

Minutes of: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 18 November 2021

Present: Councillor R Bernstein (in the Chair)
Councillors C Birchmore, N Boroda, L Dean, U Farooq,
M Powell, L Smith, D.Vernon, C Walsh, C Cummins, N Jones,
J Lancaster, E O'Brien, A Quinn and J Rydeheard

Also in attendance: Councillor Quinn and Cabinet Member Environment, Climate
Change and Operations
Councillor Jones, Shadow Cabinet Member Finance, Housing
and Regeneration
Councillor Cummins and Cabinet Member, Housing Services
Councillor O'Brien Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
and Growth
Councillor Rafiq, Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs and
HR
Councillor Jo Lancaster, Shadow Cabinet Member Children,
Young People and Skills
Councillor Rydeheard
Sir Howard Bernstein, Chair of Radcliffe Regeneration Board
Geoff Little, Chief Executive
Lynne Ridsdale, Deputy Chief Executive
Paul Lakin Director of Regeneration
David Lynch Assistant Director Regeneration
Philip Cole Head of Homelessness & Housing Options
Jaqueline Summerscales, Principal Strategy Officer

Public Attendance: No members of the public were present at the meeting.

Apologies for Absence: Councillor G McGill and Councillor K Peel

OSC.1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence are listed above.

OSC.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Bernstein declared an interest to agenda item 7 as he is related to Sir Howard Bernstein.

Councillor Smith declared an interest as a member of Six Town Housing.

Councillor Dean declared an interest as a close family member works for Six Town Housing.

OSC.3 MINUTES

It was agreed:

1. The minutes of the meeting held on the 14th September 2021 be agreed as a correct record

OSC.4 MATTERS ARISING

(A) MEMBER QUESTIONS

Councillor Caserta has now received the answer to his question submitted at the last meeting by email.

(B) UPDATE REPORT ON CHANGES TO REFUSE COLLECTIONS

It was agreed at the last Committee that members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee put forward for consideration at the Democratic Arrangements Forum (DAF) that the Employment Appointments Panel should appoint to the Head of Waste Management thus amending the constitution. Jacqui Dennis, Monitoring Officer advised that the DAF considered this however it was rejected on this occasion.

(C) SUBGROUP

The establishment of one Overview and Scrutiny Subgroup has been agreed, the group will cover Finance and Performance. The meeting has been booked in for the 23rd November 2021.

OSC.5 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

OSC.6 MEMBER QUESTIONS

The following questions from Members were received in advance of the meeting:

Question one: Councillor Quinn stated at the last meeting that "he is talking to colleagues in Greater Manchester as to how to address the shortage of HGV drivers." How did those discussions progress, and have the council finalised a plan to address the shortage of HGV drivers?

Councillor Rydeheard

Councillor Quinn advised that the HGV driver situation is now more settled within waste management. Greater Manchester Waste Strategic Officer Groups meet on a regular basis to monitor the situation and share good practice. In Bury we have worked to reduce the reliance upon agency HGV drivers by ensuring we now have a full compliment of permanent waste collection drivers. The service has also put out an expression of interest to waste collection loaders to be trained in HGV and it is also our intention subject to available funding to introduce a HGV apprentice scheme.

Supplementary Question: In terms of the apprenticeship scheme; how will it be formatted will it be a government trailblazer or a different model of apprenticeship scheme. – Councillor Rydeheard

Councillor Quinn advised he will provide a response by email following the meeting.

Question two: Have Bury Council as yet taken delivery of the remaining bin trucks from Germany? Councillor Rydeheard

Councillor Quinn advised the last remaining 6 refuse collection vehicles (RCV's) that were on order were delivered in October. This means that we now have 18 new RCV's. A further 2 RCV's have also recently been ordered together with purchasing an ex-demo smaller farms vehicle. This is to ensure improved continuity and reliability of the waste collection service when there may be a vehicle breakdown or when RCV's are brought into the workshop for regular routine mechanism service.

Councillor Jones advised he wished to withdraw his question as he discussed this question with the Leader at Cabinet.

OSC.7 REGENERATION FOLLOW UP ITEM

A. Sir Howard Bernstein will be in attendance to answer any questions from members of Committee in relation to the work he is supporting regarding Radcliffe regeneration.

Sir Howard Bernstein, Chair of Radcliffe Regeneration Board attended to introduce himself and the work that has been undertaken in Radcliffe over the last few years.

The Strategic Regeneration Framework in Radcliffe produced a place plan for the area. This plan evaluated the strengths and weaknesses particularly of the core area in the town centre, the relationship with resident priorities and providing a guide for public and private investment. This plan provided the best opportunity to secure the Level Up funding recently confirmed by the Government.

Sir Howard Bernstein then opened to questions from the Committee.

It was reported that the foundations for success in the regeneration of Radcliffe is basing plans evidence and what the impact is on the town and place along with what it means for improving long term life chances.

Discussions took place regarding how Radcliffe can contribute to being more energy efficient. It was concluded that building design, active travel choices and car parking are all key elements to support this; this reduces congestion and promotes active travel choices.

Questions around the macro-environmental analysis, how this was conducted and where the findings are was requested. Sir Howard Bernstein advised two different processes were used. The Strategic Regeneration Framework for Radcliffe which was a holistic analysis and secondly the Levelling Up bid which is underpinned by 'The Green Book' appraisal. It was stated that we need to build a benefit realisation plan which must address whole town impacts and the technical appendices will be put on the website accessible to members of the Committee. It

was concluded that the offer to current residents will be made clearer by the presence of the team in the town centre to support residents with any queries they have.

