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## COMMUNITIES, REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF MEETING

Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015

**PRESENT:** Councillor Holly (Vice Chair in the Chair); Councillors Linden, Mir (substituting for Councillor Rashid), O'Neill, O'Rourke, Stott and Zaheer.

**OFFICERS:** D. Bowler, H. Bellis, P. Cooke, A. Glover (Neighbourhoods Directorate), B. Wilkinson (Economy Directorate), D. Parmer and P. Thompson (Resources Directorate).

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillors Daalat Ali and Meredith, Superintendent A. Mallen (Greater Manchester Police), N. Matley (Link4Life), J. Yates (Rochdale Citizens Advise Bureau), J. Hartley (Street Lighting – Project Manager) and T. Cunningham (Community Lighting Project)

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Councillors Butterworth, Kelly, Rashid, Wazir and West.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

42 Further to the Council's Code of Conduct, Councillor Zaheer declared personal and prejudicial interests in respect of agenda item 5 (Gambling Licensing Policy Update), agenda item 6 (Licensing Policy Update), agenda item 7 (Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership Monitoring Report) and agenda item 9 (Link4Life Revised Performance Management Framework and Mid-Year Performance Report 2015/2016), insofar as she was the Assistant to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio. Councillor Zaheer left the room during the consideration of these items of business.

### MINUTES

43 **DECIDED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Communities, Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held 29<sup>th</sup> October 2015 be approved, as a correct record.**

### COMMUNITIES, REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2015/2016

44 The Committee considered a report of the Head of Legal and Governance Reform which presented the Committee's Work Programme for 2015/2016.

In considering the report Members of the Committee requested that performance monitoring reports from Rochdale Boroughwide Housing should be submitted to the Committee on a quarterly basis rather than a six month cycle.

The Committee requested that a joint informal comprising Members from the Audit and Governance Committee as well as members of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees to discuss Greater Manchester devolution developments.

Members also commented that the Council's courier service, in respect of mail deliveries to Members was not functioning effectively and agenda papers were often not being delivered in time for meetings that were held on Mondays and Tuesdays. The Committee requested that the Director of Neighbourhoods look into this further.

Further to Minute 41 of the Committee's meeting held 29<sup>th</sup> October 2015 Members requested a further private meeting with Rochdale Development Agency officers in relation to the Town Centre East Programme, at which information will be available to Members of the Committee, in writing, to the questions which they had asked at the previous private meeting, on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2015 (notes of which were circulated). The Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee was requested to organise such a meeting.

**DECIDED – That (1) the report be noted;**

**(2) the Committee requests that in future performance report submitted by Rochdale Boroughwide Housing be presented on a quarterly rather than six monthly basis;**

**(3) the necessary arrangements be made for an informal joint meeting comprising Members of the Audit and Governance Committee and of the Council's three Overview and Scrutiny Committees be convened to discuss issues appertaining to the devolution of powers to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority;**

**(4) the Director of Neighbourhoods be requested to examine issues relating to the Courier Service for the delivery of Councillor's mail;**

**(5) The Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee be requested to organise a further informal private meeting of Member of this Committee with Officers from Rochdale Development Agency in relation to Rochdale Town Centre East developments.**

#### **LINK4LIFE REVISED PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK AND MID YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2015-16**

45 The Committee scrutinised a report of the Chief Executive of the Rochdale Boroughwide Cultural Trust which provided information relating to the performance of the Trust, trading as Link4Life, during the first six months of 2015/16 (April - September 2015). The Committee was reminded that the Council's Sport, Leisure and Cultural Services had transferred to the Rochdale Boroughwide Cultural Trust (trading as Link4Life) on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 under the terms of a Partnership Agreement between the Council and the Trust. This Agreement spans 15 years (2007 – 2022) with an option to extend for a further five years.

The Trust had undertaken a review of its medium to longer term aspirations and developed a new Corporate Strategy for 2014 – 2017 as a document which articulates the Trust's strategic vision, key aims and business objectives. Supplementary to this new strategy was a revised three year Corporate Business Plan, primarily an internal document providing further detail in terms of the actions and measures designed to address identified challenges and opportunities as well as delivering the Trust's vision, aims and objectives. To further support this vision, revised service plans have been drawn up detailing key priorities and performance measures in line with revised service goals.

To underpin what the Trust does, Members were also advised that the Link4Life Board had approved a refreshed set of Core Values, which outline how the Trust will operate. These were described as 'PRIDE - in where we work and what we do', as follows: Passion, Respect, Integrity, Drive and Excellence.

Members in considering the report requested for a new management structure to be emailed and for more information to be disclosed in the next report in relation to golf club membership.

