

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Wednesday, 21st March, 2018

Present:- Councillors Sarah Bevan (Chair), Lisa O'Brien, Jasper Becker, Joe Rayment, Andrew Furse, Patrick Anketell-Jones and Sally Davis

57 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

58 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chairman drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

59 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

There were none.

60 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

61 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

62 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING

The Chair noted that a member of the public, Nicolette Boater had submitted two questions regarding Item 8 'Human Resources and Workforce Planning (Including Apprenticeships)'. It was noted that a response would be sent within 5 working days. *A copy of the questions and responses is appended to these minutes.*

63 MINUTES

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record, with the following amendments, they were duly signed by the Chairman:

Page 9 – '...assisted' to read '...assistive'.

Page 12 – add in the words shown in bold '...set in terms of retail **holdings** as there are **market** changes in this area...'.

64 HUMAN RESOURCES AND WORKFORCE PLANNING (INCLUDING APPRENTICESHIPS)

Cherry Bennett – Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development, introduced the item to the Panel and gave a presentation which covered the following:

- Agenda
- Purpose
- What is workforce planning?
- Why is it important?
- Who is our workforce?
- What does this mean for B&NES?
- Information used in workforce planning
- Recruitment & Retention
- Recruitment & Retention: Next steps
- Apprenticeships: Next steps
- Talent planning
- Talent planning: Next steps
- Skills audit
- Succession Planning
- How will we do this?
- Our people
- Full Time Equivalent Staff by Directorate
- Age and Sex Profile
- How will we do this?
- The Strategic Workforce Planning Process..
- Challenges
- Outcomes
- Members

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Anketell Jones asked for a definition of 'qualitative external' (page 7) and asked how the Council picked up on higher level trends. The officer explained that 'qualitative external' includes receiving data and information from a number of professional bodies such as the CIPD, LGA and South West Councils as well as professional networks. David Trethewey – Divisional Director Strategy and Performance, explained that trends can be picked up through formal and informal feedback from partners and local companies.

Councillor Rayment asked if the 'Living Wage' referred to is the government national living wage, the officer confirmed that it was. Councillor Rayment asked what proportion of staff were paid under the 'real' living wage – the officer stated that she would find out and report back. She also explained that she met with all recognised Trade Unions monthly and had a constructive relationship with them and would share plans around the approach to workforce planning with them at the earliest opportunity.

Responding to a query from Councillor Bevan, the officer explained that the government had rebranded the role of apprenticeships and the levy was now a training programme open to people of any age and experience. The officer explained that myth busting was important so that the new definition was understood.

Councillor Davis asked about progress with regard to the 'kite' diagram in the presentation. The officer explained that there were different levels of progress in different areas of the Council.

Regarding the gender pay gap, Councillor Anketell Jones stated that he was pleased to hear that the authority had an 8% pay gap against a national public sector average of 13%, he asked what figure the authority would be comfortable with. The officer explained that there is no exact number but 1-2% would be an aspiration. She further explained that there is a period of sustained work ahead to achieve this.

Councillor Lisa O' Brien asked that, when the programme was developed, to what extent were multi skilling and moulded services considered. She also asked about the fact that there are more women in the Children Services area and more men in Environmental Services. The officer explained that the gender patterns in different work areas can go back to schools and what boys and girls are being encouraged to study and the role models they have. Regarding the first question, the officer explained that her colleagues were spending a lot of time on cross skilling and working on being 'One Council' with no silos and staff with generic skills as part of the restructure.

Councillor Rayment asked if men are taking their full entitlement of parental leave, the officer will report back on this.

Councillor Becker asked about the impact of the minimum wage – the officer explained that the pay differential issues caused by the increase in the national living wage had to be managed from 1 April 2019. The Strategic Director explained that this has been an issue for Local Government as a whole as well as for partner agencies.

65 TRAINING FOR MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Tiki Toogood – Organisational Development Manager, introduced the item and gave a presentation which covered the following:

- The journey so far...
- What is development?
- 21st Century Councillor
- Recommendations – Levels of development
- Are there any gaps?

