

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Remote meeting held on Thursday, 23rd July, 2020 at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr M.D. Smith (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Veronica Graham-Green (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr T.D. Bridgeman
Cllr Sue Carter
Cllr R.M. Cooper
Cllr Christine Guinness
Cllr L. Jeffers
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr S.J. Masterson

10. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th June, 2020 were agreed as a correct record

11. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The committee was advised that following a change in responsibilities in the Conservative Group it was necessary to appoint a new Vice-Chairman to replace Cllr Sue Carter.

RESOLVED: That Cllr. Veronica Graham-Green be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

12. WORKFORCE REPORT

Alison McBride, Corporate Manager - People, presented the Workforce Report to the Committee, the highlights of which included:

- A snapshot of the Council's headcount which showed the number of FTE's decreasing year on year
- Gender breakdown - there had been a limited change since the previous report (37% male/63% female)
- Gender pay gap – Rushmoor's pay gap was 12%, it was noted that the Local Government Association (LGA) average was 6.1%
- Part time Staff – the majority of part time staff were employed at Grade 5 or below
- Ethnicity profile – 22.6% of staff chose not to report their ethnicity, of those that did, 75.2% identified as white and 2.2% as Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME)

- Profile Age – of which 31% were over 55 and 18% aged under 34
- Apprenticeship programme – Rushmoor currently reported above average numbers and were spending 57% of the allocated apprenticeship levy

Ms McBride advised that a People Strategy was being developed in-line with the Council's strategic objectives and it was hoped that a draft would be available in August for Members to comment on.

In response to a query regarding the data relating to women in higher positions and the gender pay gap within the Council, consideration would be given to how women could be encouraged to apply for higher paid positions and what could be implemented to make these roles more appealing, including flexibility and working arrangements. It was noted that the Leadership Development Programme was assisting to address this with 13 of the 14 enrolled in the second cohort being female.

Long term absence was raised as a concern by Members, as the data showed an increase in lost working days on the previous year. It was noted that, since the Employee Assistance Programme had been introduced in 2018, it's utilisation had steadily increased. In addition, there had been a marked increase since the outbreak of the Coronavirus Pandemic in March, 2020. Being a relatively small local authority, 1-2 cases of long-term absence made a significant difference to the figures and it was advised that the 22% of staff absence attributed to anxiety, stress and depression figure was slightly outdated. During the Pandemic, emphasis on wellbeing was greater across the Council. Managers were carrying out regular check-ins with staff and data was showing a difference in dealing with change and crisis, which could cause anxiety, stress and depression.

A request was made for more detailed data on the ethnicity profile. It was noted that the 2.2% of Council staff who identified as BAME equaled to six people across the authority. The number of employees who identified as BAME who had been or were part of the Leadership Programme was also requested and this information would be provided. The comparator used in the report had been the 2011 census findings, a more recent comparator would be sought and if identified, shared in the presentation for the special meeting of the Policy and Project Advisory Board to discuss the Notice of Motion on Black Lives Matter on 25th August, 2020.

In response to a query regarding attracting more young people into the Council, it was noted that a number of initiatives were in place. An officer group had been formed to liaise with schools to showcase career opportunities within local government and assist with CV writing and interview skills in both schools and colleges. Working relationships were in place with the local colleges for the apprenticeship schemes.

The Chairman thanked Ms McBride for her report.

13. **HEALTHY WEIGHTS PROJECT - UPDATE**

Martin Sterio, Health and Physical Activity Officer, attended the meeting to give a presentation on the Council's Healthy Weights Project.

An initial update on healthy weights had been provided to Members of the Leisure and Youth Panel in 2016. The initiative had developed on the back of obesity figures reported in 2016 which showed high levels of obesity in young people across the Borough. A healthy weights audit had been carried out in all schools in the Borough and the findings had showed that 1 in 4 infant school children had been recorded as being overweight; this had risen to 1 in 3 at the end of Year 6. The audit reported that deprivation had been a main factor within communities and infrastructure improvements would have a positive impact on residents' health. The infrastructure in the catchment area of each school had been looked at in detail and information had been provided on proximity to green space, sports facilities, takeaways, access to swimming pools etc. to get a clear understanding for each school.

