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Date: 20 October 2014

Dear Councillor,

### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

A Meeting of the **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** will be held in the **Council Chamber**, on **Wednesday, 22 October 2014 at 18:00**. You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

Chief Executive

To:- **Conservative Group**

Councillor Mrs. Plenderleith (Chairman), Councillor Atkin (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Mrs. Hood and Mrs. Patten.

**Labour Group**

Councillors Bambrick, Heath, Mrs. Mead and Pearson.



## **AGENDA**

### **Open to Public and Press**

- 1** Apologies
- 2** To receive the Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 25.06.2014.  
  
Open Minutes 25.06.2014 **3 - 6**
- 3** To note any declarations of interest arising from any items on the Agenda
- 4** To receive any questions by members of the public pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No.10.
- 5** To receive any questions by Members of the Council pursuant to Council procedure Rule No. 11.
- 6** PROGRESS REPORT ON NHS DENTAL SERVICE PROVISION (Verbal report by Councillor Mrs Patten).
- 7** FINANCE & GOVERNANCE TRAINING SESSION UPDATE (Verbal explanation by Director of Corporate Services)
- 8** CUSTOMER SERVICES AND PAYMENT FACILITIES, SCOPING DOCUMENT **7 - 10**

#### **Exclusion of the Public and Press:**

- 9** The Chairman may therefore move:-  
That in accordance with Section 100 (A) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in the header to each report on the Agenda.
- 10** To receive any Exempt questions by Members of the Council pursuant to Council procedure Rule No. 11.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

25<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2014

**PRESENT:-**

**CONSERVATIVE GROUP**

Councillors Mrs Plenderleith (Chairman), Atkin (Vice-Chairman), and Mrs Patten

**LABOUR GROUP**

Councillors Bambrick and Pearson

OS/01. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Heath, Mrs Hood and Mrs Mead.

OS/02. **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee agreed its core work programme for the year. This would consist of reviews into issues that were important to both the Council and the wider South Derbyshire community. The reviews agreed by the Committee were:

- (a) How are we going to meet the challenges of Individual Electoral Registration?
- (b) Are there sufficient NHS dental services to meet new and existing demand from South Derbyshire people?
- (c) Are we doing enough to make sure that we will have sufficient cemetery space to meet the district's needs in the future?
- (d) Do we have the right leisure services in place to meet the needs of local people?

During the discussion about the first investigation, it became clear that a key area of concern for members was whether those who have never registered before, such as young people, could be successfully persuaded to put their names down on to the electoral register. The Committee noted that other authorities were already doing a lot to encourage 'hard to reach' groups to register.

Members were keen to find out how South Derbyshire intended to meet the challenge locally. As a first step, it was agreed that the Chief Executive should be requested to attend the Committee's meeting in **September 2014** to discuss this.

The Committee then looked at the review on dental provision for the district, which would be led by Councillor Patten. As part of this, members made it clear that they would like to hear from local people about what their experiences had been and whether they had found it difficult to find a dentist. There was a general consensus that in order to get the views of local people, an effective communications strategy would be required. It was also thought that a variety of engagement techniques ought to be used. These included on-line questionnaires via the Council's web site, the use of social media and face-to-face meetings with the public.

The Committee supported this approach and was especially keen that the public be involved extensively in this review. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services, as the Council officer with overall responsibility for communications, agreed to help progress this. In this context, it was agreed that he should meet Councillor Patten to determine the best way forward. The findings from this consultation would then be discussed by the Committee at its meeting in **October 2014**. Following on from this, the Committee's conclusions and recommendations would be passed to the relevant NHS bodies responsible for dental service provision, such as the Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health.

Finally, Committee members discussed the review on leisure provision. They identified two key areas which they would like to focus on. First of all, who are the users of the leisure services and do a significant number live outside of the district? Second, are there any parts of the district where people cannot access leisure services, because of poor transport links etc. and are there groups who are excluded because the leisure centres do not offer the right services for them? It was agreed that the Director of Planning & Community Services should be requested to attend the Committee's meeting in **January 2015** to discuss these issues with members.

**RESOLVED:-**

**That the Committee work programme for 2014-15 be approved.**

OS/03. **CEMETERY PROVISION IN THE DISTRICT.**

The Committee then turned to the question of whether we are doing enough to make sure that we will have sufficient cemetery space to meet the district's needs in the future? Members were reminded that although cemetery provision was important, it was not a statutory service, which the Council had to provide. The Culture & Community Manager gave the Committee an update about what action had happened since it last considered this matter, over a year ago. He summarised the current capacity of the district's cemeteries and the actions that had been taken to increase the number of spaces available.

Members welcomed these measures. However, they recognised that the Council would ultimately need to decide on the long term future of the service. Members were informed that work had already taken place to identify possible new sites on Council owned land and also sites that would require the use of land that the Council did not own. This could be prohibitively expensive, especially if the land had to be acquired in or close-to the built-up areas.

In this context, members were told that there may be scope as part of any Section 106 planning decisions to require developers to help fund new cemetery provision in the district. However, it was pointed out that in order to do this the Council would need to first set out what its 'vision' for the service is. In particular, does it want to establish a new central cemetery for the district or does it want to identify several locations for new cemetery spaces, which could then be potentially expanded?