The Committee asked that future Link4Life performance reports be submitted to meetings of the Committee on a quarterly rather than a six monthly basis; Members queried the emphasis on water safety lessons as well as actual swimming lessons and expressed their concerns with regard to the underperformance of schools participating in swimming lessons.

In considering the report a Member requested that the Link4Life Board re-examine its membership insofar as there was presently no representation on the Board from the Middleton Township area.

**DECIDED – That (1) the report be noted;**

**(2) the Chief Executive of Link4Life be requested to circulate to Members of the Committee details of the revised management structure of the Trust;**

**(3) the Committee requests that future Link4Life performance reports be submitted to meetings of the Committee on a quarterly rather than a six monthly basis;**

**(4) the Link4Life Board be requested to re-examine its membership in light of the lack of representation on its board from the Middleton Township area of the Borough.**

#### **STREET LIGHTING PFI QUARTERLY UPDATE**

46 The Committee scrutinised a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods which sought to address concerns that had been raised by Members at previous meetings of this Committee and of the former Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the performance and monitoring of the Street Lighting PFI project.

The Committee were reminded that the Street Lighting PFI was a joint project with Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council. Although both PFI's were operating out of the same depot by the same Service Provider, they have separate contracts which are monitored separately.

The Street Lighting PFI was awarded to Community Lighting Partnership (Rochdale) Limited (CLP) with E.ON UK PLC acting as their Operating Sub-Contractor to deliver the service. The term of the PFI contract is for twenty five years 4th July 2011. CLP, as the Council's Service Provider, are responsible for delivering the street lighting service on behalf of the Council in all respects which includes replacement of 80% of the existing lighting stock, maintenance of all the street lighting assets, carrying out consultation with stakeholders, and dealing with customer queries and complaints. The PFI is a self-monitoring Contract and CLP are obligated to declare any failure of performance.

Members asked for a written copy of Appendix 1 to the submitted report to be circulated to them.

**DECIDED – That (1) the report be noted;**

**(2) a written copy of appendix 1 to the submitted report be circulated to Members of the Committee in paper form.**

#### **DISCRETIONARY CRISIS FUND 6 MONTH PERFORMANCE REPORT**

47 The Director of Neighbourhoods submitted a report which informed Members of the Discretionary Crisis Fund's performance over the first six months of 2015/16 (April – September). The Committees requested that, if possible, in future this report be submitted to the Committee on a quarterly rather than a six monthly basis.

The Discretionary Crisis Fund (DCF) was initially implemented in April 2013 as a result of funding and responsibility to provide a local welfare assistance scheme which was transferred from the Department of Work and Pensions scheme to the Council.

The DCF offers support to vulnerable residents who are resettling in the Borough from temporary/institutional care that may need help in acquiring essential household items. The scheme is also a final safety to provide immediate and targeted relief for members of the local community who are in the greatest need and do not have the means to resolve their own emergency situation.

Members of the Committee, in scrutinising the report, asked for similar reports in respect of quarters 3 and 4 from 2014/15 to be circulated for comparative purposes. Members also asked for further detail in future reports in relation to bond boards and asked for a summary report on how the Trussell Trust foodbank is being run, including the number of meals that were being issued to customers.

Members also commented that there had been over £1 million allocated in the available budget, however only £104,000 has been spent so far. However the Committee were advised that there would be no further funding for the Discretionary Crisis Fund from the government and that the current reserves would have to finance the Fund for the foreseeable future.

In considering the report Members requested that an informal private meeting of the Committee be convened to discuss the future operations of the Discretionary Crisis Fund and that this meeting be held early in 2016.

**DECIDED – That (1) the report be noted;**

**(2) similar reports, relating to the DCF, for quarters 3 and 4 2014/15 be circulated to Members of the Committee for comparative purposes;**

**(3) the Director of Neighbourhoods be requested to provide a summary report on how the Trussell Trust foodbank is being run, including the number of meals being issued to customers;**

**(4) an informal private meeting of the Committee be convened to discuss the future operations of the Discretionary Crisis Fund, and that the meeting be held early in 2016;**

**(5) future Committee reports relating to the Discretionary Crisis Fund be submitted to the Committee on a quarterly rather than a six monthly basis, if it is practically possible to do so.**

#### **GAMBLING POLICY UPDATE**

48 The Director of Public Health and Wellbeing submitted a report, for consultative purposes regarding the Council's Gambling Policy, in accordance with s349 of the Gambling Act 2005, so as to meet its statutory obligation to adopt and publish a policy by no later than 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016.

Members in considering the report commented that scratch card terminals should not be relocated at the front of the shops and this should be recommended to the Gambling Commission.

