

SHOPSHIRE COUNCIL

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2019

Times Not Specified in the Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate,
Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Responsible Officer: Julie Fildes

Email: julie.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257723

Present

Councillor Claire Wild (Chair)

Councillors Roger Evans, Hannah Fraser, Alan Mosley, Cecilia Motley, Peggy Mullock,
Dave Tremellen and Joyce Barrow

50 **Apologies for Absence and Substitutions**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Les Winwood.

51 **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

None were disclosed.

52 **Minutes of the meeting held on 24th October 2018 and 14th November 2018**

The Minutes from meetings held on 24th October 2018 and 14th November 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

53 **Public Question Time**

No public questions were received.

54 **Member Question Time**

Cllr Roger Evans submitted the following question:

What is the situation regarding the Community Enablement Team (CET) please.

My understanding is that the posts are fully funded under the agreed Council Budget until the end of March 2019 so assume the duties and work carried out by the team will continue until around that date. After that date, subject to the council making a decision regarding the budget for next year at the meeting in February, all funding for this team will be cut.

Which officers will be taking on the duties at present carried out by the CET including of course Local Joint Committees. This latter point is fairly urgent as I wish to ask for the committee covering my area to urgently meet and discuss Youth Club Funding after April in the area covered by my LJC. Who do I ask to organise this meeting please?

Can we be told when Parish Councils and elected members will be informed as to what plans Shropshire Council has regarding who and how the work at present

carried out by the CET is to be carried out when the team is disbanded. What if any work will no longer be carried out.

It is further understood that an additional 6 posts are being created in the Place Directorate to carry out work. Where and what work will these posts be responsible for please.

RESPONSE from Steve Brown Interim Head of Infrastructure and Communities provided the following briefing note.

Community Enablement Team (CET) Briefing Note (January 2019).

I thought you would appreciate an update regarding the CET team, as you know the team and their roles and responsibilities will cease by the 31st March.

Six of the staff from the CET have been successful in securing new posts as Place Plan Officers, which will sit within Economic Growth and Planning Policy. These are new roles, which will focus on developing and delivering Place Plans, CIL funding and infrastructure development across the county, Local Plans and will link and support at a place plan level to ensure that advice and support to Members and Towns and Parishes is provided to ensure these opportunities are maximised.

The Officers that have secured these roles are Corrie Davies, Tracy Johnson, Andrea McWilliams, Mathew Meade, Lucy Roberts and Vicky Turner. The geographical areas and key themes of responsibility are:

Corrie Davies	North-west area: Oswestry, Ellesmere, Wem. Focus – Local Plan.
Tracy Johnson	South-East: Bridgnorth; Highley; Broseley, Much Wenlock Focus – Local Economic Growth Strategies.
Andrea McWilliams	East: Shifnal, Albrighton Focus – Major projects
Mathew Meade	Shrewsbury & Central: Shrewsbury, Minsterley-Pontesbury, Church Stretton Focus – Community Led Housing.
Lucy Roberts	North-East: Market Drayton, Whitchurch, support on Shrewsbury Focus – Infrastructure.
Vicky Turner:	South-West: Ludlow, Craven Arms, Bishops Castle, Cleobury Mortimer Focus – Community Led Planning & Ironbridge.

The new roles will commence full time on 28th January 2019, although the approach will be flexible as there is an appreciation that existing CET works needs to be completed and finalised so partners are supported and the transition to the Place plan work is as smooth as possible, further there has been a transition process in place now for some time from CET members with Parishes and a Town Councils as the CET ends its current responsibilities.

If you have any queries about these roles please contact Hayley Owen Hayley.Owen@shropshire.gov.uk or Adrian Cooper, adrian.cooper@shropshire.gov.uk whilst the withdrawal process takes places, and the role of the Place Plan Officers develops.

Key areas of transition are detailed below for information ...

Resilient Communities and Social Prescribing.

Areas of activity within Resilient Communities include creating hyper-local information directories, creating networks of Community Connectors and working with the community to develop solutions to fill those gaps – to support and promote well-being and independence. This is a key element of both the council's approach to delivering care and support services and its Social Prescribing programme.

Whilst the design and development of Resilient Communities was initiated by the CET, related activity is now delivered around the county through a partnership approach between council services, primary care, voluntary organisations and communities. This will continue with the Adult Services Community Partnerships team leading from the council's side.

For more information about Resilient Communities and the Community Partnerships team contact Kate Garner – kate.garner@shropshire.gov.uk, and for Social Prescribing contact Jo Robins jo.robins@shropshire.gov.uk

Bronze level Tasking and Community Safety.

Bronze level Tasking (BLT) was established in 2010 by the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) with a wide range of partners including the Community Enablement Team who provided administrative and facilitation support. The CSP is currently reviewing BLT and considering a number of options that will provide the most appropriate local model to dealing with community safety issues, recognising that a different approach to organisation and facilitation is needed.

Whilst discussions take place with partners, the CSP will be supporting any outstanding projects, pieces of work and funding applications that the CET was previously involved. For more information contact andrew.gough@shropshire.gov.uk

Commissioning of youth activities.

Commissioning of youth activities will continue under the current contracts and will be managed by Children's Services. Please contact Fran Doyle for more details, Francean.Doyle@shropshire.gov.uk

Local Joint Committees.

A proposal for support of LJC's is anticipated to be circulated in the next few weeks
...