The Committee discussed the issue of local church cemeteries and how they are used. Members felt that this discussion highlighted the importance of assessing cemetery provision for the sub-region as a whole and for a co-ordinated approach to be developed between the different areas.

The Committee felt it important that there should continue to be cemetery provision in the district, but that for this to happen it would be necessary to develop a planning framework setting out the Council's vision for the service and for discussions to take place with neighbouring areas. The officers agreed to carry out further work on this and to report back to the Committee about what progress had been made.

**RESOLVED:-**

**That the Committee considers this issue at its meeting in December 2014.**

OS/04. **WORKING WITH OTHERS**

The Committee considered a briefing paper prepared by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) setting out the role of different agencies in holding to account various public service providers. The paper explained the different policy and operational areas which they cover, their powers and how joint projects could be organised that would be mutually beneficial to various scrutiny bodies.

Members welcomed the briefing paper and the possible ways in which the Committee could co-operate with other scrutiny bodies. It was suggested that a representative of the Centre for Public Scrutiny be invited to meet with the Committee to discuss this further with members.

OS/05 **RESOLVED:-**

**That the Chairman arranges a meeting between the Committee and a representative of the Centre for Public Scrutiny to discuss the opportunities for joint working with other scrutiny bodies.**

The meeting terminated at 6.45pm

CHAIRMAN

# Draft Scoping Document

**Name of Review/Project:**

**Customer Services and Payment Facilities at the Civic Offices**

**Terms of reference:**

A report was considered by the Finance and Management Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2014, regarding the introduction of cash machines in the Civic Offices, for people paying bills. The report also considered the more fundamental issue of current payment facilities being withdrawn, together with the need to provide a better experience for people contacting the Council and visiting the offices with queries and looking for information.

The Finance Committee agreed that the issue of payment facilities should be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and that this should be part of a wider review of Customer Services given the increasing demand from people contacting the Council.

**Please provide details of relevant Corporate Plan Themes and Priorities:**

Value for Money Theme, with a key project (VO 4) “an improved customer experience.”

**Key Issues and Aim(s) of the Review**

- To review the provision of payment facilities in the Civic Offices and the potential benefits of introducing cash machines.
- To review the service provided to people contacting the Council and visiting the Civic Offices, to determine whether this can be improved.

**Why should the review take place now?**

There has been a steady increase in the number of transactions that Customer Services have been dealing with over the last 2 to 3 years due to the growth of the area.

In addition, the nature and length of queries has increased, due to changes in welfare reform in particular. At peak times, this becomes exacerbated for people visiting the offices to make payments and to resolve queries. This is usually at the same time as telephone calls in the Contact Centre increase.

The Council has a broad Customer Access Strategy which is designed to make it easier for people to contact and transact with the Council; this is mainly based on extending the use of technology.

This review would be a part of that longer-term strategy.

**Potential outcome/s**

- A change to payment services/facilities within the Civic Offices.
- A change to services provided; for example, opening times, provision of self- service terminals, the layout of the reception area.
- Changes to how visitors are filtered when arriving.
- Changes to the Telephone System.

**What will not be included:**

- Whether to replace the IT systems, i.e. the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System and the Cash Receipting System. These are the tools used to deliver the service and are considered to be fit for purpose. It is considered that they would be best reviewed (if necessary) following this project depending on whether the service is revised.
- The Northgate Contract itself, although it may be that some of the KPI's are reviewed.

**Potential Risks or Limiting Factors:**

- The overall level of resources deployed (although how they are deployed may come under review or additional resources may be identified).
- Any proposed changes are not affordable.
- The Northgate Contract.

*Note: The IT systems are not considered to be a limiting factor at the outset albeit it may be found that greater use could be made?*

**Members undertaking the Review (if a sub-group is to be used):**

To be advised

**Possible co-options:**

None at this stage

**Which policy committee(s) does it relate to?**

Finance and Management Committee



**Key stakeholders/ consultees:**

- Local residents and visitors
- Staff in Customer Services
- The Client Unit (who monitor volumes and performance)

**Potential contributors and research required:**

None at this stage.

**Potential visits:**

- Observing the service in the reception area and in the Contact Centre
- Another local authority

**Are there any Budgetary Implications?**

Not at this stage; it is considered that the review can be undertaken within existing resources.

**Officer support required:**

Advice from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services

**Period for Review:**

Start date: **October 2014**

Proposed completion date: **April 2015**

**Phase 1:**

- Ascertain current service provision - volumes, issues, etc.
- Spend time in the service area
- Outline options for payments and any other changes

**Phase 2:**

- Review options for cash payments and other changes identified

**Phase 3:**

- Consider any changes with recommendations to Finance Committee

**Report date(s) to committees:**

22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014

- Agree scope of review
  - Consider volumes and key performance data
- December 2014
- Report back on observations from service visit
  - Outline options for any changes, including payment facilities

January 2014

- Progress on actions

February 2014

- Consider detail options for change

April 2015

- Report back and recommendations to Finance Committee

**Publicity (e.g. of recommendations)**

Any changes will affect local residents and people contacting the Council. Therefore, it is expected that sufficient communication through various channels will need to be completed prior to implementation.

**Date Scoping Document Completed:** \_\_\_\_\_