

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at the Council Offices, Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury on Tuesday, 7 February 2023 commencing at 4:30 pm

Present:

Chair Councillor J W Murphy

and Councillors:

G J Bocking, C L J Carter, K J Cromwell, P A Godwin, P D McLain, C E Mills, H S Munro, J K Smith, M J Williams and P N Workman

also present:

Councillor D W Gray

OS.77 ANNOUNCEMENTS

77.1 The evacuation procedure, as noted on the Agenda, was advised to those present.

OS.78 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

78.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K Berliner (Vice-Chair), H C McLain, C Softley and S Thomson. There were no substitutes for the meeting.

OS.79 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

79.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 24 January 2023 and took effect from 1 February 2023.

79.2 No declarations were made on this occasion.

OS.80 MINUTES

80.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2023, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

OS.81 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

81.1 Attention was drawn to the Executive Committee Forward Plan, circulated at Pages No.15-19. Members were asked to determine whether there were any questions for the relevant Lead Members and what support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could give to the work contained within the plan.

81.2 The Head of Corporate Services advised that the Council Plan Performance Tracker Quarter Three 2022/23 had been removed from the Agenda on 1 March - which was the last scheduled meeting of the Executive Committee for 2022/23 - and a briefing note would be circulated to Executive Committee Members following consideration

of the information by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 7 March. It was also noted that the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy which was due to be considered by the Executive Committee on 1 March would be deferred until after the Borough Council elections in May; the Strategy would be taken to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to Executive Committee.

81.3 It was

RESOLVED That the Executive Committee Forward Plan be **NOTED**.

OS.82 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23

82.1 Attention was drawn to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme, circulated at Pages No. 20-23. Members were asked to consider the Work Programme.

82.2 The Head of Corporate Services advised that it was intended to bring forward the Customer Care Strategy from 4 April to 7 March in order to better balance the Agenda for those meetings. With regard to the Parking Strategy Review, which was included within the pending items section of the Work Programme, a Member indicated that he had received an email from the Head of Finance and Asset Management in relation to whether there was a will amongst the Parking Strategy Review Working Group Members to revisit the parking charges - he believed there was a consensus among the Working Group Members that they were happy with the draft proposals which had been discussed previously, as such, he asked why this item had not been scheduled to appear at a forthcoming meeting of the Committee. The Head of Corporate Services confirmed that Working Group Members had agreed there would be no significant changes to the Strategy and it would be written on that basis; however, the Officer tasked with this had a number of competing priorities so it was a question of when that could be done and he undertook to update Members following the meeting as to when it would come forward. With regard to the remaining pending items, a Member queried whether the new Police Chief Inspector had been invited to attend a meeting of the Committee and the Head of Community Services undertook to make contact with him following the meeting.

82.3 It was

RESOLVED That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme be **NOTED**.

OS.83 GLOUCESTERSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL PRESENTATION

83.1 Attention was drawn to the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) presentation, circulated separately. The Community and Economic Development Manager advised that Tewkesbury Borough Council had a service level agreement with GRCC and the two organisations had a positive relationship. He introduced the GRCC Chief Executive and the Head of Operations and Business Development who would be giving a short presentation about the work undertaken and would be happy to answer any questions.

83.2 A Member suggested that it would be useful for Members to receive more regular information from the Community Development team in relation to work which was being undertaken with GRCC as this would give Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members a greater understanding and enable them to scrutinise the partnership more effectively. The Community and Economic Development Manager advised that, following the last meeting of the Committee when Members had received a similar presentation from Active Gloucestershire, he had circulated information about that organisation to the Committee and produced a Member Update for the wider Membership which included contact details etc. It was intended that today's

presentation would start the conversation about the services GRCC offered; if there were individual schemes in the borough which GRCC could help with, they could be passed on when appropriate. He took on board the point about greater sharing of information and advised that GRCC produced a newsletter which he would ensure Members received going forward.

83.3 The following key points were made during the presentation:

- GRCC (1) – Independent, local charity with rural specialism, established in 1932; countywide coverage with offices in Cheltenham and Gloucester; mission to build strong, healthy, sustainable communities in Gloucestershire using its knowledge, experience and networks; working with individuals, communities of interest and geography, and across themes, in partnership with the statutory, voluntary and private sector; involved in direct delivery e.g. Tewkesbury Community and Flood Resilience Scheme (2014) including 38 Flood Wardens and Employment Support Hub Outreach project.
- GRCC (2) – Infrastructure support – facilitation of training and networks to support and upskill the voluntary and community sector alongside the VCS Alliance; Independence Trust merged with GRCC in 2020 and offers individual countywide mental health support to adults via: Community Advice, Links and Mental Health Support (CALMHS); Community Autism Support and Advice (CASA); Community Wellbeing Service – Social Prescribing (CWS); and other bespoke projects.
- Our USP – Countywide, independent, neutral VCS organisation – wealth of knowledge, experience and understanding of the bigger picture and wider learning, 100 years of connecting through ‘twinning’ and peer support; part of a national network – one of 38 Rural Community Councils operating under the umbrella of Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) providing examples of best practice and success; translator of policy – sharing and translating policy change from central government and other agencies with communities i.e. what does this mean and how does it affect us e.g. COVID guidance, GDPR, Localism Act 2011.
- Empowering and Enabling – Helping communities to identify what is important to them; helping communities to identify projects, support start-up, establish a legal entity and fund and build a business plan – dovetails with Tewkesbury Borough Council’s Community Development team; providing communities with the right tools to succeed through templates, resources and knowledge e.g. Community Approaches to Road Safety (CARS) toolkit and emergency planning toolkit; empowering and enabling communities to take action for themselves.
- Community Consultation – Community-led planning - Parish Plans/Green Plans, Village Design Statements, emergency and resilience planning, Neighbourhood Development Plans, Parish Priorities – Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), household surveys.
- Facilitation – Networks – VCS network, the ‘go-to’ network for support to the voluntary sector including ‘Know Your Patch’ cross-sector learning networks, Service Village Forum; public consultation events – identifying housing need and enabling affordable housing including community-led, bespoke events e.g. levelling-up.
- Supporting Volunteer Recruitment and Retention – Flood Wardens; trustees; village and community halls; community asset transfer projects including community shops and pubs; business planning, project planning, fundraising strategies, funding advice; project initiation and legal entity; grant programmes; development of children’s centres.

- GRCC Commissioned Activity in Tewkesbury Borough – Rotational VCS networks (quarterly); training for trustees; growth agenda including one to one support e.g. community assets; community buildings advice and support; community-led planning; community and flood resilience.
- Current and Future Plans – Enhanced Affordable Housing Officer; digital inclusion; health and wellbeing; food poverty; climate change; traffic and transport.

- 83.4 A Member noted that GRCC had merged with the Independence Trust and he raised concern that many organisations were trying to do the same things but did not link together which was made more difficult when organisations changed their identity. The GRCC Chief Executive clarified that the Independence Trust was part of GRCC but maintained its identity externally to clients. She agreed it felt there was duplication across the county, and COVID had created a lot of new things, but the sector was now being assembled in a cohesive way – partnerships were key for GRCC and there were enough people in need for the various different organisations to offer their services so it was about who was best placed to deliver the support and being brave enough to pass this on if it was not an area of expertise. The GRCC Head of Operations and Business Development explained that the commissioning process exacerbated the problem so it was about education as well. The Member agreed there was a lot of duplication in the area, and in-fighting as a result of trying to increase numbers and retain funding, which was frustrating for Councillors. The GRCC Head of Operations and Business Development advised that organisations had to navigate a number of hoops and barriers to get commissioning in the first place which automatically blocked a lot of excellent local providers who could do a job but were left out as a result of the risk-averse approach. Despite the difficulties with duplication etc. the GRCC Chief Executive advised that data from the cohort of clients GRCC worked with showed that the organisation did make a difference and that could be seen from the wider picture as well as speaking to individuals. The GRCC Head of Operations and Business Development felt that community was key as, where areas had been brave and created a framework based on individual skill sets, things were much clearer, otherwise, it could seem clunky so she accepted that a lot of honest conversations were needed.
- 83.5 A Member sought clarification on the definition of “rural” as she had assumed GRCC would not be relevant to her Ward in Bishop’s Cleeve. In response, the GRCC Chief Executive advised that GRCC had worked in Bishop’s Cleeve – rural could be defined based on size but it depended on the particular lens being looked through, for instance, Bishop’s Cleeve would be an urban settlement in planning terms but would be rural within the NHS community. GRCC was countywide and any issues would be addressed in the most appropriate manner.
- 83.6 A Member asked how people should make contact with GRCC to access services, whether that was an individual or a Parish Council, and was advised that the Community Development team had all of the relevant contact information and could pass on details. GRCC also had a website and social media accounts and any queries made via those methods could be triaged to the right person. Another Member noted that GRCC offered community buildings advice and he pointed out that buildings were fine when they were new as little maintenance was required and there was funding for upgrades through Section 106; however, buildings became costly to maintain over the longer term when that money had run out. The GRCC Head of Operations and Business Development advised the community buildings network held meetings in the borough which could be attended by those who managed community buildings. She pointed out that Tewkesbury Borough had the first carbon neutral community building in the south-west, Toddington Village Hall, and that still received support from GRCC. GRCC also offered one to one support and had an expert in specialist charity law advice. The Member understood that

Tewkesbury Borough Council had a pool of Section 106 money which had not been spent and he asked what was going to be done to ensure that was allocated to Parish Councils to ensure GRCC could use the money. In response, the GRCC Head of Operations and Business Development clarified that GRCC could not access Section 106 but could advise communities on how to prioritise needs and make decisions on how that money could be spent.

- 83.7 A Member asked for more information on the CARS toolkit and was informed that a Parish survey had been undertaken in 2021 to identify what communities wanted from GRCC post-COVID and speeding and traffic was the primary concern across the county. Community approaches had been found to be as effective as statutory elements such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and the CARS toolkit had been launched in four districts starting in Tewkesbury Borough which had been attended by the County Council, Road Safety Forum and the Community Safety Partnership – the toolkit would be on GRCC’s website shortly and covered everything from using flowers on verges to distraction techniques to slow down traffic which had been shown to be effective.
- 83.8 With reference to the digital inclusion work, a Member asked what GRCC did in relation to hidden disabilities such as dyslexia and dyspraxia and was informed that a wealth of resources were available for those who were digitally excluded for those reasons as that was the purpose of the project. The GRCC Chief Executive would be happy to share the relevant information with Members and it was agreed that GRCC would provide information to the Community Development team on matters that had been discussed for circulation to the Committee.
- 83.9 The Head of Corporate Services indicated that there was a lot of important work being done but many Members did not know the role of organisations like GRCC. As such, it was proposed to arrange an external partners seminar for all Members following the elections in May where GRCC, Active Gloucestershire and any other relevant organisations, would be invited to give a short presentation and Members would have an opportunity to ask questions rather than this being done through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 83.10 It was
RESOLVED That the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council presentation be **NOTED**.

OS.84 GLOUCESTERSHIRE POLICE AND CRIME PANEL UPDATE

- 84.1 Attention was drawn to the report from the Council’s representative on the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel, circulated separately, which gave an update on matters considered at the meeting held on 3 February 2023.
- 84.2 The Council’s representative on the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel advised that his update report referenced the annual report produced by the Police and Crime Commissioner – this contained a wealth of information on all aspects of Gloucestershire Constabulary and was available on the County Council website so he would encourage all Members to read it following the meeting. The main focus of the meeting was budget setting – the Police and Crime Commissioner presented his proposals for the Police precept for 2023/24 which the Panel had the ability to approve or reject. The proposal was for an uplift of £15 in the annual precept based on a Band D property, or approximately 5.4% overall resulting in a revenue budget of £146m and a capital budget of £10.6m. Discussion had taken place as to how this figure had been derived and there was an underlying assumption of a 5% pay rise for Police Officers. Some Members of the Panel had taken the Police and Crime Commissioner to task on failing to achieve his manifesto commitment to increase the number of frontline Police Officers by 300; however, he did not think the Police and Crime Commissioner had stipulated they would all be frontline

