

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 7th September, 2020
6.00 - 7.15 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Chris Mason (Chair), Klara Sudbury (Vice-Chair), Sandra Holliday, John Payne, Dilys Barrell, Iain Dobie and David Willingham (Reserve)
Also in attendance:	Gareth Jones (Senior Environmental Health Officer), Councillor Jordan (Leader) and Darren Knight (Executive Director of People & Change)

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Councillor Baker had given his apologies and Councillor Willingham would substitute for him.

The Chairman took the opportunity to congratulate Councillor Wilkinson for his appointment to Cabinet. This did however, mean that he could no longer be a member of this committee and therefore another vacancy had arisen.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting had been circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman advised the committee that he had not written to Alex Chalk, MP, as the Police and Crime Commissioner confirmed that he had since received a response to his letter regarding the Magistrates Court.

Upon a vote it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 27 July 2020, be agreed and signed as an accurate record.

4. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS, CALLS FOR ACTIONS AND PETITIONS

None were received.

5. MATTERS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

There were none.

6. AIR QUALITY / SCHOOLS

The Chairman introduced Gareth Jones, Senior Environmental Health Officer, advising that his paper would be taken as read and inviting members to ask any questions.

Asked about no idling zones outside of Schools, he confirmed that the member was correct in his understanding, that these could only be adopted within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). He noted that these powers were rarely adopted by councils as they were costly to police and in practice, most drivers, when confronted, simply switched off their engines or drove away.

Monitoring had been set-up outside Gloucester Road Primary School some two weeks ago and whilst it was working, it had not yet been reviewed.

Following the changes to the AQMA, a new action plan had to be prepared and whilst this would focus on the AQMA, any provisions could have a positive impact on other areas across the town and therefore he welcomed any ideas in terms of air quality. The team regularly applied for funding and therefore encouraged members to contact them with any suggestions.

Mesh pods had been put up again across the town in the last couple of weeks and the NOX tubes had been up across the town for the last 20 years. The location of all monitoring equipment was available on the council and DEFRA websites and was agreed by O&S in February.

CBC had offered to assist GCC with the pollution monitoring element of the 'Streets for Schools' project and was preparing a quote for this work. It was also noted that Officers were happy to provide information or data to Schools producing a School Travel Plan (STP), which should encourage active travel choices amongst staff, parents and pupils.

He couldn't recall pollution levels ever having been over 40 in Prestbury or the High Street, suggesting that they wouldn't have removed the monitoring equipment if this had been the case and stressed that the annual average was more important than a peak at certain times. He confirmed that Prestbury Road was subject to increased monitoring, though levels were lower than expected this year and assured members that the pods did monitor down to PM2.5. He also advised members that the location of the NOX tubes would be reviewed at the end of the year and it was possible to put them anywhere and everywhere, but there were cost implications to such a decision.

The revised Air Quality Action plan would start to be developed over the coming months, but was likely to take a year to finalise and there would be a wide range of opportunities for members to get involved, as a large number of stakeholders would be engaged in the process.

Members were urged to bear in mind that as with many projects relating to pollution, the 'Streets for Schools' project would require at least a year of monitoring before any useful conclusions could be drawn, as levels varied so much from season to season that shorter term monitoring offered little to no value.

He was aware of functional public art on the continent and asked that the member share details of art installations which filtered particulates from the air,

which could then be turned into ink to be used for other art, whilst at the same time being aesthetically pleasing. This would be emailed to him outside of the meeting.

The Chairman thanked the Senior Environmental Health Officer for his attendance and advised that a similar update would be scheduled for a future meeting.

7. CLEARVIEW

Darren Knight, Executive Director of People & Change explained that the range of services delivered by the council, involved a wide a range of projects with varying degrees of complexity; for which performance and risk needed to be closely monitored. Clearview, which had been used by CBH for some time, allowed for the creation and execution of the strategic plan, as well as management of performance and risk, at the same time as allowing the organisation to easily report this information and therefore prioritise resources most effectively.

He stressed that Officers had only just started to populate the system immediately prior to lockdown and therefore the data that would be shown was incomplete or now out of date, but he was keen that members understand how it would work when it was updated and fully operational.

He gave a live demonstration of the system, first explaining that the priorities set out in the corporate plan had been entered into the system as 'Projects'. Under each 'Project' were a number of 'Goals' which were projects that once complete, would take the organisation closer to achieving the corporate priorities. The number in closed brackets shown at the end of each 'project' showed the number of goals listed against it and each goal would have a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status which would in turn inform the RAG status of the 'Project'. He showed examples of this, but again stressed that many were showing as red as the data had not yet been populated fully, or had not been updated since the initial data had been added. He demonstrated how the use of milestones would aid progress management and performance scorecards could show performance over a monthly, quarterly or annual period; allowing Directors and Cabinet Members to easily identify areas of concern. Clearview also allowed for the inclusion of detail that would provide a narrative to how a target had been identified, or why performance had slipped or progress had halted, which would be highly beneficial to O&S when reviewing performance. Ultimately this system would enable the organisation to review, monitor and manage, ensuring that resources were aligned to corporate objectives. He noted that the risk module had not yet been populated, but would demonstrate this functionality once it was.

