

**Minutes of a meeting of Scrutiny Committee for Community,  
Customer Services and Service Delivery  
held on Wednesday, 24th March, 2021  
from 5.00 - 5.40 pm**

**Present:** A Boutrup (Chair)  
Anthea Lea (Vice-Chair)

L Bennett	J Henwood	S Hatton
P Chapman	T Hussain	J Knight
R Clarke	M Pulfer	L Stockwell
S Ellis	S Smith	
I Gibson	A Sparasci	

**Absent:** Councillors B Dempsey, J Mockford and D Sweatman

**Also Present:** Councillors J Llewellyn-Burke and A MacNaughton

**Also present as  
Cabinet Members:** Councillors J Belsey, R De Mierre, and N Webster

**1 ROLL CALL AND VIRTUAL MEETING EXPLANATION.**

The Vice-Chairman carried out a roll call to establish attendance at the meeting. The Solicitor to the Council provided information on the format of the virtual meeting.

**2 TO NOTE SUBSTITUTES IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE  
RULE 4 - SUBSTITUTES AT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES ETC.**

Cllr Hatton substituted on behalf of Cllr Dempsey. Cllr Stockwell substituted on behalf of Cllr Mockford. Cllr Knight substituted on behalf of Cllr D Sweatman.

**3 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies were received from Councillors Dempsey, Mockford and Sweatman.

**4 TO RECEIVE DECLARATION OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF  
ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA.**

The Chairman declared an interest in Item 7, paragraph 50c, as she is Treasurer of Bolnore Village Community Partnership.

**5 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON  
3 FEBRUARY 2021.**

The Chairman updated Members on actions from the previous meeting regarding planning visits and the air quality app, which she confirmed was already on the Council website. The action regarding compliments was being considered for the

Complaints report. The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd February 2021 were agreed as a correct record and electronically signed by the Chairman.

**6 TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT BUSINESS.**

The Chairman had no urgent business.

**7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY PROGRESS REPORT 2020.**

Neal Barton, Policy & Performance Manager, introduced the Equality and Diversity Progress report. He reminded Members that the Committee had discussed a new Diversity and Equality Scheme prior to its adoption by the Council in July 2020. He noted that the Council's Equality and Diversity work as well as covering the protected characteristics looks at disadvantage from people's level of skills, income and by virtue of where they live. It also covers work to support the Armed Forces community. The 2020 report has a focus on the Council's work during the Covid-19 pandemic to support protected groups.

While highlighting the work of the voluntary sector in tackling problems arising from pandemic, the Policy & Performance Manager added that the Wellbeing Team had moved to a virtual programme, mainly contacting people by phone. Several other events had also been adapted such as Silver Sunday and the virtual Play Days at Home. Video content is available online for the public to access. He emphasised new work to support communities, including the Covid Recovery Fund, with £147,000 of funding allocated in the first round.

Members discussed the importance of partnership working. In response to a query, the Policy & Performance Manager confirmed that the Community Champions Network would continue, working with Citizens Advice, to support BAME communities. He also acknowledged a Members request for other groups to include in the report (such as prisoners and the homeless) noting that these groups were already covered by separate strategies adopted by the Council. Collaborative working with other councils was discussed and it was confirmed that there is regular contact with the Towns and Parish Councils and work will continue to ensure coordinated approaches to available grant funding in the future.

Discussion was held on the allocation of Covid grants, and the Business Unit Leader for Community Services, Policy, and Performance noted that a number of grants are aimed at young people, including Buddy Benches, sports facilities and online education, as well as initiatives underway prior to the pandemic. A Member queried the geographical split of the figures on NEETs in the area and emphasised the growing gap between generations. The Policy & Performance Manager agreed to provide a written response with more information.

A Member queried work on safeguarding and thanked the Council for the training on this matter provided to Councillors. The Business Unit Leader noted that safeguarding training is available online (Level 1 and Level 2), with further details to be shared with Members via MIS shortly.

Another Member requested more focus on the figures for Armed Forces in the Council's staff monitoring. The Policy & Performance Manager noted that the HR Department were working on including referencing to the Armed Forces in the recruitment process and he will ascertain if these figures can be included in future reports.

The current pressure on leisure centres was also discussed and the committee's suggestions for longer opening hours and support for less privileged groups to access the facilities will be passed back to the Leisure Team.

The Cabinet Member for Community reassured the Member with concerns on supporting ex-Armed Forces personnel and said that finding additional ways to support them was a priority. He informed Members that there are several different training courses available.

Regarding ex-prisoners, he highlighted the importance of providing community support to them to break the cycle of returning to crime. He additionally mentioned the increase in hate crime and domestic violence. He also reminded Members of the government's Job Retention Scheme and the need to support people if they lose their jobs when the Scheme ends. He concluded by thanking the Committee Members for their diligence in considering this report.

The Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendation contained in the report. This was approved with 15 votes in favour.

## **RESOLVED**

The Scrutiny Committee endorsed the Council's approach to meeting its duties under the Equality Act, as evidenced by the Equality and Diversity Progress Report 2020 included at Appendix 1.

## **8 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2 DUE NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN.**

No.

The meeting finished at 5.40 pm

Chairman