officers. Since his election in 2021, an additional 312 fully funded full-time posts had been added to the Force with 115 of those being frontline Police Officers; 178 were additional Police staff. There had been some debate about the Police and Crime Commissioner being asked to apologise for suggesting he would add 300 frontline Police Officers but it was noted that he still had another two years in office. His response was around the fact that the Peel report, which had been carried out a few weeks after his election, had identified clear failings within the Force which had resulted in it being placed into special measures largely around the failure to record and respond to crimes appropriately – calls to 101 and 999 were taking too long and there was a very high rate of people dropping off the call and crimes not being recorded as a result. The Police and Crime Commissioner had felt it was appropriate to deal with the failures which had been highlighted in the Peel report as a priority and a lot of money had been spent on resources to fix those failings including upgrading the control room and additional Police Officers to ensure crimes were being recorded – results for December showed that things were on target so people were now able to get through quickly to both services. Other frontline officers had been added to the Force with an additional 200 Special Constables and 100 volunteer Police Community Support Officers as well as 60 external roles funded via the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner in crime prevention and other related areas such as victim support, violence against women and gun crime which were all top priorities for the Police and Crime Commissioner.

84.3 Whilst there had been an interesting and lively debate, overall it was recognised the Police service was under-invested and the results of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner public survey, which had been completed by some 657 residents, showed that 72% of Tewkesbury respondents did not believe that Gloucestershire Constabulary had sufficient funds to address their concerns. There had been a lot of investment in estate with a new training centre in Berkeley – which would be needed if the amount of new Police Officers which had been promised was to be realised - but there had been a greater focus on getting out of special measures by addressing the areas identified in the Peel report. Nevertheless, Gloucestershire was outperforming against target numbers for recruitment and the Police and Crime Commissioner had indicated that he was unaware of any Force that had added staff at a faster rate proportionally over the period of office. The Panel had voted unanimously in favour of the suggested increase in the precept for 2023/24.

84.4 A Member asked how the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner public survey had been conducted and the Council's representative on the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel undertook to check and report back to Members following the meeting. The Member expressed the view that 657 respondents for the whole of Gloucestershire seemed low and the Council's representative indicated that, from his statistical background, he believed 657 was quite a large number for any survey. It was his understanding that the survey had been more selective in order to try to gain a representative response rather than being open to the entire population of all of the districts within the county but he would clarify this in his response to Members. The Member indicated that she would like to understand the diversity of respondents in terms of age, background etc. She was pleased to hear that Gloucestershire Constabulary was excellent at recruitment but she was aware that retention was not so positive and she asked if that was being investigated. She understood that Police staff were unable to progress beyond Grade 4 which she believed to be a contributing factor along with staff morale. The Council's representative advised that the Police and Crime Commissioner had been challenged with regard to retention and he was aware that more experienced Police Officers were being lost and replaced with very junior Officers so he had undertaken to speak to serving Officers to find out the reasons why people were leaving. It was noted that the Police and Crime Commissioner was supportive of part-time roles as an opportunity for retired Police Officers to retain some expertise within community-

based services. This was one of his priorities so the matter was getting his full attention. The Member indicated that her experience was that, although the Police and Crime Commissioner was on board with helping staff, that did not necessarily filter down to the Police Force itself and there had been reference to a “cloak” protecting higher serving Officers. The Council’s representative confirmed that the Police and Crime Commissioner planned to engage with Officers directly, particularly in relation to the issues which had been highlighted within the Metropolitan Police Force recently. Gloucestershire Police Force had a good reputation in that respect and it was recognised that it was not just a question of dealing with complaints but ensuring there was a culture where inappropriate behaviour was not tolerated and people were held accountable – this issue was front and centre for all Police Forces currently and was partly about having greater diversity.

