

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

Meeting of Place Scrutiny Committee

Date: Wednesday, 11th September, 2024

Place: Committee Room 1 - Civic Suite

Present: Councillor C Mulroney (Chair)
Councillors S Badger (Vice-Chair), Sam Allen, M Borton, K Buck,
O Cartey, T Cox*, M Davidson, A Dear, M Faulkner-Hatt*,
R Longstaff, J McMahon*, K Murphy, S Nadeem, J Norman,
M O'Connor and S Wakefield
(*Substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 27.)

In Attendance: Councillors D Cowan, L Hyde, L Burton and S W Allen
A Richards, S Zeiss and T Row

Start/End Time: 6.30 pm - 8.30 pm

13 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Jones (substitute: Councillor Cox), Ferguson (substitute: Councillor Faulkner-Hatt) and Warren (substitute: Councillor McMahon).

14 Declarations of Interest

The following interests were declared at the meeting:

(i) Councillors Borton & Norman – Minute No. 17 (Corporate Performance Report Quarter 1) – Members of the Board of South Essex Homes; and

(ii) Councillor Faulkner-Hatt – Minute Nos. 18 and 20 (Waste Collection Contract Award and Confidential Appendix – Mother's partner works for a Waste Collection company).

15 Questions from Members of the Public

The Committee noted the responses from the Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment and Waste to a question from Ms Cowdrey and Mr Whitby. The Committee also noted the responses from the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Corporate Strategy (one on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Finance, Assets & Resources and another on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Major Projects and Regulatory services who were both not in attendance at the meeting) to questions from Ms Mitchell, Mr Webb and Councillor Garston respectively. Ms Cowdrey, Ms Mitchell and Mr Webb were both in attendance at the meeting and put their questions in person. In the absence of Mr Whitby and Councillor Garston, a copy of the responses would be sent to them.

16 Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 8th July, 2024

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 8th July 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed.

17 Corporate Performance Report Quarter 1

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director (Strategy and Change), by way of pre-Cabinet Scrutiny, that presented the Corporate Performance Report for Quarter 1 of 2024/25 (April to June 2024). This covered the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which aligned to the corporate priorities set out in the Corporate Plan 2024-2028 and highlight the Council's overall performance against agreed corporate priorities.

Resolved:-

That the report to Cabinet be noted.

This is an Executive Function
Cabinet Member: Councillor Cowan

18 Waste Collection Contract Award

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director (Environment & Place), by way of pre-Cabinet Scrutiny, that sought Cabinet's approval to award the contract Waste and Street Cleansing Services to the highest scoring bidder with the relevant delegated authority to proceed to the completion of contracts.

The Committee also had before it a confidential appendix that provided a high-level breakdown of the results of the procurement to inform the contract award. It was noted that the names of the bidders could not be disclosed at this stage as the procurement remained live at this stage, although one of the recommendations within the report confirmed that councillors will be notified at the earliest possible stage once the standstill period has passed.

The public and press were excluded for the initial part of the discussion of this item to enable any questions and comments to be addressed on the confidential aspects of the report.

At the meeting, the Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment & Waste pointed out some typographical errors within the report. These were as follows:

- The date in paragraph 3,4 of the report should be 5 April 2025 not 4 April 2025; and
- the word "delivered" in the last line of paragraph 6.2 of the report should be deleted.

The Committee discussed the report in some detail and asked a number of questions which were responded to by the Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment & Waste and the Leader of the Council.

In response to a question regarding the procedures, cost and fees for the collection of bulky waste, the Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment & Waste undertook to provide written clarification to the Members of the Scrutiny Committee.

Whilst noting the report, some concerns were expressed that only the information relating to the highest scoring bidder was provided to the Committee and the Scrutiny Committee's inability to compare this with other bids.

In response to a request for the details of the procurement outcome and financial details, the Leader of the Council gave his assurances that the advice of external legal advisers would be sought on this point and that, subject to the outcome of the that advice, some information may be able to be made available to members of the Scrutiny Committee. In the event that, following legal advice, it was not possible to provide further procurement and financial information, the Leader would ask officers to enquire of the advisers what, if any information may be able to be appropriately provided in due course.

The Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment & Waste took the opportunity to thank the officer team involved with the procurement process for their hard work.

Resolved:-

That the report and recommendations to Cabinet be noted.

Note: This is an Executive function
Cabinet Member: Councillor Hyde

19 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:-

That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the items of business set out below, on the grounds that they would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

20 Waste Collection Contract Award - Confidential Appendix

Resolved:

That the confidential appendix, be noted.

Chair: _____