NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

ECONOMIC AND CORPORATE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

13th February, 2014

A meeting of the Economic and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel was held at the Town Hall, Nuneaton on Thursday, 13th February, 2013.

Present

Councillor V.N. Fowler – Chair


358 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 7th November, 2013 be confirmed.

359 Declarations of Interest

Councillor B.L. Hawkes declared an Other Interest in any relevant item by reason of him being a member of Warwickshire County Council.

Councillor K.A. Kondakor declared an Other Interest in any relevant item by reason of him being a member of Warwickshire County Council.

Councillor C.M. Watkins declared an Other Interest in any relevant item by reason of him being a Board Member of Nuneaton and Bedworth Leisure Trust.

360 Website Development Progress Update

The Director – Business Improvement updated the panel on the progress of the plan for improving and developing a more transactional Council Website.

RESOLVED that

(a) the report be noted;

(b) the Director – Business Improvement check the website 10.0.75.100 and inform Members of what this relates to;

(c) the Director – Business Improvement check the high bounce rate of certain websites detailed in the report, and whether this is because people are not finding the information or advice they require;
(d) the Director – Governance and Recreation review the safeguarding child protection website with the Equality and Child Protection Officer in the light of the bounce rate for that site;

(e) the Director – Business Improvement to investigate the possibility of customers being able to attach photos, and generate a read receipt message for E-Forms.

361 Voluntary and Community Sector Monitoring Reports for the first and second quarter of 2013-14

The Director – Housing and Communities submitted a report outlining the first and second quarter performance relating to Voluntary and Community Sector organisations with which the Council has entered into Service Level Agreements (SLA) during 2013-14.

Members asked questions and raised the following issues:

- That there needs to be a more audit of the statistics provided, to ensure they are accurate and are truly reflective of the amount of people that are being helped by the grants provided;

- Concern that the organisations should be helping residents who live in Nuneaton and Bedworth rather than the wider area;

- That the Nicholas Chamberlain Trust have extended a gift to youngsters, who live in the Old Urban District to purchase tools for apprenticeships, but despite the scheme being run for two years now, they have yet to receive an application.

RESOLVED that

(a) the performance reports for the first and second quarter, 2013/14 be noted;

(b) the Senior Communities Officer carry out an audit of the figures provided, and to look at what methodologies each organisation has in place to record their figures and to clarify the meaning of ‘contact’ for each;

(c) the CSWP attend a future meeting to outline their plans relating to Talent Match, so that Members can get more involved;

(d) The qualitative data as required by the emerging service level agreements from the four organisations be submitted half yearly; and

(e) the new opening hours of the Citizens Advice Bureau branches in Nuneaton and Bedworth be noted as part of the commissioning process.
Increasing Democracy and Electoral Uptake

The Chair of the Panel provided an update on the work undertaken by the working group to improve the level of democratic involvement of local people and increase the turnout at elections.

Members raised concern over the location of certain Polling Stations in the Borough, and how this can affect the number of people who vote.

RESOLVED that

(a) the recommendations listed in the report (a)-(o) be noted and forwarded to Cabinet for approval

Integrated Performance Report – Third Quarter 2013-14

The joint report of the Director – Finance and Procurement and Performance and Quality Manager providing appropriate performance measures and financial budget information for service areas within the scope of the Panel and providing the Panel with appropriate information to monitor performance, finance information to address issues arising was considered.

Members asked questions and raised the following issues:

- concern over the way footfall in the Town Centres is being recorded and monitored;
- Concern that the counter for measuring footfall in Rope Walk may not be accurate as many people use the shopping centre as a cut through.

RESOLVED that

(a) the Financial Planning Manager provide detail in terms of the monetary value for the red status on revenues – collection of Council tax;

(b) the Director – Regeneration and Public protection be asked to look at alternative ways of measuring footfall in the Town Centres,

(c) new indicators be established to measure empty shops in Nuneaton and Bedworth Town Centres (to include m²); market stall take up for each town centre; and a measure of the uptake of office/retail conversions to residential within each town centre;

(d) the Financial Planning Manager to consider options for alternative performance measures if information is available, and how this can be incorporated into future performance reports;

(e) the media indicator be considered for deletion from the Integrated Performance Report;
(f) the Director – Business Improvement to provide a report to the March meeting of the Housing, Health and Communities Overview and Scrutiny panel on customer complaints and to attach a copy of the Customer Complaints Policy; and

(g) The Director – Governance and Recreation to ask that Members are kept updated and are provided with an advisory note on the Borough Plan. He is to raise this.

364 **Budget 2014/15 Update**

The Cabinet report from the 6th November, 2013 providing budgetary information was considered.

**RESOLVED that** the report be noted, however Members were concerned that they were being asked to consider information that was three months out of date.

365 **Work Programme 2013/14**

The Director – Governance and Recreation updated the Panel on the current issues relating to the Work Programme 2013/14.

**RESOLVED that** the work programme be noted.

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Chair