The Interim Head of Infrastructure and Communities confirmed that the Communities Overview Committee had established a task and finish group to look at a wide range of issues including the future of the Local Joint Committees, he stated that the former Community Enablement Officers were in a transitional process and would still be undertaking some of their former duties until the end of March 2019.

55 Unmet Housing Need in Shropshire

Members noted that this item and agenda item 11, Meeting Housing Need Task and Finish Group Report would be considered together.

The Director of Place explained that extensive work had been undertaken by the Meeting Housing Need Task and Finish Group and had contributed to the report on Unmet Housing need to be considered by Council at its meeting on 28th February 2019.

In response to a Members question relating to timescales, the Director of Place explained that should Council be minded to approve the proposal the process would begin, with delivery of new housing developments once the planning process had been completed.

The Director of Place reassured Members that identification of the type of property required was reached using an established formula. He continued that it was not desirable to take a one size fits all approach and each development should meet the needs of its locality. The Deputy Portfolio Holder for Housing added that there was a limited stock of affordable housing and it was important to ensure that existing housing needs were prioritised.

Members observed that two-bedroom properties offered greater flexibility for both couples and single residents, and although these properties might fail the housing benefit criteria there were many residents on low incomes who were not constrained by this policy and required these dwellings. Members offered support for the Right House Right Place initiative, though asked for assurance that the resources were available to deliver it. The Portfolio for Planning and Housing Development explained that this was early days for the new initiative, but external funding was available to establish it and deliver the housing needed by local communities. The Director of Place confirmed that some data was already held but further work would be undertaken with town and parish councils to enrich this.

The Director of Place confirmed that governance arrangements would be detailed in the report to Council on 28th February 2019.

In response to a Member's question on the reprofiling of funds allocated for the Empty Property Incentive Grant to the next financial year, the Deputy Portfolio Holder for Housing explained that the current approach to empty properties was being revised, and it had been considered inappropriate to continue with the existing scheme until this work had been undertaken and completed.

RESOLVED:

That the Meeting Housing Need Task and Finish Group report be approved.

56 Digital Transformation Programme Update

The Director of Workforce and Transformation updated Members on the progress of the Digital Transformation Programme. She agreed to provide Members with a copy of her notes after the meeting.

Members noted that many of the projects were nearing implementation and work to achieve this had been intensified, although some delays had been unavoidable. In answer to a Member's question, the Director of Workforce and Transformation confirmed that the projected savings for Adult Social Care were not dependent on the implementation of the new computer systems.

57 Quarter 2, 2018/19 Corporate Performance Report

The Intelligence and Insight Manager presented the report, drawing Member's attention to improved figures for delayed transfer to care and increased visitor numbers for Ludlow.

In response to Member's queries he explained that the presentation of the report to the Committee had been delayed due to changes in the Cabinet timetable.

58 Quarter 2, 2018/19 Financial Monitoring Report

The Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance introduced the report, which had been considered by Cabinet on 28th November 2018. He observed that the Quarter 3 report had also been published.

Members noted that the Quarter 2 overspend had reduced significantly. The Financial Strategy for the current year was to be considered by Council on the 28th February 2019 and contained savings proposals to cover the recent staff pay award. Should Council approve these proposed savings the projected overspend would be significantly reduced.

Members discussed the revenue from the Shrewsbury shopping centres. The Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance advised Members that £2.4 had been received and although further borrowing was expected this had not yet been undertaken. As a result the Council was not yet paying the cost of borrowing or debt charges and was receiving an income which exceeded the amount anticipated from interest received on capital investment. He added that income had significantly exceeded expectations.

In response to a Member's query, the Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance confirmed that it was anticipated that a proportion of the budget allocated for broadband provision was being taken forward to the next financial year due to the Council reconsidering its methods of broadband provision and broadband providers.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

59 Financial Strategy Task and Finish Group Final Report

The Chair of the Financial Strategy Task and Finish Group introduced the Group's report. He observed that both Senior Officers and Portfolio Holders had been invited to contribute to the Group's work.

In response to a Member’s question, the Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance explained that changes to generate the savings from the Digital Transformation Programme would be put into place during 2019 to achieve savings in 2020, although some savings would be delivered immediately.

The Director of Workforce and Development observed that savings were expected to be made as a result of more efficient working practices and changes to work patterns and not wholly due to staff reductions.

A Member expressed disappointment the Group had not drilled down sufficiently and had not included the examination of capital expenditure or the concept of invest to save in its work.

In response to a Member’s question, the Director of Finance, Governance and Assurance responded that many savings proposals built into the budget were subject to consultation processes. Should these proposals be found not to be achievable then other ways of achieving the savings would need to be identified.

The Chair of the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee thanked the Group for their hard work.

RESOLVED:

That the Financial Strategy Task and Finish Group report be endorsed.

60 Meeting Housing Need Task and Finish Group Report

This item was considered with Agenda Item 6, Unmet Housing need.

61 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2018/19

Members proposed the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to examine the issue of climate change as discussed at Council on 14th December 2018. The Intelligence and Insight Manager observed that this topic had strong links to the new priorities and themes of the Council’s Corporate Plan.

RESOLVED:

That a Climate Change Task and Finish Group be established.

62 Date/Time of next meeting of the Committee

Members noted that the Committee would next meet at 2pm on Wednesday 6th March 2019.

Signed (Chairman)

Date:

