

PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday 2 March 2017

Present:

Councillor Wardle (Chair)
Councillors Foale, Branston, Foggin, Hannan, Packham, Robson and Vizard

Apologies:

Councillors Bialyk, Holland and Newby

Also present:

Service Lead Housing Customers, Technical Accounting Manager, Principal Accountant Corporate, Scrutiny Programme Officer and Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (HB)

In attendance:-

Councillor Emma Morse - Portfolio Holder for Customer Access
Councillor Keith Owen - Portfolio Holder for the Housing Revenue Account

9

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of People Scrutiny Committee held on 5 January 2016 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as correct.

10

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

11

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COUNCIL TASK AND FINISH GROUP REPORT

The Chair of the Task and Finish Group, Councillor Robson, presented the report of the Task and Finish Group, which had met on four occasions, setting out its findings and recommendations to the People Scrutiny Committee and Executive.

The Group had included representatives from Exeter Dementia Action Alliance, the Alzheimer's Society and the Community Participation Officer from John Lewis (Exeter branch) and the Scrutiny Programme Officer reported that a valuable insight had been provided by members of the Torbay Dementia Leadership Group who had visited the Customer Service Centre to observe the front line service and facilities from the point of view of a person with dementia. She also stated that the City Council would look to participate in the Dementia Awareness Week between 15 to 21 May 2017.

The Portfolio Holder for Customer Access emphasised the importance of ensuring frontline staff fully embraced the importance of dementia awareness and confirmed that the Assistant Director Customer Access would ensure that the necessary resources were in place to bring forward new signage and improved toilet facilities in the Customer Service Centre.

People Scrutiny Committee supported the report and requested Executive to:-

- (1) encourage organisations such as the Alzheimer's Society, memory cafes and Age Concern to apply for allotments for use by those with dementia;
- (2) outline the work of this Task and Finish Group in a press and social media release, highlighting that the Council can offer appointments later in the day, upon request;
- (3) establish what information sharing there is already between Council departments in respect of vulnerable individuals, such as those with dementia and investigate the process for recording and sharing new information;
- (4) continue to support dementia friendly staff training across the Council, encouraging staff to become Dementia Champions;
- (5) look into providing different modules of more in depth training for officers who work directly with members of the public;
- (6) explore dementia training as a compulsory requirement before a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver's licence is granted;
- (7) ensure that dementia friendly engagement is reflected and considered in the social inclusivity dimension of evaluating procurements;
- (8) require trained front line staff in particular to wear dementia friendly badges and a forge-me-not sign to be placed in a prominent place in the Customer Service Centre;
- (9) investigate the viability of providing a second toilet and/or carry out improvements to the existing toilet (including access) in the Customer Service Centre, subject to costings and available resources;
- (10) provide clear signposting for the toilet in the Customer Service Centre, subject to costings and available resources;
- (11) provide a higher level of dementia awareness training for security staff;
- (12) investigate the potential for dementia friendly red coat tours;
- (13) ensure that information concerning dementia friendly activities is available at the tourist information centre;
- (14) encourage such organisations as the Devon Wildlife Trust and Active Exeter to adopt a dementia friendly approach in the provision of activities; and
- (15) consider whether a similar review of other front line services within the Council should be undertaken at this stage and, if so, to prioritise the order for review.

The Technical Accounting Manager advised Members of any major differences, by management unit between the approved budget and the outturn forecast for the first nine months of the financial year up to 31 December 2016 in respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Council's new build schemes. An outturn update in respect of the HRA Capital Programme was also incorporated in the report in

order to help provide a comprehensive financial update in respect of the Housing Revenue Account.

During this period, the total budget variances indicated that there would be a net surplus of £816,053 in 2016/17. This represented a reduction in net costs of £958,178 compared to the revised budgeted deficit of £142,125 for 2016/17.

The total amount of HRA capital expenditure for 2016/17 showed a total forecast spend of £6,282,661 compared to the £12,143,470 approved programme, a decrease of £5,860,809.

People Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

13

PEOPLE BUDGET MONITORING TO DECEMBER 2016

The Principal Accountant advised Members of any material differences, by management unit between the approved budget the outturn forecast for the first nine months of the financial year up to 31 December 2016 in respect of People Services. An outturn update in respect of the People Capital Programme was also incorporated in the report in order to help provide a comprehensive financial update in respect of the People Services budget.

The current forecast suggested that net expenditure would increase from the approved budget by a total of £108,776 after transfers from reserves and revenue contributions to capital. This represented a variation of 2.86% from the revised budget and included a supplementary budget of £158,000.

The 2016/17 Capital Programme, including commitments brought forward from 2015/16, was £1,434,540, as set out in the report.

People Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

(The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 5.58 pm)

Chair