

Minutes of: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 23 March 2023

Present: Councillor D Vernon (in the Chair)
Councillors R Bernstein, C Birchmore, A Arif, N Bayley,
N Boroda, D Green, N Jones, T Pilkington, E Moss and D Berry

Also in attendance: Councillor O'Brien, Leader of the Council
Councillor Rafiq, Cabinet Member Corporate Affairs and HR
Councillor Quinn Cabinet Member Environment, Climate
Change and Operations
Lynne Ridsdale, Chief Executive Bury Council
Jon O'Connor Group Leader, Asset Manager
Carmel Foster-Devine, Head of Engineering
Crispian Logue, Head of Service (Strategic Planning and
Economic Development)
Jacqui Dennis, Director of Law and Democratic Services
Chloe Ashworth, Democratic Services.

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillor K Peel and Councillor M Walsh

OSC.1 APOLOGIES

Apologies are noted above.

OSC.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

OSC.3 MINUTES

It was agreed:

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 09th March 2023 be approved.

OSC.4 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

OSC.5 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

OSC.6 MEMBER QUESTIONS

There were no member questions.

OSC.7 BURY COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2023/24 - STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Councillor Rafiq, Cabinet Member Corporate Affairs and HR provided an overview of the report. The report sets out the progress made in 2022/23 to deliver against the priorities set out in the Council and NHS GM (Bury) Corporate Plan. Whilst a final report will be shared with Cabinet at the end of Quarter Four, this summary demonstrates the way in which efforts have been targeted at delivering against the 3Rs which is our framework for contributing the priority outcomes within the LET'S Do It! Strategy. The second half of the report sets out a proposed approach for developing the 2023/24 Corporate Plan.

Members were invited to ask questions.

Councillor Bernstein raised that at Cabinet he raised the suggestion to include the reserves strategy within the Corporate Plan. Councillor Rafiq, Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs and HR agreed that this will be considered going forward.

Councillor Green questioned if feedback from the Children's Ofsted visit had been received. Members were informed the report has been received and confirms we are on target with our improvement plan.

Councillor Boroda asked how the Bury 2030 Plan and the Corporate Plan align. Councillor Rafiq Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs and HR advised the Strategy has helped to develop the Corporate Plan. Councillor Boroda sought assurances that Bury Council is on track to meet the Bury 2030 ambitions.

Councillor Vernon asked questions regarding the People and Communities Plan. In response Lynne Ridsdale, Chief Executive advised it is about working with all public services and community partners in every town with focus currently on Radcliffe and Bury. Each area has been worked with to co-design a set of interventions to engage the communities with the development work so there are changes to connect people to growth. In addition Councillor O'Brien, Leader added when funds are available they have to think about how they link back to the Bury 2030 Strategy.

Councillor Birchmore questioned further on the approaches for Bury and Radcliffe Community Plans and what has been learnt. In response Lynne Ridsdale, Chief Executive advised the two approaches have commonality as they are focused on areas of greatest deprivation in the borough so the commonality is there between the area, but the people are different.

Councillor Green wished to place on record the positive feedback from residents following Lynne Ridsdale's appointment as Chief Executive.

Councillor Boroda asked how the 'local' element of the Let's Do It Strategy runs through the Corporate Plan and Team Bury delivery. In response members were advised that local is the way we want to operate now and we have a small number of public service teams working collaboratively this way and this will need to now be expanded.

Councillor Vernon questioned the reference to an all-age skills strategy. Councillor O'Brien, Leader advised we should have an all-ages skills development approach and have established and appointed to a role to develop this work and build capacity. Councillor Jones further questioned about support for apprenticeships across Greater Manchester. In response Councillor O'Brien, Leader advised the different types of apprenticeships available, and work is taking place across Greater Manchester. Councillor Jones questioned when the Council is going out to tender has consideration taken place from a social value aspect to have more opportunities to upskill people in the Council or Borough to undertake tasks otherwise external people may be required. Councillor O'Brien responded to state it will be reviewed and included as part of the Social Value Policy.

Councillor Birchmore questioned which partners are being worked with as part of the Skills Development. In response Members were advised Bury College will be a big partner, the Adult Learning Centre, Holy Cross College, local Sixth Forms and Greater Manchester organisations and external training partners.

Councillor Vernon questioned the schemes identified for development and new homes. In response Crispian Logue, Head of Service Strategic Planning advised the 450,000 referred to within the plan is a combined total to be provided.

Councillor Vernon thanked Councillor Rafiq, Cabinet Member Corporate Affairs and HR for his attendance this evening.

OSC.8 UPDATE REPORT - PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE SUB-GROUP

Councillor Vernon moved item 10 to take place now so Councillor Rafiq, Cabinet Member Corporate Affairs and HR could participate in discussion.

