

Minutes

Corporate Services, Commerce and Communities
Policy Overview Committee
Tuesday, 5 February 2019
Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge



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Members Present:

Councillors Richard Mills (Chairman)
Wayne Bridges (Vice-Chairman)
Lindsay Bliss
Nicola Brightman
Farhad Choubedar
Alan Deville
Jazz Dhillon
Kerri Prince
Raymond Graham

Officers Present:

Mark Braddock, Senior Manager, Democratic Services
Luke Taylor, Democratic Services Officer

54. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Vanessa Hurhangee, with Councillor Ray Graham substituting.

55. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

56. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2019

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2019 be agreed as a correct record.

57. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was confirmed that all items were Part I and would be considered in public.

58. DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS 2019/20: COMMENTS FROM POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEES

The Committee noted that comments on the draft budget proposals 2019/20 were made by Policy Overview Committees in January, and that these comments were before the Committee for consideration.

The Labour Group disagreed with the proposed comments' assertion that the Council had a record of delivering a budget without impacting on frontline services.

The draft comments were proposed and seconded and put to a vote, with five Councillors voting in favour and three voting against the proposed wording. The Labour Group requested that their opposition votes to the motion be recorded.

As such, it was agreed that the comments on the budget proposals be confirmed as "The Committee noted the budget projections and the combined budget proposals put forward by the Chief Executive's Office and Finance Group, and recognised the continuing financial constraints faced by the Council, whilst acknowledging that the Council have a track record over recent years of delivering a budget without impacting frontline services".

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- 1. Noted the formal comments on the Cabinet's budget proposals from the other two Policy Overview Committees;**
- 2. Agreed its own final comments on the Cabinet's budget proposals; and,**
- 3. Submitted the combined set of formal Policy Overview Committee comments to Cabinet for consideration.**

59. REVIEW B: BROADCASTING OF POLICY OVERVIEW, SCRUTINY & SELECT COMMITTEES ON YOUTUBE

The Senior Democratic Services Manager introduced the report regarding broadcasting in Hillingdon, as part of the Committee's review into the Broadcasting of Policy Overview, Scrutiny and Select Committee meetings.

Members heard that the decision to begin broadcasting meetings was made in 2015, and it was possible to broadcast from the Committee Rooms 5 and 6 with single cameras, and the Council Chamber with three cameras.

The Council's YouTube viewing rates compare favourably with other Councils as residents are able to watch meetings that they are not able to attend, and even choose the item they wish to watch in some cases, which ensures they do not take up time watching discussions that they are not interested in.

Councillors were informed that YouTube provides free subtitling and transcripts on its videos, and technology was improving for these services, and were shown examples of other Council's around the world who broadcast Committee meetings for comparison.

The Senior Democratic Services Manager noted that watchtime, not views, was the key indicator for public interest in broadcasts, and heard that outside of Democratic Services, YouTube was used infrequently within the Council, although the music service occasionally posted videos. Members were then shown a tutorial to demonstrate you videos were added to YouTube.

The Committee asked whether it was possible to add meeting broadcasts to the Council's website, and heard that there was nothing to stop this, and although the Council used YouTube to broadcast, this may be something that is considered in the future.

Responding to questioning from Councillors, the Senior Democratic Services Officer noted that the resolution of videos was dictated by the cameras, which are now three years old and will eventually require upgrading, and that the streams were controlled by computers in the Democratic Services Office, while officers had to start the broadcasts on their own laptops at meetings.

Members noted the screens in CR5 could not be viewed on videos, citing the example of Planning Committee plans which may be useful for viewers to see, and asked whether these could be enhanced. The Senior Democratic Services Officer noted that Google Hangouts may offer alternatives to this as they could add presentational material during a broadcast, but this is something that would require the Democratic Services Officer to act on during the meeting with live editing. However, Democratic Services Officers were primarily required to minute meetings and advise the Chairman, and as such, live editing was seen as problematic, as it may interfere with the other roles required of the officers. However, it was an aspiration for the future.

The Committee asked whether the broadcasts generated enough traffic to warrant advertising and heard that monetisation was disabled to stop adverts for viewers, and that this decision was taken by the Council as it was a public body and would not be able to control the adverts to ensure they were for local businesses, or companies relevant to Hillingdon.

Councillors agreed that broadcasting more meetings was the way forward, but urged a cautious approach until viewing figures became clear and it was suggested that a test broadcast of one POC took place to see the demand for viewing these meetings.

Members commented that the filming of all meetings would also help provide a definitive record of minutes, and would be beneficial for Democratic Services when it came to recording minutes. The Committee agreed that the broadcasting of all meetings would be helpful and should take place, but noted that it was important to do so with zero cost impact. Members agreed that as the infrastructure was already in place, there was no need to roll it out further.

It was noted that if witnesses attend meetings they should be advised that they will be filmed, and this would need to be conveyed to anyone attending meetings. In cases where attendees did not want to be filmed, alternative arrangements could be agreed to ensure that the attendee was not visible but could be heard on the

broadcast, and this was possible to achieve. Furthermore, officers would need to ask for consent if vulnerable witnesses or children were to be filmed. Writing to witnesses, similarly to Planning and Licensing Committees, prior to the meeting to advise them of the broadcasts would help ease this process.

The Committee agreed to expand the current service and broadcast Policy Overview and Scrutiny committees using Committee Rooms 5 and 6 and the current technology that is in place.

RESOLVED: That the Committee recommend the expansion of the current broadcasting service to Cabinet, following a findings report to the Committee in March.

60. REVIEW A: POLICING IN HILLINGDON

Following the final witness session at the previous Committee meeting, Members discussed potential recommendations to be included in the final report.

The Committee noted that a regular report updating the Council on the impact CCTV has had to assist police in prosecutions may be helpful, and that this would be seen by the relevant scrutiny Committee.

Councillors also noted that the Community Safety Team had a lot of work, and wanted to ensure that the department was not under-resourced. It was agreed that the department coped admirably considering financial pressures, and due to their track record of delivering results, it was important to ensure this work could continue to a high level, and that ensuring the team was adequately resourced helped to achieve this.

Members expressed concerns regarding the rumoured cut in MOPAC funding, and noted that officers bring huge value to Hillingdon and a loss in funding for Tasking Teams would be problematic, and the Committee should make representations to MOPAC to request that this funding remains in place.

With regards to CCTV, the Committee agreed it was important to ensure the current CCTV program rollout continues, and that the Committee is notified of any slippage. Members also noted that it would be interesting to see information on the effects and prosecutions from mobile CCTV cameras.

Councillors commented that the "Out of Hours Team" that works in the Council overnight may be better deployed if they were moved to the new CCTV Control Room.

Members also stated that facial recognition in CCTV cameras may be used to help find missing people, vulnerable adults or dementia patients, and the Council should liaise on assisting this with the relevant teams if technology continues to advance to allow its use in this manner.

To conclude, it was agreed that a set of draft recommendations be drawn up and circulated to the relevant officers to confirm practicality and wording. Once agreed by

officers, these recommendations would then be circulated to the Chairman and Labour Lead Member to agree, before being incorporated into the final report.

RESOVLED: That the review's draft recommendations be agreed with the relevant officers, Chairman and Labour Lead Member, before being included in the first draft of the final report.

61. FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED: That the forward plan be noted.

62. WORK PROGRAMME 2018/2020

RESOLVED: That the work programme be noted.