

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 6 December 2018

Present:

Councillor Hacking (Chair) – in the Chair
Councillors Andrews, Cooley, M Dar, Douglas, Kirkpatrick, Rawlins and Rawson

Also present:

Councillor N Murphy, Deputy Leader
Councillor S Murphy, Statutory Deputy Leader
Councillor Ollerhead, Executive Member for Finance and Human Resources

Kirsty Bagnall, Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation (GMCVO)
Claire Evans, 4CT
John Biggs, North Manchester resident
Paul McGarry, Head of the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub

Apologies: Councillor Fletcher-Hackwood

CESC/18/52 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2018 as a correct record.

CESC/18/53 Festival of Ageing

The Committee received a presentation of the Age-Friendly Manchester Team which provided an overview of the impact of the first annual Festival of Ageing, which took place in July 2018.

Some of the main points and themes within the presentation included:

- How the festival was developed, including a co-design event with older people;
- The aims of the festival;
- An overview of the events; and
- One of the attendees, John Biggs, speaking about his experience of the Retro Summer Music Festival event and the benefits this brought to local people.

A Member who was also the Lead Member for Age-Friendly Manchester thanked those involved for their work. She reported that the festival aimed to raise the profile of older people in Greater Manchester. She informed Members that Greater Manchester had this year become the first Age-Friendly Region in the UK, as designated by the World Health Organisation. She reported that this work was a starting point for joint working to progress equality for older people in a range of areas such as employment, housing and making communities more age- and disability-friendly.

The Head of the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub informed Members about work taking place at a Greater Manchester level, the region's commitment to improving older people's lives and the importance of older people having a sense of purpose in their lives.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- Whether the festival would be an annual event;
- The advertising for the festival and whether this was able to reach isolated older people; and
- Whether attendees who needed additional support were identified and signposted to other services.

Claire Evans from 4CT, lead partner in the Festival of Ageing, reported that no budget had been set aside to fund this in future years but that the partners involved were seeking funding to continue to run the festival in future years. She informed Members that one of the learning points from the festival was to allocate a larger budget for advertising the festival, as it had not received the level of press attention that they had hoped for. Kirsty Bagnall from the Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation (GMCVO) reported that her organisation had used its networks to reach socially isolated older people.

Claire Evans reported that the town centre events and some of the other events had had information points and service providers present to advise and signpost older people to services. She informed Members that she was aware of socially isolated individuals who had been identified through attending festival events and who had consequently joined new groups and activities. She advised Members that, since the festival, the partners involved had discussed using other networks, like libraries and GPs, to reach more older people. The Committee discussed groups in different areas of the city which organised trips or events for older people which helped to tackle social isolation.

Decisions

1. To thank the guests for their contribution.
2. To note that the Committee would welcome resources being made available to fund this in future years.

CESC/18/54 Budget 2019/20 Refresh Process: Update for Scrutiny Committees

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive and the City Treasurer which provided an update on the Council's financial position and set out the next steps in the budget process. The report summarised officers' proposals for how the Council could deliver a balanced budget for 2019/20.

In conjunction with the above, the Committee also received and considered the Neighbourhoods Directorate Business Plan for 2019/20, which set out in broad terms the directorate's key priorities, key activities and revenue and capital strategy for

2019/20, which was a refresh of the directorate's Business Plan for 2018/20 in the context of current resources, challenges and opportunities.

Taken together, the report and the directorate Business Plan illustrated how the directorate would work together and with partners to deliver Our Corporate Plan and progress towards the vision set out in the Our Manchester Strategy.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- The Council's overall financial position, budget pressures and the challenges of delivering a balanced budget;
- Why the Council was using less of its reserves this year;
- Request for information on the equality impact of the proposals across all Directorates;
- Whether there were sufficient library staff to manage high levels of library usage; and
- Request for an update on the identification of alternative management arrangements for the Powerleague in Whalley Range and what the implications were for the staff working there.