Councillor Vernon presented an overview of the report.

Councillor Bernstein added that discussions have reflected that the sub-group has been beneficial and worthwhile including a growth in membership.

Councillor Jones wished to thank the Sub-Committee for covering sickness absence which has been of high pertinence along with the work Sam McVaigh, Director of People & Inclusion is involved in to drive forward improvements.

It was agreed:

1. The Overview and Scrutiny agrees that the Performance and Finance Sub-Committee will continue into the next municipal year and appointment to it be included in the annual appointments report.

OSC.9 HIGHWAYS CAPITAL PROGRAMME - HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE FUNDING 2023/24 TO 2026/27 AND INTEGRATED TRANSPORT BLOCK 22/23

Jon O'Connor Group Leader, Asset Manager provided the Committee with a presentation which has been appended to the minutes.

Following the presentation Councillor Vernon opened to Councillor Quinn Cabinet Member Environment, Climate Change and Operations to provide an overview of the report. Councillor Quinn highlighted to members key concerns for highway maintenance and their budgets.

Councillor Boroda questioned how much allowance has been made for unprecedented pressures. In response Jon O'Connor Group Leader Asset Manager advised that it is based on current pressures not future anticipated pressures.

Discussions took place regarding the £2 million allocated within the budget with the details yet to be provided.

Councillor Bernstein highlighted from the presentation that the asset of Bury roads is £1 billion which is significant and it would need huge investment. It was questioned how the 'human factor' in decision making is used in the approval process. Councillor Quinn,

Cabinet Member Environment, Climate Change and Operations provided assurances that the officers are the experts, and they make the decisions. Councillor Quinn Cabinet Member Environment, Climate Change and Operations advised there is an interactive map that shows the programmes of work across the borough which could take place as a learning opportunity for the Scrutiny Committee.

Discussions took place regarding individual areas planned under the programme of works and reserves list.

Members discussed the various weights each type of data is given to make decisions on road works.

Members sought further information on the 'Safer routes for Schools Schemes', in response the Committee were advised this is a scheme that looks at area surrounding a school and what can be done to encourage parents to walk or cycle to school.

Members sought clarity on 'collision hotspots' within the borough. Members were informed that annually the Council looks at collisions in a five-year period and a list is drawn up of areas with the highest number of collisions. Following the exercise, the operations team look at the areas to see if there are any engineering measures that can be put in place to prevent collisions occurring in the future. Carmel Foster-Devine, Head of Engineering advised she would provide a list of hot-spots to the Committee following the meeting.

It was agreed:

1. Councillor Quinn and Officers be thanked for their attendance and update
2. All Councillors receive a copy of the presentation provided by Jon O'Connor Group Leader, Asset Manager.

OSC.10 LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY - CONSULTATION DRAFT

Councillor O'Brien, Leader of the Council provided an overview of the Local Transport Strategy.

Members had discussions on routes of transport around the borough, development of Metrolink sites and bus routes that currently are unconnected. In response the Leader advised that within the strategy on pages 215-227 there is outlines of an improvement plan for bus routes.

Councillor Pilkington suggested that the Strategy could be clearly broken down into updates for each township to assist with using the strategy.

Discussions took place regarding the Rossendale Rail line and Councillor O'Brien confirmed that the Council will think creatively, and the Council's position is that it is worth exploring but there is a heritage red line.

The Leader also advised he would be welcome to considering how to connect Ramsbottom and Tottington.

Councillor Bernstein welcomed the Local Transport Strategy but advised the challenge is how we educate people to understand its aim. He confirmed that there is significant time before delivery and the objective is improving the environment and active travel. The Leader agreed and advised firstly active travel and public transport needs to be improved for those who need

to use public transportation then to support those who choose to use a car but could use effective public transport.

Discussions took place regarding specific Bus and Metrolink routes where members of the Committee highlighted areas for development and gaps in the current transport infrastructure.

Councillor O'Brien finished by thanking officers for their work on this document and asked elected members for their support on this work and communicating it to residents.

It was proposed by Councillor Pilkington and agreed unanimously by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that:

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee suggests that prior to commencement of consultation and to assist engagement, the Local Transport Strategy includes separate transport plans for each of the different townships.

OSC.11 URGENT BUSINESS

Councillor Vernon, took the opportunity to thank officers and members for their participation, attendance and contribution over the year. In addition Councillor Vernon also thanked Jacqui Dennis, Director of Law and Democratic Services and Chloe Ashworth, Senior Scrutiny Officer for their support.

COUNCILLOR D VERNON
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 9.45 pm)

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