84.5 A Member raised concern that injured Police Officers were going into desk jobs at a higher rate of pay and she asked why they were being retained for prolonged periods on that higher rate. In response, the Council’s representative undertook to put this question to the Police and Crime Commissioner but he suspected this was down to policy and procedure which was in place to prevent discrimination but resulted in a system which was subject to abuse.

84.6 A Member noted that Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) report on the effectiveness of police engagement with women and girls had found that poor behaviour towards women was prevalent in many - if not all - Forces and, with regard to vetting, one out of 10 Police Officers should never have been recruited. Women had lost confidence in the Police and she asked what was being done to regain that. The Council’s representative indicated that a debate on the vetting process had been covered in a previous report and the Police and Crime Commissioner was looking at increased digitalisation which would enable greater sharing of information to prevent Officers who had been reported for inappropriate behaviour being able to progress within and between Forces. He indicated that he would put the question to the Police and Crime Commissioner again. He provided assurance that regular conversations took place regarding interaction with women and how to encourage them to come forward. It was important that all incidents were recorded and properly triaged – this was true of all crimes but those affecting women and girls in particular. He was able to nominate topics for discussion and undertook to suggest this as something to debate at a future meeting. The Member indicated that she struggled to believe that Gloucestershire Police Force did not have any misogynistic Police Officers. Another Member advised that she was aware of paid one day training which was available to female Police staff to improve their confidence to make complaints about inappropriate behaviour.

84.7 The Chair thanked the Council’s representative for their informative update and it was

RESOLVED That the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel update be **NOTED.**

OS.85 GLOUCESTERSHIRE ECONOMIC GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE UPDATE

85.1 Attention was drawn to the report from the Council’s representative on the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee, circulated at Pages No. 24-25, which gave an update on matters considered at the meeting held on 18 January 2023.

- 85.2 The Council's reserve representative on the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee advised that a report on supporting small businesses and assistance for start-ups had outlined that the one and three year business survival rate was higher in Gloucestershire than the rest of England and the south-west and unemployment was still very low. The Growth Hub and SAGE programme were credited with this good performance – this was important as consideration may need to be given to how Growth Hubs were funded in future depending on what happened with GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) so this was something which the Committee was keeping a close eye on. The business birth rate in Gloucestershire was slightly worse than the south-west average so it was important to encourage people to the area by building sufficient houses for them to live in.
- 85.3 With regard to the unemployment rate, a Member asked whether this was due to a need to upskill and the Council's reserve representative on the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee advised that was part of the issue but there was a lack of people in general so it was about encouraging people to live in the county. Automation and robots may help to address this to some extent but ultimately there were not enough people to fill the jobs. Another Member questioned how many people lived in the county but worked elsewhere, for instance, in Bristol or Birmingham, and if they would work in the county if they could earn more money. The Council's reserve representative undertook to find out if that information was available and report back after the meeting. The financial aspect had been discussed in terms of offering more money but employers needed to earn more to be able to pay their employees more. Some businesses started-up and then stagnated due to lack of investment so it was necessary to think about how they could be supported to expand. Again, automation may be one way of increasing outputs with less people which would allow employers to increase wages. Another factor was that Gloucestershire did not offer what people wanted in terms of work and that was more difficult to address. There were certain areas where early retirement was causing an issue as some people stopped working at 55. The Member noted that the Cotswolds was a commuter belt with people working in London during the week and returning at the weekend. The Council's reserve representative pointed out that Gloucestershire did not fare badly in a lot of the statistics compared to others, particularly with regard to the cyber sector, and the employment rate was very good but engaging young people to return to the area after attending university in big cities was a challenge.
- 85.4 The Chair thanked the Council's reserve representative for attending the meeting in his absence and it was

RESOLVED That the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee Update be **NOTED**.