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Anketell Jones asked about a possible examination for Councillors after their first year in order to assess the gaps in their knowledge. Maria Lucas – Head of Legal and Democratic Services explained that there is only a small budget in their area so money must be spent wisely. She explained that the induction programme

will be refreshed and suggested that new Councillors receive ongoing training and refresher sessions as a continued learning progress. Tiki Toogood, Organisational Development Manager, explained that e-learning could be used to test and improve knowledge.

Councillor Furse stated that he hoped that training was not just about digital skills. He explained that all Councillors had differing priorities and wards. Maria Lucas explained that there were specific training courses for areas such as licensing and planning but also some general skills such as dealing with a complainant, skilful questioning and knowledge of the constitution that all Councillors may benefit from. Councillor Furse stated that member training would become more important as the Council changes and officers are possibly less available. Councillor Karen Warrington – Cabinet Member for Transformation and Customer Services, stated that resident's expectations can be relatively high and there is a need to let them know that there is less money and fewer officers and there will be a different way of working.

Councillor Davis stated that Councillors can help each other by sharing experience with possible mentoring and being pro-active in learning new things (such as using i-pads). Councillor Bevan agreed that Councillors asking officers for information on specific areas would be better than officers spending time organising formalised training sessions which are not always well attended. Councillor O'Brien echoed this and added that it can be up to a year before a new Councillor starts to learn how everything in the authority works – she explained that it should be about developing understanding rather than training (although there are some areas where training is obligatory) and suggested that a criteria be drawn up for candidates. Maria Lucas explained that descriptions for certain roles such as Cabinet Member, Chairperson etc. could be shared with candidates to give them an idea of what each role involves.

Councillor Rayment explained that managing resident's expectations is political. He stated that equalities training was very positive and that representatives from all sections of society should be encouraged to become Councillors. Councillor Bevan stated that maybe Human Rights and Equalities training should be obligatory in the same way as Planning and Licensing training and that some formal training could be shared with other authorities. Councillor Rayment asked that the programme be developed with Councillors. Officers agreed this should be planned with Councillors.

66 BUDGET MONITORING

Donna Parham - Divisional Director Business Support, introduced the item.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Furse asked about the £3.4million overspend (paragraph 5.4) and what the figure will look like going forwards. He also asked about NHS Trusts claims (paragraph 5.16) and asked what the risk profile for this area was. Councillor Charles Gerrish, Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency responded to the first point by explaining that there are some improvements in the draft February outturn figures although the severe weather in the last couple of weeks was not helpful (decline in the use of Car Parks and Roman Baths along with the cost of grit). He also explained

that £1million of the £3.4million is carry over from the previous year's care home closures. On the second point Councillor Gerrish explained that some local authorities have been affected by NHS Trusts claiming charitable relief on their rents. The LGA are acting on behalf of local authorities. This is a substantial issue.

Councillor Anketell Jones asked about the Non Domestic Rates (page 37) and if this is the right model for funding local government. The officer explained that it was not the most stable income stream but it is there to encourage growth.

67 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency, Councillor Charles Gerrish updated the Panel on the following:

- Regarding property – there is a meeting with property agents HTC tomorrow.
- Ongoing close examination of potential commercial acquisitions.
- Asset Transfers – Keynsham Town Hall, and possibly Clutton Scout Hut plus Bath City Farm.
- Close monitoring of the Budget outturn performance.
- Government Fair Funding Review – the authority will be responding to the Government.

68 PANEL WORKPLAN

With the following amendments, the Panel noted the workplan:

16th May 2018

Add 'Procurement Strategy and Plans'

11th July 2018

Add 'Update on ADL' and 'Update on final figures for this financial year – outturn report'

28th November 2018

Add 'Update on Council Management Restructuring & Staff Savings; plus also on the plans for the 'Member Development Programme'

Items to be scheduled

Add 'People Strategy' (likely to be March 2019) and 'Local Government Funding Changes (no date agreed – links to Government announcements on Fair Funding and funding for Social Care).

69 ANDREW PATE - STRATEGIC DIRECTOR - RESOURCES

The Panel noted that this would be Andrew Pate's last meeting as he would be leaving the Council in the near future. Members thanked Andrew for the work he

had undertaken, expressed their recognition and appreciation of his valuable contribution to the Panel and wished him well for the future.

The meeting ended at 6.25 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services