OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY 2023

Present: Councillor J C Patrick, Chair

Councillors: S Easom
L Ellis
M J Crow
S Dannheimer
E Kerry
P J Owen
C M Tideswell
I L Tyler
D Bagshaw (Substitute)
J M Owen (Substitute)
D Grindell (Substitute)
H Land (Substitute)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D K Watts, L Fletcher, M Hannah and R S Robinson

34   DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

35   MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

36   MINUTES FROM WORKING GROUPS

Members noted the minutes from the Agile Working and Missed Bins Working Groups. An update was provided on the Cost of Living Working group to the Committee. A further meeting was being arranged for the Cost of Living topic.

37   UPDATE FROM CABINET

Members were informed that there was no update from Cabinet.

38   CONSIDERATION OF CALL-IN

Members were informed that no call-ins had been received.

39   BRIEFING ON BUDGETARY PLANNING AND BUSINESS PLANS

The Committee welcomed a presentation on the budgetary planning and business plans from the Head of Finance in preparation for the Overview and Scrutiny meetings 30 and 31 January 2023.

40   OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP- AGILE WORKING

The Committee received the report on Agile Working. The Chair of the Working Group gave a summary at the meeting of the report. The purpose of the report was to achieve the outcomes identified in the scoping report and sought that residents were getting the best service possible with a positive impact on services, service delivery expectation had not been reduced since agile working and there was a better understanding of how agile working operates, and how this was communicated to residents and Councillors.

The Committee considered that there was still work to be done on the report and residents input would have been useful. Members requested reassurance that agile working for staff and for residents and businesses be considered. It was stated that agile working was here to stay with other businesses adopting differ styles of agile working with trends for a four-day week pattern. There was a need for clear guidelines with discipline without supervision, mentoring, learning, strengthening, cohesion and how effective leadership and support is offered to employees. This all should be looked at more closely. There was concern that there still were communication problems with residents trying to make contact with services especially if there were areas with staffing issues or illness. It was considered that work in some areas was not being achieved and agile working may be responsible. Councillors expressed frustration at having to call in constantly to get updates on issues when the query had not been answered. Further queries raised included having an unskilled workforce, where are the boundaries and what is the future and that some employees have not had the practical experience of working in an office. Members stated that benefits included a happier workforce, supported a better work life balance and reduced the environmental impact on car emissions around the borough supporting the Council's target to become carbon neutral by 2027.

Members considered that there was a need to look at this topic again with the new administration while including the views of residents. There should be a re-focus on scrutiny with residents and how it impacts on them.

Options were suggested by the Committee on how to progress the report. It was stated that the report be put back onto the work programme as a topic to be considered by the Committee at a future meeting.

RESOLVED to return the issue of agile working back to the work programme for a future review, taking account of all the views of Councillors of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

41   CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted the Cabinet work programme. Queries were raised with regards to the Leisure Centre update and the impact on energy and inflation on Leisure

Centres, and the Housing Situation in Broxtowe report including how many voids were there in the borough.

42   SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee resolved that the work programme with the minor amendments and the topic of Agile Working being added back to the programme be approved.

RESOLVED that the work programme be approved.