

**COMMUNITY CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 18th September, 2014

Present:-

Councillor Innes (Chair)

Councillors Bagley
Borrell

Simmons
Tom Murphy

Anita Cunningham – Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Angela Dunn – Bereavement Services Manager +
Brian Offiler – Committee and Scrutiny Coordinator

+ Attended for Minute No. 22

**13 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**

No declarations of interest were received.

14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

**15 EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT - UPDATE REPORT ON WORKFORCE STRATEGY**

The Executive Member for Governance and Organisational Development and the HR and Payroll Service Lead submitted an update report on the progress of implementing the actions agreed within the Council's Workforce Strategy.

The Workforce Strategy had been agreed in March 2012, identifying key actions in respect of Organisational Development, Leadership Development, Skills Development, Recruitment and Retention and Pay and Rewards. A Workforce Strategy Group (comprising officers, an Executive Member, Trade Union representatives and a representative from Corporate Management Team) had been established to agree key actions and review implementation.

The planned actions and the progress made to date were shown at Appendix 1 to the report. Many of the planned actions had been completed with others still in progress.

The Workforce Strategy was a three year plan and was due to be updated in 2015. The Strategy Group would consider the priorities for the next three years to report to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration in January 2015 prior to the updating of the Strategy.

The Committee considered the update report. Members requested that more information be provided for the January meeting of the Committee in respect of:

- the Innovation Funding provided by Price Waterhouse Cooper for training;
- how the impact of the current training programmes was being measured.

RESOLVED –

That a further update report on progress and proposals for the updating of the Workforce Strategy be considered in greater detail at the January meeting of the Committee.

16 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 October 2014 to 31 January 2015.

It was noted that the Community Engagement Strategy was scheduled to be considered at a meeting of the Cabinet on 23 September, 2014, and it was queried whether the Strategy had been considered by Scrutiny.

RESOLVED –

That the Forward Plan be noted and the status of the Community Engagement Strategy be requested.

17 SCRUTINY MONITORING

The Scrutiny Monitoring Report was considered. It was noted that a special meeting was being arranged for Crime and Disorder matters.

RESOLVED –

That the Scrutiny Monitoring Report be noted.

18 WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee considered a list of items raised to date for its Work Programme.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Workforce Strategy would be considered in further detail at the meeting in January 2015.

2. That the Customer Services Strategy, the Outdoor Market Reconfiguration, the Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion Strategy and a final report from the Health Inequalities Plan Project Group be considered at the meeting in November 2014.

19 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENTS

The Policy and Scrutiny Officer reported that the report on the Review of Scrutiny Arrangements would be considered by the Cabinet on 23 September, 2014.

20 SCRUTINY PROJECT GROUPS PROGRESS UPDATES

Health Inequalities Scrutiny Project Group

RESOLVED –

That a report from the Health Inequalities Project Group be considered at the November meeting of the Committee.

21 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee held on 26 June, 2014, were presented.

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

22 EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT - REPORT ON DRAFT CEMETERIES STRATEGY

The Bereavement Services Manager presented the Draft Cemeteries Strategy.

The Strategy had been developed following consultation through the Council's Equalities Group and the Friends of Spital Cemetery. It sought to guide the development of the Borough's cemeteries for the next five years, with four primary aims:

- To provide a service that meets the needs of the bereaved and other visitors to the cemeteries;
- To provide cemeteries for the burial and commemoration of the dead in a secure, sustainable and well maintained environment;
- To raise awareness of cemeteries and churchyards as valuable, historic green spaces promoting wellbeing, biodiversity, learning and recreation;
- To manage the service in the most cost efficient manner, incrementally reducing the deficit whilst improving standards.

The strategy identified a number of objectives and actions within these aims, including the development of management plans for each of the Council's four cemeteries. A number of the actions were already underway, including safety inspections of memorials.

It was planned to work with the local community and to consider options for extending the lifetime of the cemeteries.

In response to questions from Members, it was confirmed that the Council had a statutory duty to maintain its existing cemeteries and also closed churchyards when responsibility for maintenance was passed to the local authority. The current costs of the service were not met by the current fees, and it was aimed to move towards a break even position through increasing fees and reducing costs. The Council had a responsibility to make safe unsafe memorials, which incurred costs, including applying for a faculty.

RESOLVED –

That the Executive Member and the Bereavement Services Manager be thanked for their work on producing the Draft Cemeteries Strategy.