

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 12 June 2018 at Pippbrook, Dorking from 7.00pm to 9.04pm

Present: Councillors David Draper (Chairman), Joe Crome (Vice Chairman), Tim Ashton, Lynne Brooks, Simon Budd (substituting for Duncan Irvine), Rosemary Dickson, Malcolm Ladell, Stephen Cooksey, Garry Stansfield, Michelle Watson and Mary Huggins

Also present: Councillors, Patricia Wiltshire, David Hawksworth, Chris Hunt and David Harper. Matthew Smyth (Joint Waste Solutions), and Steve Warriner (Places for People).

6. Minutes

The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 22 May 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Duncan Irvine.

8. Disclosure of Interests

None

9. Presentation from Amey

Matthew Smyth of Joint Waste Solutions (JWS) was in attendance to provide Members with an introduction to Amey.

During the course of the presentation the following points were noted:-

- By way of background Mr Smyth explained that four local authorities; Elmbridge, Woking, Surrey Heath and Mole Valley all started procurement on a joint waste collection contract in 2014. In January 2017, the contract was awarded to Amey. A ten year contract had been signed, extendable by up to 14 years. JWS was the client and Amey was the contractor. JWS, as the client were managing the contract on behalf of the four authorities.
- The contract had been designed so that other local authorities within Surrey could join at any time. The new contract saved a total of £2.5m a year for the four authorities. Mr Smyth added that this saving was not at the expense of quality.
- There would be alternate weekly collections of residual and recycling (no change from existing arrangements), a weekly food collection and a paid for garden waste collection. There would be no changes to current rounds and operation when the contract began in Mole Valley. Once everything was settled, then further improvements and changes may be made – for example, how materials were collected and the number of collection rounds made.
- A new vehicle fleet would be arriving at Dorking Depot between now and September 2018. These would have new livery/branding. Vehicles would have a panel on the side that would be used for advertising messages. Trucks would be fully wrapped and colourful so that they stood out.

- There were separate compartments in existing vehicles for food waste and recycling. Amey would use separate vehicles for food and separate vehicles for refuse and recycling. This was to make sure that each vehicle was full before it had to be emptied, maximising the use of each vehicle. Mole Valley would have a split; urban parts of Mole Valley would have two vehicles. In rural parts, one vehicle would be used. More drivers would therefore be needed and Mr Stammers (Amey) was currently working on this recruitment. The economic impact of this would differ in rural and urban areas due to proximity of properties and depots.
- Amey would supply more technology within the cabs of the vehicles, including 360 degree cameras which would confirm if or not bins were put out. Also, on-board systems for capturing data such as speed, location and downtime.
- Existing staff would be transferred over to the new company under TUPE. Mr Smyth added that Amey had spent a lot of time with the current staff to make sure they understood the new arrangements.
- JWS had a Mobilisation Officer based at Elmbridge who had managed the first three mobilisations. Their role was to make sure the mobilisation plan was fit for purpose.
- During the mobilisation of the previous contracts, Amey was able to learn and implement best practice. For example, if an Amey staff member was off sick in one area, a replacement member of staff could be brought in from another area. Litter bin sensors were being considered to indicate when bins were full.
- There were 15 KPIs within the framework to help manage performance.
- A Members Seminar would be held July to consider amongst other things, resident engagement, licensing, ICT and innovations.

Members' questions and comments

Members queried if rural areas would be using older vehicles. Mr Smyth confirmed that all vehicles used on this contract would be new, only the configuration of these vehicles may differ. In some parts of the district there would be one vehicle that collected refuse or recycling and a separate vehicle that collected food. In other parts one truck would collect recycling and food one week, then refuse and food the next. Where necessary, some hire vehicles might be used for a short period of time.

Members asked if it would be obvious that food waste and recycling were being separated properly. Mr Smyth said he will look into the possibility of putting some stickers onto the back of the vehicle.

Members questioned why MVDC was saving more money than the other districts (£1m out of total £2.5m across the 4 local authorities). Mr Smyth replied that during the procurement process, each bidder was given a map of the area and asked how much it would cost to collect refuse from each property over the four authority areas. The map showed the road network and the tipping point. Each bidder was asked to provide a price. Contracts that had been extended could show differences to those that have been tendered more recently. Rural areas were able to save more money.

Members asked what proposals were in place to engage with schools in order to promote recycling and were informed that JWS worked with a company called Waste Buster which provided resources for primary schools to use. The intention was for this to be extended into secondary schools.

AGREED - that JWS/Amey return to Scrutiny in six months time to provide an update on the performance of the new contract.

The Chairman thanked Mr Smyth for the presentation and Members for their questions.

10. Presentation from Places for People

Steve Warriner, Area Manager for Places for People (PFP) was in attendance to provide a performance update on Places for People.