**DECIDED – That the report be noted.**

#### **LICENSING POLICY UPDATE**

49 The Director of Public Health and Wellbeing submitted a report, for consultative purposes that would enable the Council to fulfil its statutory obligation to

adopt and publish a Licensing Policy in accordance with Section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003 before 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016.

**DECIDED – That the report be noted.**

**ROCHDALE SAFER COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP MONITORING Q2**

50 The Committee scrutinised a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods which provided Members with a summary of how the Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership (RSCP) had performed against its targets during the second quarter of 2015/2016 (July 2015 - September 2015). The report was co-presented by Superintendent Mallen (Greater Manchester Police) and Councillor Daalat Ali the Cabinet member with responsibility for the Neighbourhoods and Communities Portfolio.

The Committee were advised that the RSCP is a statutory partnership in the Borough of Rochdale with responsibility for ensuring that the Borough is a safer place. The Partnership's Plan highlighted seven strategic priorities as follows: to increase confidence and satisfaction; to reduce crime; to reduce the harm caused by drugs and alcohol; to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour; to prevent offending (and re-offending) by children and young people; to prevent adult re-offending; to develop community cohesion. It was against these seven priorities that the Committee scrutinised the performance of the Partnership. This particular item was due to be submitted to Full Council on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

In considering the report a member requested that the appropriate body of the Council or even the Partnership itself look at the body's membership insofar as there was presently no representation on the RSCP from the Middleton Township area.

Members asked for further information around measuring crime and protocols for reporting crime.

Superintendent Mallen reported that he would specifically liaise with Councillor Mir to forward to her specific information about domestic abuse within the Borough's Asian and Moslem communities. Members also commented on the need for more venues where race hate can be reported.

Members also made specific reference to Savings Proposal CC103 that was part of the Council's Saving Programme 2016/17, commenting that if this particular measure were to be implemented as planned it would, Members thought, have a detrimental effect on service provision and may even jeopardise the future delivery of a viable community safety function.

**DECIDED – That (1) the report be noted;**

**(2) further information clarifying measurements of crime and the protocols for reporting crime be included in future reports to the Committee;**

**(3) the Cabinet be advised of this Committee's concerns regarding the savings proposal CC103, noting that if this proposal was to be implemented as proposed it would have a detrimental effect on service provision and may even jeopardise the actual delivery of a community safety function;**

**(4) the appropriate body of the Council or even the Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership itself examine the Partnership's membership insofar as there was presently no representation on the Partnership from the Middleton Township area.**

**EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

51 **DECIDED – That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following two items of business since it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information, namely information relating to the business or financial affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).**

**CONTRACT FOR WELFARE, ADVICE AND HOUSING ADVICE SERVICES.  
PERFORMANCE OF ROCHDALE CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU 2015/16**

52 The Director of Neighbourhoods submitted a report that provided Members with an opportunity to consider the performance and contract for 2015/16 in respect of the Rochdale Citizens Advice Bureau who currently supplies the Council's Welfare, Debt and Housing Advice Contract.

Members of the Committee commended the report, stating that in their view that funding should be maintained at a level in 2016/17 to enable Rochdale CAB to deal with even more people.

Members of the Committee commended the excellent work that was carried out by Rochdale CAB. It was noted that for this good work to be maintained, and in order for more people to be helped from 2016/17 onwards Council funding of the CAB needed to be maintained at an appropriate level.

In addition Members noted the large demand for CAB services across the Borough, the large amount of outreach work undertaken by CAB services, the amount of valuable work undertaken with the Borough's BME communities and also commented that few community centres outside of the Rochdale township area have access to a Freephone.

**DECIDED – That (1) the report be noted;  
(2) the Committee recommends that the Freephone service to be extended to more of the Borough's branch libraries.**

**STREET LIGHTING PFI QUARTERLY UPDATE - UPDATE ON REDUCTIONS**

53 Further to minute 26, of the Committee's meeting held 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2015, the Committee scrutinised a private and confidential report of the Director of Neighbourhoods which outlined the amount of money that had been refunded to the Council to cover failings in the Street Lighting PFI contract that had been awarded to the Community Lighting Partnership (Rochdale) Limited (CLP) with E.ON UK PLC.

**DECIDED – That the report be noted.**

**ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

54 Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 24.5, the meeting terminated at 9.45pm. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 24.5(2) the Committee agreed that the uncompleted business, as detailed below, would be dealt with at the next scheduled meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2016.

The items deferred to the next meeting are:

- a. GMCA/AGMA Scrutiny Pool - Minutes of meeting held 9<sup>th</sup> October 2015
- b. Highways Shared Service - Outline Business Case
- c. Update on the Community Cohesion Hub Activities in Rochdale Borough
- d. Asylum Dispersal in Rochdale and across Greater Manchester