Questions took place regarding the flexibility of the SRF. Sir Howard Bernstein reported the SRF is not a statutory planning document and is flexible in that it can be reviewed as and when needed. Within the SRF document a pace was created to think about what the role and function of the town is.

Following further discussions, the following key themes emerged from the questions and responses:

- What success in Radcliffe looks like and how this aligns with the established needs of the community
- How to effectively build Community Spirit in Radcliffe
- Consultation and stakeholder engagement processes
- Priorities for the regeneration programme

It was agreed:

1. As part of future updates a report on what the active travel choices are for Radcliffe to be brought.
2. Sir Howard Bernstein be thanked for his attendance

B. Paul Lakin Director of Regeneration and David Lynch Assistant Director Regeneration to present an overview of regeneration in the Borough at the meeting. Report and presentation attached

Paul Lakin Director of Regeneration provided an overview of regeneration in the Borough.

The Council has an ambitious regeneration programme which is designed to boost economic activity and participation across the Borough, maximise the use of Council land and assets, generate additional tax and commercial incomes and safeguard the future of our key town centres. This is an extensive agenda.

A presentation was delivered by David Lynch, Assistant Director of Regeneration to give the Committee a visual oversight of current plans.

Questions were then invited from the Committee.

Key themes identified were:

- We have recently built up a BGI Department and now we need the right team to support and deliver the regeneration proposals. It was stated that restructures, streamlining internal processes and the development of a Delivery Board will ensure successful delivery.
- The whole of the road networks and active travel opportunities must be considered to enable residents where possible to access town centres including parking provisions.
- The development of jobs and businesses in the regeneration plans to enable large scale employment.

- The delivery of the 20,000 jobs would take place over 20 years so will develop yearly

The Committee wished to note their observations around capacity issues and how this may affect the ability for the department to deliver all projects as outlined in the update

It was agreed:

1. Councillor O'Brien, David Lynch and Paul Lakin be thanked for their attendance.

OSC.8 HOUSING REPORT

Councillor Cummins, Cabinet Member for Housing Services outlined an update on Housing.

In May 2021 the Council adopted a new Housing Strategy for the next ten years, which sets out clear objectives to deliver:

- More, high-quality and low-carbon homes in the Borough.
- More affordable homes, to help get people on the housing ladder.
- A more dynamic housing market, with a broader range of housing tenures and more tailored support for people.
- A housing strategy for every township, shaped by development and regeneration plans to support the future of each town centre and neighbourhood.
- Additional support that enables people to live healthily and well in their own community long into later life.
- An approach to eliminate rough sleeping by 2025, by helping homeless people achieve financial independence.

Demand on Council housing services including statutory homelessness and rough sleeping has been increasing since the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and more recently due to the impact of Covid-19 and the "Everyone in" initiative. Over the last 12 months demand for statutory services in Bury has increased by around 30% and the number of rough sleepers has more than doubled.

Councillor Cummins, opened to the Committee for questions.

Discussions took place regarding the offer for rough sleepers which is now 24/7 and supports keeping people off the street. We currently have no rough sleepers so moving forward the challenge to work thorough is moving people on into affordable tenancies and housing.

The Committee questioned if the relationship between Sixtown Housing and the Council needs re-defining to reflect current needs. In response the Committee were advised that the Partnership relationships with Sixtown Housing are improved and we feel confident it is delivering our requirements. A new management agreement has been signed and the partnership is currently very strong.

A question was asked about the refuge centres for victims of Domestic Violence and if one will open in Bury. The Committee were assured that we are currently looking at suitable accommodation and provision.

It was agreed:

1. Councillor Cummins be commended on recently undertaking rough sleeping to assist it developing appropriate policy and support for those at risk
2. Locations of a bed for every night and homeless units to be sent to Councillor Birchmore
3. Councillor Cummins and the team be thanked for their time and work.

OSC.9 LGA CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE FEEDBACK

Councillor Rafiq, Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs and HR provided an overview of the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and their feedback.

In November 2018 Bury Council benefitted from a comprehensive Corporate Peer Challenge review undertaken by the Local Government Association (LGA), from which a number of recommendations for improvement were made and responded to.

In summer 2021 the Council received a Corporate Peer Challenge Revisit, the purpose of which was to assess the progress made against the recommendations identified during the original peer challenge and the impact this has had. The Council has made progress against all the feedback apart from producing a Commercial Strategy.

It was confirmed that the Cabinet will take responsibility for ensuring the recommendations within this report are driven forward. A key part of changing the day-to-day culture will be demonstrated in Bury through the People Strategy. This will make Bury an attractive place to work and help people progress to what they want to be in their Careers along with working on corporate behaviours and expectations.

It was requested to note comments regarding prioritisation and if the Cabinet can assure the Committee that in future they can deliver all priorities set out.

It was agreed:

1. Councillor Rafiq, Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs and HR, Lynne Ridsdale, Deputy Chief Executive and Geoff Little, Chief Executive be thanked for their update and attendance.

OSC.10 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee were advised the theme of the January meeting will be Crime and Disorder.

OSC.11 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business

COUNCILLOR R BERNSTEIN
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 6.30 pm and ended at 9.40 pm)