

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING

Monday, 7 December 2020

PRESENT: Councillor(s): T Graham, Anderson, D Burnett, B Clelland, S Dickie, K Dodds, A Geddes, F Geddes, M Hood, H Kelly, P Maughan, Reay, J Turnbull, R Waugh, A Wheeler and K McClurey

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): S Hawkins

CPL74 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed. A comment was made noting that the update provided in the minutes on the Council's response to the pandemic was not thorough enough. It was asked that a clearer analysis on this matter be provided at a future meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record.
- (ii) The Committee requested a further update on the Council's response to the pandemic, in particular communications and ICT between services.

CPL75 COVID-19 RECOVERY AND LESSONS LEARNED

The Committee received a report and presentation providing an update on lessons learned from service delivery during the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact on communities and place.

From the presentation, the Committee were provided a summary of lessons learned and how the pandemic has shaped the way the Council delivers services. The Committee also received information in relation to how the Council will work in the future having identified areas of best practise.

A service update on a variety of Council departments was also reported, this included shielding hubs, the Holiday Activities and Food scheme, libraries, leisure, housing and waste services.

Two video clips were shown to the Committee, these clips showed how communities have pulled together to support each other during the pandemic, an example of this effort included the 'dance on your doorstep' event. The Committee noted that despite inequalities across the borough there have been great examples of community cohesion. The Committee were also provided with an update on the Council's Covid household impact survey results, it was noted that Councillors had also been invited to a Corporate Advisory Group on this matter.

It was asked what support was being offered to residents in the supply of hot meals for those in need. Officers advised that many community organisations are offering such support, an example of those being Age UK. It was further noted that the Council, via its shielding hub network continue to provide information, advice and guidance to residents and this includes support for food and the cost of utilities.

The Committee thanked officers for their hard work and efforts during these challenging months; it was acknowledged that there is still a way to go and that there are areas of improvement needed but given the circumstances the work being done is excellent.

It was asked whether the alternate number plate system could remain in place post-Covid, it was suggested that this system is working well. Officers advised following the meeting that whilst there has been some support from residents for this there have also been a number of complaints. The Committee were advised that this system will remain in place as long as it is deemed necessary with the aim of returning to the former system.

A comment was made noting that a resident had attended one of the waste sites on the wrong day and was turned away when they were at the skips. Officers advised following the meeting that complaints have been received from residents who had been refused access when busy but then witnessed other residents going in on wrong day when it is less busy. The Committee were advised that the system needs to be applied equally for everyone or it creates ambiguity.

Additional queries were received on the implementation of a new permit scheme for the waste grounds. It was also asked whether vans are excluded from the number plate rule. Officers advised that hired vans are exempt from the odd/even system as residents have no control over the registration of the hire vehicle on the day they hire it. It was noted that resident's own vehicles that require a permit are required to comply with the odd and even rules. It was stated that the new permit system is being tested in January 2021 with implementation as soon as possible. It was also confirmed that Suez are carrying out regular customer care training/tool box talks

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted and agreed the contents of the report.

CPL76 DELIVERING THRIVE - APPROACH TO A NEW PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The Committee received a report setting out the proposed approach towards developing a new performance management and improvement framework for the Council.

From the report it was noted that the Council's current performance framework has been in place for several years and has evolved over time. It was highlighted that the need to develop a new framework that better reflects the Council's priorities was required; it was further stated that the new framework will need to be designed to respond to the impacts of Covid-19 and the future role of the Council.

The Committee were advised that the new framework would have a range of underpinning features and have a greater focus on impact and:

- Is shaped around the characteristics needed to enable people to thrive
- Is simple, responsive, timely and meaningful indicators
- Empowers employees to drive improvement
- Incorporates qualitative and quantitative approaches
- Recognises locality-based approaches, population and community level interventions to improve
- Considers partnerships, communities and aligned to key policies and strategies such as Health and Well-being Strategy, schools, housing outcomes
- Is intelligence led, using evidence to learn and improve
- Considers how to incorporate a wider range of data, for example linking to a 'Data hub' approach
- Measures the health of the organisation (balanced scorecard approach)
- Enables members to scrutinise performance and see the impact of decision making

The Committee asked whether staff were to be consulted in the design of the new framework. Officers advised that staff at all levels of the Council will be consulted to shape the framework; it was also noted that Councillors would be consulted at varying stages including at OSC.

It was acknowledged that the performance management framework did not quantify how 'happy' residents felt, it was noted that there is a difficult balance to strike between the qualitative and quantitative data. The Committee advised that simplifying the framework was appropriate, it was noted that it should be easy to identify where things are going well and where improvements need to be made.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the contents of the report after providing feedback.

CPL77 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received the Work Programme report setting out the current position in relation to the OSC's work programme from 2020-21.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the contents of the work programme.

Chair.....