The Head of Workforce Strategy reported that further detail on the equality impact and action plans for each directorate would be available from February 2019. The Strategic Lead (Libraries, Galleries and Culture) reported that there had been a capital investment in self-service technology for routine library transactions which was enabling the service to manage the increased usage of its libraries. The Chief Operating Officer (Neighbourhoods) reported that a number of organisations had expressed an interest in taking over the running of the Powerleague site at Whalley Range when the current lease ended on 31 January 2019 and that the Council was working to ensure that this change of management did not have a significant impact on the current users of the facilities.

Decisions

1. To request further information on the Council's reserves including what proportion of the budget spend they make up, how the decision to use less of the reserves this year was arrived at and the rationale for this.
2. To request further information on the equality impact of the proposals across all directorates.
3. To ask the Chief Operating Officer (Neighbourhoods) to confirm the implications of the change of management for staff employed at the Powerleague in Whalley Range.
4. To request further details of the impact, if any, of the budget proposals on areas within Committee's remit.
5. To request that, where other Committees consider budget issues which impact on the work of the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee, the Chair be informed and invited to attend, where appropriate.

CESC/18/55 Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Infrastructure Contract

The Committee received a report of the Deputy Chief Executive which provided an update on the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Infrastructure contract, specifically on the review of current provision and on the co-design process for a new VCS infrastructure contract.

The main points and themes within the report included:

- Background information;
- The joint review of the Council's and the Manchester Health Care and Commissioning (MHCC)'s VCS infrastructure contracts; and
- The co-design group established as part of the process to develop the new service model and contract.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- How many Members had provided feedback as part of the joint review process;
- Request for further information on the localised community development work outside of the VCS infrastructure contract referred to in the report;
- Whether officers had looked at what other local authorities were doing in relation to their VCS infrastructure contracts;
- Whether Members would receive details of the services included in the VCS infrastructure contract tender; and
- Whether it would be appropriate for work to take place at a Greater Manchester level or a more local level.

The Programme Lead (Our Manchester Funds) informed the Committee that five Members had formally provided feedback and that his team had met with two further Members individually about this. He reported that other services and organisations could and did support community development. He outlined how organisations were supporting the VCS sector and the importance of getting more organisations, both public and private sector, to do so. He confirmed that his team had looked at what the ten Greater Manchester authorities, as well as local authorities elsewhere, were doing in relation to their VCS infrastructure contracts. He reported that some local authorities had ceased to have an infrastructure provision whereas others were strengthening theirs. He confirmed that Members would receive details of the services included in the VCS infrastructure contract tender and that this was likely to go initially to the Our Manchester VCS Fund Task and Finish Group and then to the parent Committee.

The Statutory Deputy Leader informed Members about the Memorandum of Understanding between the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the GMCVO but she advised that it would be difficult for a single organisation to deliver the VCS infrastructure contract across the whole of Greater Manchester because of the range of different needs of the different communities across Greater Manchester.

A Member who was also the Chair of the Our Manchester VCS Fund Task and Finish Group expressed concern at the low number of Members who had responded to the request for feedback as part of the joint review process. She suggested that Members be asked why they hadn't responded and what would have enabled them to respond. She agreed to discuss with the Programme Lead (Our Manchester Funds) the best way to do this.

Decisions

1. To support the work outlined in the report.
2. To request further information in a future report on how the Memorandum of Understanding between the GMCA and the GMCVO relates to this work.
3. To note that the Chair of the Our Manchester VCS Fund Task and Finish Group will, in conjunction with the Programme Lead (Our Manchester Funds), ask Members why they hadn't responded to the request for feedback and how this could be improved.

CESC/18/56 Overview Report

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained a list of key decisions yet to be taken within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

The Chair informed Members that Councillor Fletcher-Hackwood, who had sent her apologies for today's meeting, had requested that the Committee consider how it could feed into the Law Commission's review on making misogyny a hate crime. A Member recommended that the Chair meet with Councillor Fletcher-Hackwood to discuss how this should be taken forward, to which the Chair agreed.

Decisions

1. To note the report and agree the work programme.
2. To recommend that the Chair meet with Councillor Fletcher-Hackwood to discuss how to take forward the suggestion that the Committee contribute to the review on making misogyny a hate crime.