



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING : Monday, 7th January 2019

PRESENT : Cllrs. Coole (Chair), Ryall (Vice-Chair), Hawthorne (Spokesperson),
Dee, Finnegan, Haigh, Hampson, Hilton, Lewis, Morgan, Pullen,
Taylor, Toleman, Walford and Wilson

Others in Attendance

Councillor Lise Noakes, Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure
Councillor H. Norman, Cabinet Member for Performance and
Resources
Corporate Director (Partnership Working)
Head of Communities
CEO, Aspire Trust
Chair, Aspire Trust
Democratic and Electoral Services Team Leader

APOLOGIES : Cllrs.

124. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

124.1 Councillors Hampson and Toleman declared an interest in agenda item 8 by virtue of their membership of the Aspire Trust Board of Trustees. They advised that they would take no part in that agenda item.

125. DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIPPING

125.1 There were no declarations of party whipping.

126. MINUTES

126.1 **RESOLVED that:** - That the minutes of the meetings held on 26th November 2018 and 3rd December 2018 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record, save for amendments to the following from 26th November:

Minute 112..58	Councillor Hampson sought numbers and usage of Shopmobility;
Minute 112.59	That the word 'hygiene' be replaced with the word 'gambling'.

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127. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

127.1 There were no declarations of party whipping.

128. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

128.1 There were no petitions or deputations.

129. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME AND COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

129.1 The Chair informed Members that the next meeting would take place at Gloucester Guildhall. Suggestions were taken from Members and it was agreed that the Tourist Information Service Report would be discussed at the next meeting.

129.2 In order to examine the matter in detail and following a year after its introduction in the City, it was agreed that the review of the Council's service provision in relation to Universal Credit would be conducted in March 2019.

129.3 Councillor Hilton noted that a rough sleeping hub in the County had been announced and requested that a short briefing paper on what the project is as well as the input the City Council may have. This was agreed by the Committee. It was also agreed that the Chair would raise the matter of an all-Member briefing at the next meeting of the Member Development Working Group.

129.4 **RESOLVED that:-** (1) The Tourist Information Service Report to be considered at the next Committee meeting; (2) A briefing paper on the rough sleeping strategy and the new homelessness hub be considered at the February meeting of the Committee; and (3) The Chair to raise the suggestion of an all-Member briefing on the rough sleeping strategy and the homelessness hub with the Member Development Working Group.

130. ASPIRE TRUST: ANNUAL REPORT

130.1 The Chair welcomed both the Chief Executive Officer and the Chair of the Aspire Trust. The CEO summarised the report and brought to Members' attention key aspects including the financial statements and the Trust's proposed next steps. She particularly noted the successful partnership working with the University of Gloucestershire.

130.2 Councillor Hilton shared his view that it was positive that Aspire was still going forward after ten years and in a solvent manner. He stated that it would be beneficial to know how the books had been balanced whether through staff streamlining, changes in wages or changes in service delivery. He also queried what impact the funding cut from the City Council had.

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- 130.3 The CEO advised that, while Aspire was a charity, it was necessary to continue to be business minded. She outlined that there had been both staff and product changes and that some reserves had been used for investment. Aspire's Chair informed Members that it was not just a commercial organisation and that participation in activity was one of the Trust's primary aims.
- 130.4 Councillor Noakes stated, in response to a query from Councillor Hilton about the maintenance of Council owned sites, that buildings were maintained to a high standard and that, while the City Council did not fund Aspire directly, it did assist in other ways.
- 130.5 In response to an intervention from Councillor Pullen regarding achieving income targets, the CEO stated that more information would be forthcoming. She pointed to Aspire's large social media reach of close to a million followers and that local schools had started to book Aspire facilities.
- 130.6 Councillor Haigh shared her view that it was a significant achievement for Aspire to be successful without the previous financial support and that it was positive to see the partnership with the University. She asked how Aspire's work would be developed and whether it was a case of doing more activities or maintaining their current position. The Chair of Aspire stated that the aim was to work with partners to improve participation and highlighted their work with Age UK. He also highlighted the need to be reasonably innovative.
- 130.7 Councillor Haigh stated that it was important to consider financial accessibility for the public. The CEO highlighted that the organisation always wanted concessionary rates and informed Members of their work with asylum seekers in the area.
- 130.8 Councillor Hawthorne stated that charities needed clear aims and to identify clearly who the charity supports. He queried whether there was a clear outline of Aspire's charitable aim. He asked what Aspire's raison d'être was.
- 130.9 The CEO advised the aim was to get families active in an environment that was positive for families in Gloucester. She added that it was necessary to balance being engaging and a concessionary price range.
- 130.10 Councillor Morgan congratulated Aspire on its achievements and noted the significant investment in the Lunar City project. He asked for what period of time Aspire saw it continuing and how the organisation conducted research into its future market.
- 130.11 The CEO advised that Lunar City had a life-span in the region of three years. She further advised that the investment was also in respect of building modifications. She stated that it was possible that there would be a further installation in another location. In relation to research

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methods, the CEO advised that Aspire worked with partners and others to examine how the market was shifting such as demographic changes.

- 130.12 In response to a query from Councillor Lewis regarding whether future development would include going out of the City to manage other places, the CEO responded that without an extremely very high volume, it would not be prudent to do so.
- 130.13 Councillor Finnegan asked if Macmillan Cancer Support (who made use of Aspire services for rehabilitation) provided any contribution. The CEO advised that Macmillan trained Aspire's fitness instructors and paid to use space at the premises. She further advised that those who used Aspire's services tended to be repeat customers.
- 130.14 Councillor Dee praised Aspire for the good work it continued to deliver. He asked whether the Trust incurred any additional costs for running parallel events. The CEO stated that there were private services which were more expensive for customers to book and that changes had been absorbed into the Trust's operations.
- 130.15 **RESOLVED that:** - The Overview and Scrutiny Committee **NOTE** the report.

131. PERFORMANCE MONITORING QUARTER 2

- 131.1 Councillor H. Norman, Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, introduced the report and highlighted key aspects. She stated that she was confident that there would be improvements in areas where required and thanked all Council officers for their continued hard work.
- 131.2 Councillor Pullen queried what impact moving to Shire Hall would have on performance trends in customer services. The Corporate Director advised that using an appointment based system should see waiting times for customers fall. Councillor Haigh asked how would waiting targets be measured under an appointment system in the event that, for example, a customer arrived on time for their appointment but had to wait beyond the booked time. Both Councillor Norman and the Corporate Director advised that this would be monitored.
- 131.3 In response to a question from Councillor Pullen as to the possibility of qualitative data being used as part of performance monitoring, Councillor Norman advised that this was but only the second such report and the performance management framework was still in its infancy. She further advised that she and officers welcomed suggestions for improvement.
- 131.4 In response to a query from Councillor Hilton, Councillor Norman stated that it was an aspiration to reduce the recorded message attached the Council's main telephone number. She brought to Members' attention that there would be a new telephony system as part of service transformation.

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131.5 Members queried some matters which did not come within Councillor Norman's portfolio. Councillor Norman advised that such queries would be passed on and written answers would be provided. They were:

- (1) Councillor Wilson sought clarification on whether the target for answering calls to the main Council telephone number included the length of the recorded message and the beginning of the call;
- (2) Councillor Haigh asked, in relation to performance measure 'H2' whether it was possible to display this data broken down as the time it takes to determine a case rather than the number of decisions made in a quarter;
- (3) Councillor Haigh asked, in relation to performance measure 'RB1' to see the number of business in rates arrears;
- (4) A general query from Members was how the red threshold was determined and if this the numbers could be included.

131.6 **RESOLVED that:** - The Overview and Scrutiny Committee **NOTE** the report.

132. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

132.1 28th January at 6.30pm in the Fisher Room, Gloucester Guildhall.

Time of commencement: 6.30 pm hours

Time of conclusion: 7.45 pm hours

Chair