It was noted that Public Health Hampshire, the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), local schools, community champions and sports partners had formed a Local Action Group (LAG) to focus on key themes identified in the audit. These included the physical infrastructure, physical activities and healthy eating environments and education. A number of initiatives had since been delivered, these included:

- Junior Park Run
- Park Run
- Couch to 2k family programme
- Promotion of leisure facilities and green spaces,
- The daily mile in schools - 25 schools now involved up from 8 initially
- School travel schemes
- Improved healthy menus in schools
- Balance and ride scheme in infants schools Year R and Year 1
- Moor Road playing fields improvement - new playground/sports facilities in one of the Boroughs most deprived areas

It was realised however, that one-time events wouldn't change things long term, so therefore a Whole System Approach Steering Group had been established with partners to ensure healthy lifestyles were maintained long term. Themed action registers would be created to change systems that would lead to long term goal achievements.

The issue of obesity was a long term challenge with no single element to address it that would alter the situation in the longer term. It was considered that many things needed to change to slowly make a difference over time.

In response to a query regarding deprivation and it's definition, it was explained that Rushmoor had several areas that were considered "lower super output areas" this was determined on a number of domains including educational attainment, employment and skills, income by household. Areas were scored nationally against certain criteria and, within Rushmoor, several areas had been scored in the top worse 20% in the country on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

Following a discussion regarding school lunches and packed lunches it was noted that the majority of younger school children had school lunches and as they got older, switched to packed lunches. Improvements had been made over the past six

months to the school dinner offer making the offer more healthy. It was noted that all schools had a packed lunch policy but some schools monitored pack lunches more strictly than others.

Weighing of Year R and Year 6 children was also discussed. It was noted that the percentage of those that opted out was not known, but the Committee was advised that 24% of the Year R pupils that were weighed were classed as obese and this figure rose to 33% in Year 6. The data on weights was released every two years and figures would be due later in 2020. Any impacts of COVID-19 would show in these figures.

In response to a query, it was advised that, following the balance and ride scheme, schools had advised parent on safe routes to schools to encourage pupils to ride to school. Unfortunately, parents still had a fear of road safety and vehicle movements and felt it unsafe for their children to ride to school.

A discussion was held on how the Council could influence/educate parents/households to lead healthier lifestyles. This was considered a difficult area to tackle, but the LAG were considering targeting pre-school families to try and influence, from an early age, healthier lifestyles. It was suggested that cookery skills could be taught to parents to help address the issue.

The Committee was advised that in the future the audit that was completed by all schools at the beginning of the process would be re-circulated to gain comparable data on how the initiatives were having an impact.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Sterio for his presentation and the work of the Local Action Group was **ENDORSED**.

14. **SCRUTINY TRAINING SESSION**

It was noted that Thursday 20th August had been secured for the Scrutiny training. It was agreed that the session would be best held face to face and the training would be held in the Concorde Room at the Council Offices.

15. **WORK PLAN**

The current work plan was noted.

At the next meeting of the Committee, representatives from the Safer North Hampshire Team and the Police would provide updates and the Quarter 1 performance data would also be reported to the Committee.

Moor Road Playing Fields Update – The Committee was informed that consultation had taken place with the community and a plan had been established to install a destination playground, basketball court, cycle track and outdoor gym facilities. The facility now had the destination playground and gym facilities installed and work would be starting on the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and cycle track in September. Improvement work to the car park would also take place at this time.

In response to a query regarding the skatepark, it was advised that the one located in Farnborough Town Centre was coming to its end of life and would be replaced within the new civic quarter development and not relocated to Moor Road.

The meeting closed at 8.12 pm.

CLLR M.D. SMITH (CHAIRMAN)
