

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 11 SEPTEMBER, 2018

REPORT BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – UPDATE

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report

- This report details the comments and recommendations made following an additional meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 July 2018.

<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u>	
(A)	That the Executive note the contents of the report.

1.0 Background

1.1 Issues arising from Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 June 2018 were reported separately to the Executive on 17 July 2018. Overview and Scrutiny Committee met again on 10 July 2018 to consider the following items:

- **Shared Services Update : IT**
- **Shared Services : CCTV**
- **Potential Kingsmead Scheme**

2.0 Shared Services Update: IT

2.1 The Committee considered a report outlining the shared IT

service arrangements with Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) and the background which culminated in the shared service arrangement, notably the need to secure value for money and stability of service. The Director explained the savings achieved and the significant investments made particularly over the last six months. The Chief Executive of Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) acknowledged the austerity measures which local government had faced since 2008 which had prompted shared services and the challenges still facing shared IT arrangements. He referred to the successes of shared arrangements, including Revenues and Benefits and the CCTV partnership.

2.2 The Committee discussed the report at length. Members sought and were provided with clarification from Officers (including the SBC team) on a number of key elements contained in the report:

- why the projected savings of £400k had not been achieved in the context of the outturn figures for 2016/17 and 2017/18 but invested in equipment and licences;
- the financial costs of moving to a shared service arrangement;
- retained costs what these were and why sums were held by both Councils;
- the impact of not having a shared service arrangement and the possibility of increasing annual costs;
- the need to continually invest and develop an ICT strategy and improved resilience;
- the need to invest in the right platforms for each Council's services and residents;
- the suggestion of a lack of planning at the infrastructure

phase which had increased the costs in the life of the share service arrangement;

- concerns about controls over projects and usual business;
- the appointment of a new Information Technology (Transformation) Manager and when in post, his views on the emerging ICT Strategy;
- the possibility of inviting another Council to join the shared partnership arrangement;
- going forward, the need to look at service provision and what could be done better;
- concerns about the increasing use of consultants;
- the possibility of outsourcing or privatising the service;
- the need to provide additional information about shared service arrangement including extraction costs;
- a request for further information by Christmas 2018.

2.3 The Committee thanked Officers for the report.

2.4 The Committee recommended that the value for money assessment of the Shared IT Service and the current proposals to help ensure continued value for money be noted and further supported a recommendation to receive a further report by Christmas 2018.

3.0 Shared Services : CCTV

3.1 The Committee considered a report on the current shared service arrangements, hosted by Stevenage Borough Council through which CCTV cameras were monitored. The Head of Housing and Health provided an update on where cameras

were deployed, the profits and losses incurred by the trading arm owned by the four partners and how this was apportioned. An update was provided on the governance review currently underway and the development of a business plan to accommodate demands for CCTV assistance.

3.2 The Committee discussed:

- Whether the service could be extended for use by Buntingford Town Council;
- When and what decisions were taken to move mobile cameras;
- Why the trading arm was established;
- profit and losses how this was distributed and the need for the most tax efficient method for the trading arm to operate particularly in regard to the acquisition of cameras;
- The benefits of “hard wired” systems vs mobile arrangements in terms of the GDPR and compliance;
- The governance review and the development of a business plan.

3.3 The Committee supported the recommendations as detailed.

3.4 The Committee recommended that the shared CCTV arrangements be noted and that Members’ comments be taken on board by the Head of Housing and Health for consideration at an operational level; the reviews of the operational and governance aspects of the shared CCTV service currently underway be acknowledged and Members; comments be taken on board by the Head of Housing and Health. Lastly, that the Head of Housing and Health submit a report to Members on the outcome of the reviews.

4.0 **Potential Kingsmead Scheme.**

4.1 The Committee received an exempt report and presentation on the potential for improving and/or redevelopment of the Pinehurst Community Centre, the adjacent shop and flat on the site known as the Kingsmead site. The Head of Housing and Health provided background information on the history of the site, its configuration, key issues and opportunities arising from the options appraisal. Members considered three possible initial options:

- Refurbishment of the community centre and shop with no changes to the two residential flats;
- Disposal of the site to a housing association or developer;
- Council-led redevelopment of the site.

4.2 The advantages and disadvantages of each option were debated at length and officers provided clarification.

4.3 Members expressed support for the initiative.

4.4 The Committee recommended that the Executive be advised that Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the option of a Council-led redevelopment of the site as detailed in the report and that Officers be requested to conduct more financial modelling.

Background Papers

None

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