Mr Warriner introduced the item. During the course of the presentation, the following points were noted:-

- PFP had 10 KPIs they were measured against by MVDC. All scores and data referred to the last financial year (April 2017 – March 2018).
- Total participants were short by 11,000 which still equated to over half a million visits a year. Mr Warriner advised that these figures were higher than other local authority sports centres.
- Fitness membership equated to 65% of overall business with a growth of 16 members overall. Figures included 2,005 fitness only members and 354 swim only members. This was a net growth of 59 members in April and May 2018.
- Concessionary members included students, seniors and disabled people. The KPI target was 22% of total participants. PFP scored 18%.
- Savings were made with electricity, water and carbon emissions. PFP had invested £47,000 in an LED project in 17/18 year, including lighting in swimming pool area, pool changing rooms and the main walkway to car park. PFP contributed £40,000 and MVDC contributed £7,000. Electricity showed a 9.68% improvement from last year. Also positive reductions with gas and carbon emissions.
- PFP asked customers to complete surveys within the centre. These scored 93.4%, the target was 94%. There was also an online survey which scored 8.02 out of 10. Two mystery visits take place each month. This scored 89% on the last mystery visit.
- Planned maintenance scored 99%, the target score was 98%. Reactive maintenance was measured on how long it took for a repair.
- PFP sent out surveys to all four schools which had lessons at the centre. PFP received an overall score of 8.8 out of 10.
- There were 2,551 exercise referrals visits within last year. 248 people signed up to the scheme with a target of 192. 82 people completed the 12 week scheme. 59 people signed up to regular membership. The exercise referral scheme included gym, swimming and fall prevention. Referrals came from all GP surgeries. Some further afield surgeries had lower referral rates. Joint replacement, rehab, obesity and back pain were the most common referrals.
- PFP had dedicated 20 hours to health and wellbeing. There was a Wellbeing Manager who worked with exercise referral and schemes. Funding had been received through Active Surrey to run a falls prevention scheme to help improve balance and strength, held at Chart Downs Community Club.
- PFP worked with Surrey Family Services to deliver 2 hours of gym sessions. Surrey Families Services had provided families with gym equipment and helped deliver training.
- PFP worked with Alzheimer's Society to deliver dementia training to staff. Some MVDC staff also undertook this training.
- PFP helped run community events such as the Dorking Colour Run. Badminton training schemes in conjunction with Badminton England were introduced. There was a children's badminton club called Racket Pack as well as 50+ sessions. There was a community badminton session on Sunday lunchtimes at half price. An instructor was always present.

- PFP ran child based activities that enabled younger swimmers to attend. Life jackets were introduced which meant that the age limit had been reduced from 8+ to 5+.
- PFP run apprenticeship schemes who train as lifeguards with a view to moving into gym and management. Apprentices and staff could gain NVQs in a leisure based subject. E-Learning had been introduced which covered areas such as health and safety and data protection.
- PFP had signed up to 'Quest', a scheme rated by Sports England. This involved an audit of the leisure centre. PFP were rated as excellent overall as well as excellent for Health and Wellbeing. Scores were based on a two day audit, mystery visits and a second year review.

In the question and answer session, points were noted as follows:-

Members asked what provisions would be made for low income families to use the centre's facilities. Mr Evans explained that this was part of the concession scheme but there was little uptake.

Members questioned if MVDC's community transport was used or recommended as a way to help people to and from the leisure centre. Mr Evans confirmed that PFP did refer people to use MVDC transport.

Members asked if there should be concessions for obesity. Mr Evans replied that PFP worked with the charity Weight Concern and also ran weight management courses and obesity was one of the conditions as used by GPs to refer people. Mr Evans added that if people completed their referral course then they would be entitled to concessionary rates.

The Committee asked what other measures would be made to reduce energy costs. Mr Evans advised that LEDS had been successful and other areas of the building could benefit. PFP had employed an Energy Manager and other improvements would be considered where possible.

The Chairman thanked Mr Evans and Mr Warriner for their presentation.

11. Community Infrastructure Levy: Annual Reports and change to Governance Arrangements

The Committee considered the previously circulated report.

Annual Accounts

With reference to the annual accounts, it was noted that as at 5 April 2018, £464,000 CIL had been collected. Collection rates were slow initially but were now increasing. No CIL was yet spent except for admin costs. The Future Mole Valley Local Plan would establish the scale and location of key infrastructure needed to support new development.

Change to Governance Arrangements

The Committee were briefed on the proposed change to Governance Arrangements.

- In non-parished areas, the neighbourhood element would be retained by MVDC who were responsible for spending it on local projects within the neighbourhood in which it was collected.
- It was agreed in 2016 that such funding would follow the Council's community grant funding process. That process has since been amended to allow the approval of smaller sums under delegated authority on a quarterly cycle.

- It was proposed that a similar process was used for the neighbourhood element of CIL that MVDC was responsible for. This would allow smaller CIL amounts up to £10,000 to be allocated under delegated powers.
- Allocation would be subject to a consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning Policy and Ward Members. The revised process was consistent with current procedure for using Planning Infrastructure Contributions (PIC). Ward Members were able to promote the use of CIL funding in their neighbourhoods and advise the merits of different schemes.