The Executive Director of People & Change gave the following responses to member questions:

- Members could be assured that Clearview met the security requirements demanded by the council and he would email details to the individual member separately.
- The system did integrate with other software such as Uniform.

- He reiterated that Officers would input explanatory notes where targets were not achieved, as well as details of any measures that had/would be taken to address any issues.
- Original timelines were derailed by Covid but it was expected that the Risk Module would be updated in the next 2 months, for completion by November, but the performance aspect would likely be after Christmas now.
- Staff were previously updating word or excel service plans and would now simply input the data directly into Clearview, so this would be resource neutral. The officer would be required to explain the course of any data and how it had been calculated and the system would flag where data was not current.
- There were plans to make a read-only version of the system available to all members, but populating the system and rolling it out to Cabinet Members was the priority.

Members felt that the system looked impressive and that once fully populated, it would be useful on many levels. It was agreed that a further demonstration would be scheduled once the system had been populated/updated.

8. SCRUTINY REVIEW TASK GROUP - ONE PAGE STRATEGY

The Chairman referred members to the One Page Strategy which had been circulated with the agenda. He reminded the committee that they had agreed to establish a task group to consider the Campbell Tickell recommendations and devise an action plan. The committee were being asked to agree the ambitions and outcomes for this review.

There were no comments or questions and upon a vote, the One Page Strategy was agreed.

The Democracy Officer would now contact all non-executive members and invite them to be involved in this review, with Councillors Payne and Parsons having previously volunteered.

9. CABINET BRIEFING

The Leader highlighted the recent Cabinet reshuffle. He reminded members that this had been done so as to create additional capacity for some of the major projects the council was embarking upon and that the relevant constitutional changes had been made and budgets allocated, at the end of the last year. He had fully intended to implement these changes sooner but chose to delay until after the general election and then the local elections, which was subsequently postponed due to Covid.

Two additional cabinet members had been appointed, Councillor Wilkinson as Cabinet member climate and communities and Councillor Atherston as Cabinet member economy and development. The portfolio of 'climate and communities' was an acknowledgement that we needed to take communities with us and would allow for any opportunities to do this to be maximised. The spreadsheet outlining cabinet member portfolios had been updated but he accepted that this document may require additional amendments. He was aware that Councillor Wilkinson's appointment to cabinet had created another vacancy on this committee and assured members that his group would be nominating replacement members soon.

Members would be aware of the renewed focus on devolution and restructuring of local government. In his opinion, now was not the ideal time to be doing so, but the white paper was expected imminently and therefore various conversations were starting to be had. 5 localities had been identified and asked to come forward with proposals and a number of council leaders felt it was important to start these conversations now, rather than wait and have something imposed upon us. Early discussions suggested support for Gloucestershire having two unitary authorities, if it were to go ahead at all, but he stressed that it was very early days.

The Leader gave the following responses to member questions:

- There had been talk that Gloucestershire was not a large enough area for a Metro Mayor and that because of this, it may need to form part of a larger area possibly with the West of England, but he had not heard any formal proposals for this.
- He had already acknowledged that the portfolio spreadsheet would require some further adjustment, but assured members that whilst one cabinet member would be responsible for ensuring that access and inclusion were covered in the equalities and impact assessment included in every policy; it was the responsibility of each cabinet member to ensure that the policies delivered.
- There would absolutely be a role for scrutiny in terms of devolution, but at this stage he was unsure how or when this would be of most value. He suggested that we wait for the white paper before making any decisions on this.

The Chairman thanked the Leader for his attendance.

10. REVIEW OF SCRUTINY WORKPLAN

The work plan had been circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman confirmed that it would be updated to include future items on Air Quality and Clearview. He also advised the committee that the New Homes and Regeneration Strategy had been scheduled to come to committee this evening but had been deferred on the forward plan and as such would come to committee at a later date. As always, the lead members would meet to agree the agenda for the next meeting in due course.

The Vice-Chair, Councillor Sudbury, announced that she would be standing down from this role, as she felt she was no longer able to give it the time it needed, but she would remain a member of the committee. The Chairman noted his disappointment, acknowledging her hard work and support as Vice-Chair and his hope that she would indeed remain on the committee.

11. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXEMPT INFORMATION

Upon a vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100A(4) Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining

agenda items as it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public are present there will be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in paragraph 3, Part (1) Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972, namely:

Paragraph 3; Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

12. EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The exempt minutes of the last meeting had been circulated with the agenda.

Upon a vote it was

RESOLVED that the exempt minutes of the meeting held on the 27 July 2020, be agreed and signed as an accurate record.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for the 2 November 2020.

Chris Mason
Chairman