

Corporate Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday 27th May 2020

Meeting Summary and Recommendations

The Panel acknowledged and welcomed the report that had been submitted to them and thanked the officers for their time taken to prepare it.

They also collectively thanked all staff for their work during this time, especially those that have undertaken new roles as part of the management of the crisis.

Rigorous and detailed questioning was undertaken by the Panel and they raised points on a number of matters during the discussion of the report including:

- Income to the Council
 - Can the loss of income be broken down by service department?
 - What % of activity may return and when?
- Staff survey / wellbeing
 - What actions are being taken to address the poor levels of wellbeing and anxiety expressed by some members of staff?
- Delivery of Social Care
 - How is the £2m allocation to the Council being utilised?
- Business Grants
 - Is the Council confident that all grants have been issued to legitimate businesses?
 - How many small businesses were declined a business grant?
- Recovery planning – Council
 - How are we preparing for matters such as safe spaces for walking (social distancing) around the city centre and our local shopping areas as we move towards exiting lockdown?
 - Is the Council preparing for a possible increase in applications for planning permission and licensing for the use of tables & outside of restaurants and public houses?
- Work From Home – Productivity / Capability
 - Has any evidence been gathered to say whether productivity has increased or declined at this stage or whether this is something that will be monitored?
- Test & Trace readiness
 - How prepared is the Council for this process and what funding / officer resources will be received to enable it?

- Council's Capital Programme
 - Which of the Council's Capital Programme projects are continuing, pausing or being stopped for the time being?
- Compassionate Community Hub
 - How long will this facility remain in place?
- PPE in Community Resource Centres / Volunteers
 - Is the Council recharging for the PPE it has procured at cost price or is it losing money as part of the current process?
- Revenue Capitalisation costs
 - The Panel would welcome more details on the figure supplied in the report.
- Council Governance / Decision Making
 - When will the emergency powers relating to decision making cease?
- The Council's Budget
 - How much of the agreed budget will be achievable?
- Engagement / Communication with the public
 - Will the Council seek to communicate with all members of the public on a more regular basis?

Further detail was requested from officers in a number of areas with a large part of the meeting given over to questions with pressure on time limiting the amount for debate. Given the very wide scope of the report it was felt that more time was needed to assimilate all the answers to questions and to review further information.

The meeting concluded with the Panel agreeing the following recommendations.

The Panel **RESOLVED** that;

- (i) A Task & Finish Group be convened with the membership of the current Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel Chairs & Vice-Chairs to feedback in more detail on these matters to the Cabinet and lead officers of the Council.
- (ii) Members of the Corporate Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel can email further comments on the report to Democratic Services by 5.00pm on Friday 29th May.