In the question and answer session, points were noted as follows:-

The Committee raised concerns with regards to the proposed arrangements for non-parished areas and queried who would be able to assist with project management. Members thought that without project management from Officers, certain schemes would not be possible as those people promoting schemes didn't have the facilities or ability to manage projects. It was also suggested that part of an organisation's budget should be used towards employing a project manager.

In response Mr Davies, Planning Policy Manager, replied that in non-parished areas, MVDC were the holders of the neighbourhood element of CIL budget rather than the implementers of new projects, and that the purpose of the neighbourhood element was to empower the local community organisations rather than for use by MVDC itself.

The Committee asked how local Members and residents could make applications under CIL funding. Mr Davies replied that MVDC were preparing advice and guidance for this and that once available it would go to the Planning Policy Working Group and published on the MVDC website.

Members asked what was meant by the Strategic Infrastructure Statement. Mr Davies explained that MVDC would set out what it intended to spend the strategic element of CIL money on over the next 3-5 years without committing to one specific project. Mr Davies added that people could see what type of projects CIL could be used. There was funding infrastructure list on the MVDC website.

5% of CIL was paid to MVDC for admin costs which covered the cost of employing an officer who chased and collected CIL payments.

Also, funding could be used to improve public realms in joint projects with Surrey County Council. It was advised that CIL funds could also be used for flood defence but that this budget would not be able to cover large scale projects which the Environment Agency required.

Mr Davies advised that in parished areas there were regulations that required the neighbourhood element of CIL to go to the parish council. It was up to Members and residents to persuade parish councils on what and how CIL their element of CIL is spent.

It was recommended by that the views of the Scrutiny Committee were taken into account.

AGREED – The Cabinet has subsequently agreed to review the operation of the CIL neighbourhood governance arrangements after 12 months.

12. Demolition of The Royal Oak Public House, Leatherhead – Update

The Committee noted the previously circulated report which provided an update on the findings of the independent review that were brought to the Scrutiny Committee on 13 March 2018.

Members were advised:-

- A planning application had been submitted, seeking retrospective permission to demolish The Royal Oak. This included planning permission for 12 apartments and provision of community use. This would be published on MVDC website. Households in the area and anyone else wishing to be kept informed were being notified and had the opportunity to express their views.
- There had been 7 demolition notices received since the start of the calendar year.
- Members and Officers had been looking into better working arrangements. An initial meeting would be held before the end of July 2018.

In the question and answer session, points were noted as follows:-

Members queried what Officers would be doing to increase public engagement for this application. The Executive Head of Service (EHoS) indicated that site notices would be made visible in the area and those who had asked to be kept informed about the site would be notified of the planning application.

Members asked if the Planning Department were confident that issues like this would not happen again. The EHoS stated that lessons have been learnt and that MVDC would handle applications relating to drinking establishments in the light of the Development Plan and any material considerations. It was emphasised by the EHoS that none of the issues surrounding The Royal Oak would be repeated. The EHoS further advised that all of the Planning Team were kept up-to-date with legislation. MVDC had access to an on-call planning lawyer, as well as lawyers at other local authorities.

Members questioned the Planning Enforcement Team's staffing arrangements. The EHoS advised that there were currently two members of staff in the team. This included one team leader (contractual basis) and one enforcement officer. The aim was to have four full time members in the Planning Enforcement Team. Recruitment was taking place.

Members asked if there was an out-of-hours contact number for the public and Members. It was explained that an out-of-hours number was available. It was agreed that the out-of-hours contact number be circulated to all Members. The EHoS agreed to look into this. *(Note email sent to all Members dated 15/06/18)*

The EHoS explained to the Committee that Counsel's advice had been sought on whether it would be expedient to serve an Enforcement Notice on the owners of The Royal Oak site. The summary of advice had been circulated to local Members and those who had asked to be kept informed about the future of the site. Advice would be sought with regard to publishing that information to a wider audience.

AGREED – Subject to advice of MVDC's Legal Team, Counsel's advice on the expediency of taking enforcement action against the owners of The Royal Oak site would be circulated to Members of the Scrutiny Committee.

13. Terms of reference for Planning Scrutiny Panel

The Chairman advised Members of the Scrutiny Committee that the terms of reference for the Planning Scrutiny Committee were in the process of being put together and would be brought to the next Scrutiny Committee in September 2018.

14. Terms of reference for Parking Scrutiny Panel

The committee considered the previously circulated terms of reference for the Planning Scrutiny Panel. Committee Members commented that the work of the Panel should be more than just a review of parking charges. The remit of the panel should monitor other works relating to parking issues. The Chairman advised Committee Members to contact the Chair of the Parking Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Bridget Kendrick with any other suggestions for the terms of reference of the Panel.

15. Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2017-2018 and Work Programme for 2018-2019

The Chairman introduced the previously circulated report and Members noted the works undertaken by the Scrutiny Committee over the previous year.

AGREED - Looking ahead, the Chairman advised that he would be inviting Cabinet Members to future Scrutiny Committees to speak on a number of items including Economic Prosperity Strategy, Transform Leatherhead and external investment.

AGREED: The Chairman added that Members who represented MVDC on external bodies would also be asked to update the Scrutiny Committee.

Chairman: Date: