

MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON

31 October 2023

7.30 - 9.10 pm

PRESENT

Committee Members

Councillor Alastair Gunn (Vice-Chair, in the Chair)
Councillor Mike Garnett (as substitute for Councillor Russell Perrin)
Councillor James Griggs
Councillor Kay Morrison
Councillor Matthew Saggars
Councillor Lanie Shears (as substitute for Councillor Tony Edwards)

Also Present

Councillor Nicky Purse, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability
Councillor Dan Swords, Leader of the Council
Councillor Chris Vince

Officers

Donna Beechener, Revenues and Benefits Manager
Andrew Bramidge, Chief Executive
Rebecca Farrant, Assistant Director - Corporate Services
Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Services
Adam Rees, Senior Governance Support Officer

89. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tony Edwards, Colleen Morrison and Russell Perrin. Councillors Mike Garnett and Lanie Shears were in attendance as substitutes for Councillors Edwards and Perrin.

90. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

91. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2023 are agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

92. MATTERS ARISING

None.

93. **WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

None.

94. **WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

None.

95. **RESPONSES OF THE CABINET TO REPORTS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED that the response to the following be noted.

- a) Review of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harassment

96. **CORPORATE PLAN**

The Committee received a report on the Corporate Plan. They heard a presentation from Councillor Dan Swords, Leader of the Council. He said that he welcomed feedback on the Plan, and stressed that it was a plan, not a strategy. There would be consultation with Officers, as well as consultation with partners and the public. The aim was to achieve buy-in for the finalised plan.

In response to questions, Councillor Swords explained that it would be a four year plan, aligned with the MTFs. The survey used was from the LGA, which allowed the council to benchmark the results against those of other councils.

Dealing with anti-social behaviour was a priority and the council would look to take more targeted action on tenanted properties. The council had recently reviewed its tenancy agreement strengthen the action it could take. He agreed that the council needed to do more to improve tenant participation and it was working to do this.

He said the Corporate Plan would be evidence based. The council was working to improve its support for SMEs.

It was important that the council focused on areas which were priorities for residents, even if the council did not have direct control over them. It was a plan for the whole of Harlow. He agreed that more clarity on the council's role would be beneficial in these circumstances.

This plan did not link priorities to portfolio holders, as portfolio holders could change. There needed to be flexibility. He would reflect on some of the changes in language found throughout the new draft plan.

RESOLVED that the Committee recommended to the Leader that the following points were considered in the Corporate Plan:

- A A timeline for the delivery of priorities be included.
- B Each priority has a deliverable outcome to measure success against.
- C Consultation with residents on an ongoing basis be included.
- D The Plan references life expectancy where relevant.
- E More detail on improving tenant participation be provided.

97. **CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY - INITIAL REPORT**

The Committee received an update report on the Climate Change Strategy.

It was agreed that the Committee would be provided with details on progress replacing both residential and operational boilers. The Committee would also be provided with any further analysis on the decarbonisation of the council's housing stock.

RESOLVED that:

- A The Committee noted the report.
- B The Committee recommended that the following actions be taken:
 - i) A list of quick wins be developed.
 - ii) Progress on the carbon reduction plan be reviewed.
 - iii) Consideration be given to the use of solar tiles.
 - iv) Consideration be given to having identified Officers responsible for areas of the Climate Change Strategy.
 - v) Clear costs for implementing the Strategy be developed.

98. **WORK PLAN**

The Committee received a report summarising its work plan for 2023/24.

RESOLVED that the work plan be noted.

99. **REFERENCES FROM OTHER COMMITTEES**

None.

100. **MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE