

Minutes of a meeting of the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 22 January 2019 at 5.30 pm in Committee Room 1 - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 1830
Concluded 2015

Present – Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT	GREEN
Heseltine Whitaker	Amran Dodds Berry Jamil Mohammed	Stubbs	Love

Apologies: Councillor Salam

Observers: Councillor Ross-Shaw, Portfolio Holder, Regeneration, Planning and Transport

Councillor Jamil in the Chair

54. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

No Action

55. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

NO ACTION

56. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no referrals submitted to this Committee.

NO ACTION

57. DEPARTMENT OF PLACE PROPOSED FINANCIAL PLAN UPDATED 2019/20 TO 2020/21

The report of the Strategic Director, Place (**Document “AD”**) covered initial draft Department of Place budget proposals for consultation pertaining to the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and for consultation with the public, interested parties, staff and Trade Unions for 2019-2021.

The Strategic Director, Place was present and gave a synopsis of the report. He explained that since 2010, the Council had approved £262m of budget savings and cuts, and had invested £56m into priority areas largely to help cover the impact of demographic growth. This financial plan identified a further £33.4m on top of the £262m. This report was the refresh of the financial component of the Council Plan 2016 to 2020 and aligned resources with priorities. Due to new and emerging pressures and changes to funding assumptions, together with targeted investment, the revised gap had been refreshed. The plan showed a balanced budget for 2019/20 after using reserves but the gap had risen to £28.8m for 2020/21. In the medium term, the effect of these changes represented a structural gap of the order of £20m-£25m which would require corrective action.

Following introduction, a question and answer session ensued:

- Were there proactive considerations towards income generating?
 - There were a large number of properties that commanded income on a commercial basis which included museums, the receipt of grants and the increasing of charges through partnership working;
- Was there access to alternative funding?
 - Yes this was also on an increasing level such as directing people within own respective communities to take responsibility of certain measures in order to avoid costs. This entailing the cleaning of own streets and the Council was doing the best it could for the city;
- What was the rationale behind larger cuts to services in comparison to less cuts to other services?
 - Trailing back to 2017/18, large proportionate cuts made previously had lesser cuts made more recently but following a number of years of cuts there was an equal balance of cuts made throughout Council services;
- Due to the ever-increasing number of young people in Bradford and the cuts made, how did the Council expect to assist young people for the future?
 - The Youth Service budget was £2 million and the Council was committed to meet its statutory obligations towards youth services. There were other factors being considered in this area such as further collaboration with schools. Overall, the whole concept of delivering vital services had changed throughout the country in response to cuts but all cities were concentrated in pulling services together in providing joint services to its citizens. Albeit the fact that many Councils had reduced its Youth Service provisions significantly in comparison to Bradford; and,
- What had been in response to the statement of the Police who had stressed on the fact that the Youth Service was in desperate need of significant further funding?
 - The absolute need in reorganising the Youth Service had been recognised and the current flow of services would be delivered through Welfare Advice and Customer Services;

- The Strategic Director of Corporate Services took a holistic view of Council services with proposals of more details of individual strands and a lot more was ongoing behind the scenes that had not been included in the report.

Resolution –

- (1) That officers be thanked for the report.**
- (2) That the comments raised by the Committee be considered as part of the budget proposal consultation process.**

ACTION: Strategic Director, Place

58. LIBRARY SERVICE

The report of the Strategic Director, Place (**Document “AE”**) was a proposal that responded to the need to realign the library service to deliver savings of £950k, in 2019/20.

Officers from the service were present and jointly invited by the Chair to present the report. They commenced by stating that libraries formed part of the district Cultural strategy and contribute to four of the five Council priorities: (a) better skills, more good jobs and a growing economy, (b) a great start and good schools for all our children, (c) better health, and better lives and, (d) safe, clean and active communities.

It was further highlighted that Bradford Libraries statement of purpose was “to enhance the quality of life of citizens and communities and support their learning, skills development and wellbeing by promoting access to relevant ideas, information and works of imagination through a high quality library service.”

Proposals supported the delivery of savings of £950k to be delivered in 2019/20. Proposals for future years would be subject to further detailed planning following the agreement of the savings target by the Executive at the end of February 2019.

The changes included in these proposals would lead to the development of a comprehensive library service delivered through a network of community managed libraries supported by the development of 3 Community Hub libraries located in Keighley, Shipley and the City Centre and operating on a cluster basis, as well as the retention of 7 existing Council run libraries.

Following a detailed presentation, the Chair commented on the fact that Bradford possessed a unique diversified population and the expectation of a more diverse needs would have to be delivered. In terms of the library services, there was a large proportion of Bradford’s citizens that attended library services on a intense passionate level.

Following introduction, a question and answer session ensued:

- In relation to 9.3.4.1 of the report “part of the initial consultation process” had the consultation process been extended to respective Ward

Councillors?

The timings of meetings was publicised through the media and pinned notices but there had been no direct communication with Councillors. Nevertheless all future consultations would be communicated with Councillors;

- Had the consultation been accessible in terms of engagement with the diverse makeup of individual communities such as the Bradford West constituency?

Not directly aware who had attended the consultation meetings but assuming library users and all elements of change would be considered for future consultation work;

- The library in the Manningham Ward covered a vast area consisting of many diverse communities yet no consultation had been undertaken with the people of Manningham or the adjoining wards?
 - This could be addressed in future considerations of the consultation process;
- How had libraries remained open with less staff?
 - Libraries had remained open in communities with volunteers who had taken the opportunity to react positively to resident needs, with support of existing library staff, ward officers and other partners;
- For this model to progress positively a cooperation was paramount throughout the district and therefore how were existing resources being built on?
 - Through a focused approach of engagement between the Council and communities;
- In relation to departments that were to relocate into libraries, what had been their response to the move?
 - The Council was ensuring that the workforce was working towards the one same approach and discussions were still ongoing however the changes included in these proposals would lead to the development of a comprehensive library service delivered through a network of community managed libraries with additional Council services;
- With the development of 3 Community Hub libraries located in Keighley, Shipley and the City Centre and operating on a cluster basis, what benefits would this entail for service users?
 - Imminent benefits with immediate response to various resources and the demand of services being met for residents by addressing needs through a geographical point across the service for priority of delivering vital services.
 - This meant delivering services out to communities as opposed to centralising into the City Centre;
- The proposals entailed an intense detailed of work. How was the Council on track of delivering the proposals?
 - The Council had plans to deliver the completed project within 3 years;
- How did the libraries service tend to make savings of £950K?
 - It was about re-evaluating the delivery of services through good practice which included the downsizing of back office resources;
- Many local residents relied on the on the Local Research department, would this service remain during changes?
 - Yes, the local studies research departments would remain as they presently are;

- Had consideration been given to whether the libraries services would move into Council buildings?
 - Finer details would be considered in the future following the end of library building leases; and,
- In relation to further consultations, could officers ensure that all engagement would be undertaken in line with equality strands of the Council as this had not been achieved to date?
 - Following comments of the Committee, a more robust consultation process would be delivered in all areas.

During the discussion, the Committee and officers made the following comments:

- The Committee had expressed its disappointment in the way the consultation process had been undertaken due to the lack of engagement with Ward Councillors and residents of the Bingley, Heaton, Manningham, Toller Wards including other inner city areas during the consultation process;
- Seemed an artificial process within the consultation had played a pivotal role by officers and it should be noted that residents deserved to be treated with more respect however the past has gone and it's important to focus on what was on the table now for future implementation;
- It was would be an arduous task of delivering the service with £95K less; and,
 - In response to comment, the significant reduction signified a change in delivery of services for the future.
- It was of paramount importance that further consultations met the best practice standards of the Council.

Resolved –

- (1) **That Members expressed serious concern at the lack of consultation undertaken in Bradford during information gathering, regarding the proposed changes to the Libraries and Museums Service.**
- (2) **That consultations also be undertaken with the Council run libraries (to include Manningham, Bingley and other areas) to reflect the diversity of the district as part of the budget proposal consultation process. That following this consultation, the Committee Members be advised of the information gathered by email.**
- (3) **That following the above, this Committee requests that all options for the libraries and Museums Service be presented to this Committee in July 2019.**

ACTION: Strategic Director, Place

59. STREET LIGHTING INVEST TO SAVE STRATEGY

The report of the Strategic Director, Place (**Document “AF”**) is to provide information to this committee regarding the Street Lighting Strategy. It provides details of the Invest to Save proposal to replace all street lighting lanterns with energy efficient LED units and the replacement of life expired street lighting

columns.

Following a synopsis of the report by the Principal Engineer, a question and answer session ensued:

- Was the installation of new columns for the whole district?
 - Yes this correct and the strategy had commenced 3 years ago;
- Why had the works gone out to tender and not completed works in-house?
 - The Council's operation team was not big enough to install 50,000 lights hence the tender for works;
- Why had this Council not gone through a PFI process similar to other Councils?
 - Many PFI street lighting was not LED based and therefore many Councils have had to redo works. Our commencement was later than other Councils and had managed to reduce costings due to ensuring the correct installation of lighting as opposed to other Councils;
- What was the quality of new lighting?
 - Better quality and longer life;
- Would present columns that were next to curbs be moved further away from roads in order to avoid accidents?
 - This was part of the implementation of the strategy;
- What plans were in place for unadopted roads?
 - The present lighting would be maintained; and,
- Was it possible to reduce timings of new lighting installation?
 - Normal use of lighting would be applied and the consideration of traffic volumes and individual communities would be taken into consideration.

Resolved –

That the officer be thanked for the informative report and the Committee looks forward to receiving progress on the Street Lighting Invest To Save Strategy, as appropriate.

ACTION: Strategic Director, Place

60. WEST YORKSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT

The report of the Strategic Director, Place (**Document “AG”**) updated the committee on the outcome of the delivery of the 2017/18 programme of schemes of the Local Transport Plan and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's progress towards adoption of the replacement Transport Strategy for West Yorkshire.

The Highways Services Manager was present and invited by the Chair to present the report. He explained that the third West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (LTP), which covered the years from 2011 to 2026, was approved by the then West Yorkshire Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) in March 2011. The objectives of the plan entailed (a) to improve connectivity to support economic activity and growth in West Yorkshire and the Leeds City Region; (b) to make substantial progress towards a low carbon, sustainable transport system for West Yorkshire,

while recognising transport's contribution to national carbon reduction plans and, (c) to enhance the quality of life of people living in, working in and visiting West Yorkshire.

Progress on the capital schemes that had been, or were being, implemented by the Council were shown in Appendix A of the report. Further information about the work that had been undertaken by Bradford during 2017/18 through the Local Transport Plan and a number of related funding streams had also been listed in Appendix B. The funding allocation for the 2017/18 programme was shown in Appendix C.

Following introduction, a question and answer session ensued:

- How was the backlog of lists being dealt with?
 - More could be done but the increase of works surpassed funding that was available;
- Was the Council in a position to deliver transport works as listed in appendices?
 - The Council was not worse and equally not better however was in a position to carry out transport works which required immediate attention; and,
- What were reasons behind the delay of delivering the Canal Road cycle lane?
 - Unexpected problems but investigations were still ongoing at present.

Resolved –

- (1) **That progress on transport programmes across both Integrated Transport Block and Highways Maintenance Block allocations in the 2017/18 financial year be welcomed.**
- (2) **That a further report on the progress of delivering the first year of the next 5 year Implementation Plan of the replacement WYTS be presented to a future meeting of this committee.**

ACTION – Strategic Director, Place

61. REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2018-19

The report of the Chair of the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee (**Document “AH”**) included the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2018/19.

Resolved –

That Councillors Dodds, Love and Mohammed be appointed on the Members Resources Waste Strategy Working Group to develop a new Waste Strategy for the district.

ACTION: Overview and Scrutiny Lead

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

THIS AGENDA AND ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER