

COMMUNITIES, REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING Tuesday, 23 May 2023

PRESENT: Councillor Besford (Chair); Councillors Brown, Davidson, Hodgkinson, Mohammed, Paolucci, Place, West, D. Williams and P. Williams

OFFICERS: Donna Bowler (Assistant Director Neighbourhoods), Paul Moore (Assistant Director Economy), Levi Rickell (Rochdale Development Agency Director), Fabiola Fuschi (Senior Governance and Committee Officer)

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A. Nisa.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 8th March 2023 would be submitted at the next meeting of the Committee.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

4 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business received.

5 ITEMS FOR EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

There were no items for exclusion of press and public.

6 NEIGHBOURHOODS DIRECTORATE PLANS 2022-23: QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Committee considered a progress report of the Data Innovation and Intelligence Manager which provided an update on the Neighbourhoods Directorate's performance to date.

The Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods presented the report and informed of the actions that had been completed and of those being progressed.

The Committee sought and received clarification on the DEFRA's consultation concerning changes to food and waste recycling as these would have an impact on the Council's plan to promote recycling initiatives to minimise waste and increase recycling rate.

Members also enquired about ground maintenance and street cleaning and how these were affected by resources being deployed to the "In Bloom" initiatives; the Assistant Director noted that resources were limited and the team was working very hard to meet the agreed priorities.

The Committee also asked questions on the development of the business plan for the Town Hall and the feasibility study for Rochdale's town centre.

The Committee agreed that there were some themes that they wanted to prioritise for this year's work programme, for example: the Community Safety Plan, the Housing Allocation Policy, Accelerated Housing Programme, Environmental Management Service and the delivery of the Cultural Compact.

Resolved:

1. That the progress report be noted;
2. That it be noted that there are some areas of work that the Committee intend to review during 2023/24:
 - a. Community Safety Plan,
 - b. Housing Allocation Policy,
 - c. Accelerated Housing Programme,
 - d. Environmental Management Service
 - e. Delivery of the Cultural Compact

7 ECONOMY DIRECTORATE PLANS 2022-23: QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Committee considered a progress report of the Data Innovation and Intelligence Manager which provided an update on the Economy Directorate's performance to date.

The Assistant Director Economy and the Rochdale Development Agency Director presented the report and informed of the actions that had been completed and of those being progressed.

The Committee sought and received clarification on matters such as high value and aspirational housing; officers informed that work had been already completed to identify sites for family homes. Some were small sites, others were larger to deliver a variety of homes, including affordable family homes. New sites were emerging in the Middleton Masterplan. To some Members' objections about new housing in already intensively developed areas, Officers responded that the town centre was considered a primary location to build new residential properties.

Members raised queries with regards to the A2868 East Middleton scheme, following the building fire, and its completion in 2024 and the number of empty units in town centres across the Borough. Officers informed that a project was ongoing to compare quotes and to use an existing budget to address the matter concerning the A2868.

The Committee agreed that another issue to examine as part of its work programme for 2023/24 would be empty commercial units in the town centres across the Borough.

To questions concerning why Rochdale Development Agency was not part of the Council, Officers responded that the current set up allowed direct engagement with funders and operating with greater flexibility.

In regards to “Creating Vibrant Town Centres”, Members asked about plans for the Mecca Bingo site and requested an update on Rochdale’s market. Officers responded that the Mecca Bingo site was part of the Station Master Plan and that they would welcome traders’ proposals, subject to their compatibility with the Council’s requisites.

The Chair congratulated Officers on the progress against targets. A conversation followed on the plans to roll out the Rail Corridor Programme.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted;
2. That a review of empty commercial units in the town centres be added to the work programme of this Committee for 2023/24.

**8 WORK PROGRAMME PLANNING 2023/2024
AS BELOW**

9 TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMUNITIES, REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee considered its terms of reference (ToR) and received a presentation of the Senior Governance and Committee Officer on the role and functions of Overview and Scrutiny in relation to the wider Council’s governance arrangements.

The Chair requested to ensure that the Committee’s ToR referred to the Climate Emergency Study Group; the Committee noted that Your Trust’s performance were being scrutinised quarterly by the Health, Schools and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and, in order to avoid duplication, agreed that Your Trust would not be expected to report to the Communities, Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved:

1. That the terms of reference (ToR) of the Communities, Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted;
2. That the ToR include reference to the Climate Emergency Study Group;
3. That it be noted that Your Trust reported quarterly to the Health, Schools and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
4. That it be agreed that Your Trust would not be expected to report to the Communities, Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

10 DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2023/2024

The Committee gave consideration to the Neighbourhoods and Economy Directorate Plans for 2023/24. A conversation between Members and Senior Officers took place to agree items for review to be added to the Committee’s work programme for 2023/24.

The following issues were agreed for review:

1st August 2023

Item	Purpose
Directorate Plans Performance Report Quarter One 2023/24	
Rochdale's Safer Communities Partnership – including domestic abuse and community safety in general.	To receive an update on the partnership, its remit, policies and strategies, current data and its analysis against statistical neighbours. Accountability process and OS function in relation to community safety and crime prevention – Police and Justice Act 2006
Council's Motion Tracker	
GMCA scrutiny minutes	
Rochdale Council's Key decision document	
CRE Work Programme 2023/24	

12th Sep 2023

Rochdale Town Hall reopening	Progress report on reopening, short and long term business plan, financial sustainability and impact on town centre
Council's electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure strategy	
Places for Everyone Main Modifications	Consultation
Council's Motion Tracker	
GMCA scrutiny minutes	
Rochdale Council's Key decision document	
CRE Work Programme 2023/24	

21st Nov 2023

Directorate Plans Performance Report Quarter Two 2023/24	
RBH – chair and chief exc to be invited to review progress and transformation plans with RBH - if the	Detailing progression with the improvement plans and operational effectiveness in light of the Coroner's

chief exc is in post.	findings and issues raised by Members of the Committee (5th Dec 2023)
Council's Motion Tracker	
GMCA scrutiny minutes	
Rochdale Council's Key decision document	
CRE Work Programme 2023/24	

30th Jan 2024

Directorate Plans Performance Report Quarter Three 2023/24	
UK Share Prosperity Fund	Progress report performance against targets
Housing Task and Finish Group Report	Report of the Housing Task and Finish Group on data analysis and findings and for Committee to agree recommendations to Cabinet / Council
Council's Motion Tracker	
GMCA scrutiny minutes	
Rochdale Council's Key decision document	
CRE Work Programme 2023/24	

5th Mar 2024

Growth Company Annual Update	
Your Trust – Annual Update	Focus on culture, events communities and community engagement (input from Place Team)
Highways – Annual Update	
Environmental Management Annual Update	
Council's Motion Tracker	
GMCA scrutiny minutes	
Rochdale Council's Key decision document	
CRE Work Programme 2023/24	

Items to be scheduled subject to the Committee's agreement/prioritisation considerations:

- Vacant commercial units in Rochdale

The Committee also agreed to undertake the following Task and Finish Groups: Housing Task and Finish Group and the Climate Emergency Sub-Group.

Resolved:

1. That the Neighbourhoods and Economy Directorate Plans for 2023/24 be noted;
2. That the draft work programme 2023/24 be agreed as outlined above;
3. It be noted that the work programme remains a working document as it would need to accommodate items which the Committee might need to review urgently and as priorities.