed by a £30 a year annual charge. Members were informed that Lincoln City Council operated a chargeable service for waste collection and used stickers to identify which households had opted into the service.

A Member highlighted to the Committee that if twin stream recycling proposals were also brought forward households in the Borough would be required to accommodate another bin. This would be particularly challenging for numerous households across the borough; particularly those who lived in terraced houses. The Cabinet Member stated that no decision had been taken on making changes to recycling collections and the views of the Committee would be taken into consideration as prior to any decision being made.

A Member queried whether promotion of composting garden waste or brown bin concessions for social housing had been considered as part of the consultation. The Cabinet Member stated that composting had been considered as part of a planning consultation for new build properties in the area. However, he announced that a final decision on chargeable garden waste collections had not been made and the final results of the consultation were due in October 2017.

A Member commented that the £300,000 saving was relatively small. Therefore he felt that the Cabinet could consider alternative options to make this same saving without changing a universal service that was valued by residents. The saving could be converged by outsourcing the service or even using reserves. Alternatively, if it was thought desirable to extend the service then maybe charging could be introduced for the additional months when the current service did not currently operate.

A Member asked the Cabinet Member for Clean and Green if sponsorship or advertisement on waste bins had been considered. The Cabinet Member informed the Committee that the idea would be considered.

Following the debate it was **moved** by Councillor Bird and duly **seconded** by Councillor Andrew that:

The Committee request that Cabinet do not continue with proposals to introduce a chargeable garden waste collection service. In order to achieve this Cabinet should:

- a) explore other ways of achieving the savings;
- b) delay the proposals to enable the decision to be taken in parallel with potential changes to recycling collections;
- c) consider outsourcing the service.

If Cabinet do decide to introduce a chargeable brown bin collection service than the proposed charges should only be applicable to the extended service (November to March) and that the existing months (April to October) the service is provided for should continue to be provided to all residents with no extra charge.

On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried.

**Resolved:-**

- 1. The Committee request that Cabinet do not continue with proposals to introduce a chargeable garden waste collection service. In order to achieve this Cabinet should:**
  - a. explore other ways of achieving the savings;**
  - b. delay the proposals to enable the decision to be taken in parallel with potential changes to recycling collections;**
  - c. consider outsourcing the service.**
- 2. If Cabinet do decide to introduce a chargeable brown bin collection service than the proposed charges should only be applicable to the extended service (November to March) and that the existing months (April to October) the service is provided for should continue to be provided to all residents with no extra charge.**
- 3. The Committee receive an update report on the outcome of the garden waste collection consultation and twin streaming service proposals at the next available Committee.**

## 203/17 CCTV

The Committee welcomed Mark Babington from Transport for West Midlands and considered a report on an update on the transfer of the Council's CCTV service to TfWM, as part of the West Midlands Combined Authority.

The Cabinet Member for Community, Leisure and Culture announced to the Committee that CCTV cameras had been an important part of policing and ensured vital security footage in the community. In answering a question from a Member, the Cabinet Member clarified that over 100 new cameras would be purchased and that future sites for any cameras would be agreed on a requirement basis following discussion between the Council and its partners. Members could make suggestions for sites through Locality Managers who would pass them onto the CCTV Working Group.

A Member congratulated the Cabinet Member on the level of investment with CCTV in Walsall and enquired whether social landlords had been consulted and involved with the proposals. The Cabinet Member stated that Locality Managers had been liaising with social landlords such as Walsall Housing Group (WHG) to identify anti-social behaviour locations. The Leader of the Council reported that the Council would ensure that partners played their part in keeping local communities safe and that CCTV was not a suitable alternative to lost Police resources. He assured the Committee that the Council was building a new strategic partnership to improve cross-organisational working.

A Member queried in regard to the technical transfer commencing on 25 September and whether the information should be deemed confidential. The Head of Business Change confirmed that a specific date had not been specified publicly. The transfer date would be kept highly secret and only announced after it had taken place.

Members raised concerns about the quality of CCTV cameras in the area and the ability to use the camera evidence in criminal cases. Mark Babington confirmed that investment had been put into new cameras in high definition quality and existing cameras would be upgraded in future. Further to this the cameras would communicate over mobile phone lines so the footage could be viewed in real time.

A Member sought clarification on whether urban traffic control systems (UTC) or Sight Cameras had been considered by TfWM. The Head of Business Change confirmed that UTC's had not been considered as part of the technical transfer but part of a wider debate in future. He concluded that the use and purchase of covert cameras would be reviewed. The Cabinet Member highlighted that sites which were frequently blighted by fly tipping would be considered for the installation of covert cameras. However, he clarified that businesses and individuals had a responsibility to ensure that 'white goods' such as fridges were safely disposed and regulated appropriately.

The Chair enquired if Members would be able to request locations for covert cameras in social housing areas. Mr Babington confirmed that feedback on future locations should be submitted to the CCTV Working Group.

**Resolved:**

**That:**

- 1. The Head of Business Change write to Members to inform them of when the CCTV transfer has taken place;**
- 2. The CCTV Update be noted.**

**204/17 Update on the implementation of the recommendations of the Community Cohesion Working Group**

**Resolved:**

**That the report be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.**

**205/17 Update on the Walsall Market**

The Committee considered a report on the overview of progress to date of the delivery of the new Walsall town centre market.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration informed the Committee that delivery of a new town centre market had been discussed since 2012 with planning consent granted in March 2015. He further stated that shopping habits had changed since 2012 and delivery of the new market needed to reflect changes including new visitor experiences.

A Member enquired in relation to the market in Cannock Town Centre and how Walsall Town Centre could attract potential customers. The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration informed Members that the Council had to look at the business case on how to improve the market for different types of traders and different experiences. A Member informed the Committee that younger generations were no longer using the markets in Walsall with the changes in shopping habits including online shopping.

The Leader of the Council informed the Committee that the markets of Willenhall and Darlaston had different selling points to the market in Walsall Town Centre and the Council was looking at all options which worked for different sites. He further stated that Walsall and Willenhall markets had hosted successful events previously such as Christmas and Italian themed market days.

A Member stated that investment in the Town Centre needed to be reconsidered to include investigations into problems with homelessness and anti-social behaviour. He explained that homeless people had been using market stalls for sleeping at night and intoxicated individuals had been troubling for market traders.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration confirmed that the market needed to innovate for future survival and the Council was working with businesses and market traders to organise the right outcome for the market going forward. He concluded that Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) and licensing issues affecting the town centre would be assessed as part of a review of the market.

Members requested an update on the new Walsall Town Centre Market project in 6 months time with an invitation from a market trader.

**Resolved:-**

- 1. That, an update on the new Walsall Town Centre Market Project be presented to a future meeting of the Committee;**
- 2. In connection with (1) above that a market trader be invited to a future meeting of the Committee.**

**206/17 Corporate and Public Services Financial performance revenue and capital outturn for 2017/18**

The Committee considered a report on revenue and capital outturn for 2017/18 for services within the remit of the Committee. The position was revenue overspend of £561,000 and that the capital underspend of £2.129m.

A Member enquired in regard to table 2, Capital Forecast on solar photovoltaic panels and whether there had been any plans to locate panels on community buildings. The E&E Business and Finance Partner responded that the panels were part of an 'invest to save' scheme and there were no plans to install panels on community buildings in future.

A Member enquired in regard to Appendix 2 – Explanation of 2017/18 forecast Revenue Variations by Service earmarked reserves on programme management under spends. The E&E Business and Finance Partner and the Executive Director – Economy and Environment explained that there had been in a change in the phasing of how earmarked reserves were spent, furthermore reserves and grants allocated to Programme Management were to fund additional costs.

A Member questioned table 2 on the Capital Outturn 2017/18 in regard to Blackberry server upgrade, he enquired why investment was being made in a service that was becoming obsolete. The Executive Director – Economy and Environment confirmed that Blackberry devices were in the process of being

decommissioned but the upgrade was essential for the existing devices. The Member requested additional information on this investment.

A Member requested additional information on how to access bikeability funding

**Resolved:-**

1. **That the Committee noted the forecast 2017/18 year end financial position for services as follows:-**
  - a) **A revenue overspend of £561k, net of the use of and transfer to earmarked reserves and implication of action plans;**
  - b) **A capital forward request of £2.129m.**
2. **Members be provided with further information on the following topics:**
  - a) **how to access funding from the bikeability scheme;**
  - b) **why the Blackberry servers required upgrading.**

**207/17 Areas of focus – 2017/18**

The Committee considered its areas of focus and the forward plans of Walsall Council and the Black Country Joint Executive Committee.

A Member asked for more information on whether there would be a metro station in Moxley.

**Resolved:**

**That:**

1. **The areas of focus 2017/18 be noted;**
2. **The forward plans be noted;**
3. **Members be provided with further information on whether there will be a Metro station in Moxley.**

**208/17 Date of next meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting would take place on 19 October 2017.

**Termination of Meeting**

There being no further business, the meeting terminated at 7.40 p.m.

Signed: .....

Date: .....