

MINUTES OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11 SEPTEMBER 2023

PRESENT:

Members of the Committee:

Councillors Mistry (Chair), Mrs Brown, Lawrence, Mrs McKenzie, Mrs New, Mrs Parker, Rabin and Mrs Timms

Officers:

Aftab Razzaq (Chief Officer – Legal and Governance), David Burrows (Chief Officer – Regulation and Safety), Mike Connell (Chief Officer – Communities, Homes, Digital and Communications), Henry Biddington (Environmental Health and Community Safety Manager) and Linn Ashmore (Democratic Services Officer)

Also Present:

Mr Philip Seccombe (Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner)
Chief Inspector Jim Rankin (Warwickshire Police)
Councillor Poole (Portfolio Holder for Regulation and Safety)
Councillor Willis (Portfolio Holder for Communities and Homes)
Councillor Karadiar

8. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 June were approved and signed by the Chair, subject to noting that an item on the monitoring of warm banks be included in the future work programme.

9. COMMUNITY SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received a report (Part 1 – agenda item 4) regarding a summary of the work in relation to crime and disorder as delivered through the Rugby Community Safety Partnership (CSP) including performance during the past year and the priorities for the forthcoming year.

The Environmental Health and Community Safety Manager and the Chief Officer for Regulation and Safety were present at the meeting to answer questions from the Committee on the report.

Mr Philip Seccombe the Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire and Chief Inspector Ian Rankin were also in attendance and responded to questions and addressed the Committee.

RESOLVED THAT – Mr Seccombe, CI Rankin and officers be thanked for attending the meeting.

10. DISCUSSION WITH THE REGULATION AND SAFETY PORTFOLIO HOLDER

The answers to questions submitted to the Portfolio Holder by the Committee and a copy of a briefing paper covering the areas within the regulation and safety portfolio had been circulated prior to the meeting. There were no further questions raised.

RESOLVED THAT – Councillor Poole be thanked for attending the meeting.

11. CUSTOMER SERVICES UPDATE

The Committee received a report (Part 1 – agenda item 6) regarding an update on activities in progress and planned within the Customer Services department and wider council services.

This item was included in the work programme in response to concerns raised by the Committee regarding call waiting times.

Councillor Willis, the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Homes, Digital and Communications and the Chief Officer were present and answered questions put to them by the Committee.

Councillor Willis presented the key highlights from the report and the Chief Officer for Digital and Communications gave the Committee an update on the procurement of the new telephony system. It was anticipated that the system would be procured in quarter 3 and would be operational in quarter 4.

The Committee acknowledged that the difficulties lay with the technology and not the Customer Service team who had been open to the frustrations of residents calling the council.

The Committee raised a number of questions on the level of risk in delays, how the change and improvements would be communicated to residents, and the data produced.

A communications strategy would be put into place when the system was procured. The requirement functionality would be prioritised, and communications would be required at each stage including what residents will expect when they contact the council. This will go out via multiple means and not just via digital channels.

The Committee were informed that the new performance indicators would capture the customer journey. A recent upgrade in the legacy system had resulted in more metrics being available but the call leave point was not identifiable. A greater level of detail would be necessary for the new system.

The Chief Officer for Legal and Governance undertook to pick up a query about equality and diversity implications outside the meeting.

RESOLVED THAT – Councillor Willis and the Chief Officer be thanked for attending the meeting.

12. REVIEW OF THE LIVE MUSIC SCENE IN RUGBY

The Committee received a report (Part 1 – agenda item 7) regarding a draft one-page strategy for the review.

It was agreed that the draft one-page strategy took the form of a terms of reference.

RESOLVED THAT -

(1) the review terms of reference be approved, and a task and finish group be formed; and

(2) at the end of the process the task group's review report and recommendations will be presented to the Committee for approval and submission to Council for adoption.

13. DRAFT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

The Committee received a report (Part 1 – agenda item 8) regarding the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report summarising the work undertaken by the Committee during the 2022/23 municipal year.

RESOLVED THAT - the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for the 2022/23 municipal year be approved for submission to Council with a recommendation that the report be published.

14. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report and a table listing future work programme topics, items due to be scheduled and outlining the current position of reviews (Part 1 – agenda item 9).

The Chair and Vice-Chair will decide which portfolio holders should attend future meetings.

The purpose of this Committee was to function as a board and the scrutiny work is carried out outside of the Committee meetings. In recognition of the need for engagement outside committee meetings regular scrutiny steering group meetings have been arranged. The Committee were welcome to engage with that process in terms of priorities of work that needs to be progressed.

The topic of warm banks will be raised at the scrutiny steering group meeting.

The Chief Officer for Legal and Governance provided a verbal update on the progress of the Landlord Forum Task and Finish Group.

RESOLVED THAT – the future work programme be updated as minuted above.

CHAIR