

COMMUNITIES, REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING Thursday, 20th February 2020

PRESENT: Councillors Meredith (in the Chair); Councillors Besford, Beswick, Susan Emmott, Kelly, Angela Smith, West, Winkler and Zaheer.

OFFICERS: M. Widdup (Director of Neighbourhoods), M. Robinson (Assistant Director – Economy), P. Maynard, M. Roberts (Neighbourhoods Directorate) and P. Thompson (Resources Directorate).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: D. Cook (Operations Director – Rochdale Development Agency), E. Cheshire (FutureGov) and one member of the public.

31 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Peter Williams.

32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests.

33 MINUTES

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of Communities, Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, held 28th November 2019, be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

34 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

The Chair advised that he was minded to permit two additional items for consideration, as follows:

- a. Feel Good Festival (minute 35)
- b. Flooding (minute 36)

35 FEEL GOOD FESTIVAL

The Director of Neighbourhoods gave a presentation regarding the background to the Rochdale 'Feel Good' Festival and preparations that were in place for the 2020 event.

The Festival was established in 2007 and has been held annually, in Rochdale town centre in each subsequent year, usually on the last weekend of August. The Festival is managed by Rochdale Town Centre Management and supported by council staff and volunteers.

The Festival's events and activities were free of charge to all persons attending. Funding for the Festival came from the Council and sponsorship partnerships (both monetary and in kind agreements), usually from locally based sponsors. The Festival itself comprised of: live music stage, chef demonstrations, family entertainment, indoor venues, with objectives of

promoting health and wellbeing, feeling good, family fun, positive publicity for Rochdale and the wider Borough and attracting visitors to the town. In terms of this latter point just over 14,000 attended the 2018 Festival of whom, 4,308 resided outside of the Rochdale Borough. A key feature of recent Festivals was the increasing multi-cultural nature of the events and that was reflected in the demographic profile of people attending the Festival.

Resolved:

That the presentation be noted and welcomed.

36 FLOODING

At the request of the Chair, the Director of Neighbourhoods updated the Committee on incidences of flooding that had occurred in the Borough in the aftermath of the recent weather events that had affected large parts of the United Kingdom, namely Storms Ciara and Dennis. Rochdale though escaped the worst effects of these storms.

Insofar as the Rochdale Borough was concerned parts of Milnrow and Littleborough had been affected by flooding from the rivers Beal and Roch respectively.

The Committee was advised on measures that the Council was taking to help to warn residents who live in 'flood risk' areas to best prepare for potential flooding events.

The Director of Neighbourhoods also advised on measures that the Council could take to prepare for a flooding event in Rochdale town centre, including the erection of flood barriers around Number One Riverside. The director also informed Members that the Council regularly prepared a newsletter regarding areas, within the Borough, that were most prone to being flooded and he undertook to forward a copy of the latest edition of the newsletter to members of the Committee.

Resolved:

1. That the Director of Neighbourhoods' update on flood risks within the Borough be noted.
2. The Director of Neighbourhoods be requested to submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee regarding pro-active work that the Council, and partner agencies, are taking to combat the risk of flooding.

37 HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING ALLOCATIONS BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

The Director of Neighbourhoods and Ms. E. Cheshire (FutureGov) gave a presentation regarding homelessness and the housing allocations business transformation project. Rochdale Council's Strategic Housing team had asked FutureGov to support them in conducting a discovery around the Homelessness and Allocation services.

Phase 1 of the project aimed to uncover pain points for residents, services and partner organisations, to identify opportunities for change and to develop a vision for a future experience in a collaborative way.

FutureGov worked with relevant council teams/services and providers, to better understand the challenges and the issues unique to Rochdale Borough and they used data to define the scale of the issues. They endeavored to listen and learn from residents to identify how services impact on their lives.

Together with Rochdale Council and providers FutureGov built a shared understanding of the ways services have failed to meet people's needs. They collaboratively explored ideas for how the services could be different for customers, staff and providers and they now need to be developed and tested. They also collectively crafted a new vision and mission for the future of Housing in the Rochdale Borough.

Resolved:

That the presentation be noted and welcomed.

38 RESPONSE TO CLIMATE EMERGENCY MOTION

The Director of Neighbourhoods presented a report which set out the scale of the challenge faced by the Council and other agencies to meet the Climate Emergency Motion declared by the Council (at its meeting on 17th July 2019: minute 15 refers). The report set out details of work that had been done prior to the Council Motion and subsequent action. The report also outlined what actions and leadership were needed to work towards the ambitions of the Council Motion.

The Committee noted that this report had been previously presented to the Cabinet at its meeting on 28th January 2020 (minute 68 refers) and in doing so endorsed the report and the decisions that the Cabinet made in relation to this matter.

The Committee expressed concern at the seriousness of this issue and it was suggested that the Committee's membership hold a special informal session dedicated to discussing this issue of climate change, to be facilitated by the Director of Neighbourhoods.

Resolved:

1. The Cabinet's decisions in respect of the Climate Emergency, resolved at its meeting held 28th January 2020 (minute 68 refers) be endorsed
2. The Committee's membership hold a special informal session dedicated to discussing this issue of climate change, to be facilitated by the Director of Neighbourhoods.

39 NEIGHBOURHOODS DIRECTORATE PLAN 2019-20: QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Committee scrutinised the progress at the end of Quarter 3 (1st October – 31st December 2019) towards achievement of the targets contained in the Neighbourhoods Directorate Plan 2019/2020.

In accordance with the Council's performance management framework, progress toward targets contained within Directorate Plans are to be reported to relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committees at the end of each quarter.

Two actions included in the Directorate Plan 2019-20 had been completed, 71% (12) actions were ongoing and were due to be completed on schedule. Three further actions (18%) had passed their due dates and were not fully completed (Amber rating).

The three actions that weren't fully completed and for which the due dates had passed related to: agreeing a plan for embedding Public Service Reform across the borough; to sustain, as a minimum, the Council's recycling rate (in year 2019/20) whilst reviewing the current waste management strategy to improve rates in conjunction with the governments resources and waste strategy; and the 'Accelerated Housing Programme'.

Resolved:

The Quarter 3 (1st October – 31st December 2019) performance report detailing progress towards achievement of the targets contained in the Neighbourhoods Directorate Plan 2019/2020, be noted.

40 ECONOMY DIRECTORATE PLANS 2019-20: QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Committee scrutinised the progress at the end of Quarter 3 (1st October – 31st December 2019) towards achievement of the targets contained in the Economy Directorate Plan 2019/2020.

In accordance with the Council's performance management framework, progress toward targets contained within Directorate Plans are to be reported to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees at the end of each quarter.

90% (10) of the actions included in the Economy Directorate Plan 2019-20 were ongoing and due to be completed by each individual action's due date. One further action isn't fully complete and the action due date has now passed. The chart below showed that the overall performance of the Directorate in meeting its plan targets at the end of Quarter 3. The action that wasn't fully complete and for which the due date had passed (Amber rating) related to: the 'provision of an effective and efficient portfolio of Council asset'.

The Operations Director (Rochdale Development Agency) updated the Committee on regeneration projects that were ongoing or in preparation across the Borough and of the work of Rochdale Development Agency. He updated the Committee on developments and proposals concerning Rochdale Market and on the Rochdale Riverside project.

Resolved:

The Quarter 3 (1st October – 31st December 2019) progress towards achievement of the targets contained in the Economy Directorate Plan 2019/2020 be noted.

41 WORK PROGRAMME 2019/2020

Resolved:

That the Committee's Work Programme 2019/2020 be noted.

42 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Resolved:

That the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

Reason for Decision:

Should the press and public remain during the following item of business as there may be a disclosure of information that is deemed to be exempt under Part 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

43 ROCHDALE MARKET

The Committee scrutinised a report of the Director of Economy which provided Members with an overview of the process that led to the current situation and the future plans for the Rochdale Market.

Further to minute 24 of the Committee's meeting held 28th November 2019, Members were asked to note that the Council's Internal Audit had been asked to scrutinise the process for the market closure.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.