OS.86 COMMUNITY SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- 86.1 The report of the Head of Community Services, circulated at Pages No. 26-28, provided an update on the progress made in relation to the Community Services Improvement Plan. Members were asked to consider the update and to agree that no further reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were required.
- 86.2 The Head of Community Services advised that a review of Community Services had been undertaken in 2018 covering all services except waste. At its meeting in July 2018, the Executive Committee had agreed an improvement plan focusing on Environmental Health, Housing, Community Safety and Licensing, attached at Appendix 1 to the report. The Environmental Health service covered a range of activities including food hygiene, air quality, health and safety, noise and pollution. One of the improvements was to undertake a trial of a new way of working by moving the staff into geographical teams where Officers would be responsible for all aspects of the Environmental Health service within their geographical area. This

had been trialled for a period of six months but feedback from Officers was that they lacked the in-depth knowledge of other disciplines outside of their specialist areas, as such, the team had moved back to the previous method of working within their specialisms. It was noted that there had been no permanent Environmental Health Manager in post at the time of the review and the subsequent Manager had left after 18 months, just prior to the COVID pandemic, so it had taken some time to fill vacancies within the team; however, he was pleased to confirm that all vacant posts had now been recruited to, including the Environmental Health Manager role, so the service was able to progress. In terms of housing, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2018 required the Council's Housing department to undertake a more preventative approach to those threatened with homelessness. It was fortunate that the Housing team already worked in a preventative way and new Officers had been employed in order to comply with the duties under the Act so the team was now working well.

- 86.3 The Head of Community Services advised that one of his first tasks when he had joined the authority was to re-establish the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) which had been suspended at the time. This had been done and an action plan was in the process of being finalised when the pandemic had hit. The only outstanding action in the Community Services Improvement Plan was around delivering a meaningful Community Safety Plan and he provided assurance that would be in place by April 2023. He went on to explain that the Council had previously had no resources to tackle anti-social behaviour and community safety requests but he was pleased to report there were now two Officers who dealt with antisocial behaviour, supported by a Community Safety Coordinator, and the reviews of community safety within the borough over the last few years demonstrated that the team was working well. In terms of Licensing, it was noted that the actions within the Community Services Improvement Plan had been superseded by the Licensing Service Review which Members would be familiar with.
- 86.4 A Member indicated that he had sat on the previous CSP which was essentially a talking shop for various issues which were raised and dealt with by the relevant people around the table; however, a lot of Members had started to feel disengaged and he hoped that would be addressed through the new Partnership. The Head of Community Services recognised these concerns and advised that the Lead Member for Community would sit on the CSP and he would ensure that regular updates were provided to the wider Membership. Furthermore, it was intended that the Community Safety Plan would be brought to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis so there would be an opportunity to scrutinise the activities of the CSP going forward.
- 86.5 A Member drew attention to Page No. 29 of the action plan and sought clarification with regard to EH-6 which stated that commenting on planning applications had been brought back in-house and he asked if comments were made in a timely fashion. The Head of Community Services confirmed that this had previously been outsourced to Worcester Regulatory Services but this created problems as those commenting were not familiar with Tewkesbury Borough; things had improved since bringing this back in-house. Another Member asked who the customer was in this scenario and was informed that Environmental Health was a statutory consultee for planning so there was a requirement to consult with the department on certain aspects of a planning application depending on the concern - e.g. contaminated land, air quality, noise and the action required would vary accordingly. The Member asked if site visits were undertaken and was advised that it was complex but the onus was generally on developers to provide Environmental Health with relevant reports.

- 86.6 With regard to EH7, the Member noted that a suite of KPIs were reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the performance tracker and asked whether there had been any changes and if there was now continuous improvement. The Head of Community Services advised that certain areas were improving, for instance, food hygiene inspections, but he would need to refer to the performance tracker for specific details and report back following the meeting. The Member expressed the view that it would have been helpful to have more information within the report before Members. In terms of H2, which was an action about working better with the private rental sector to deliver a sustainable supply of temporary and emergency accommodation, he asked whether that accommodation had actually been delivered. In response, the Head of Community Services indicated that there would never be enough of these types of accommodation, particularly at certain times of the year such as Cheltenham Race Week or times of adverse weather when there was a shortage of hotel accommodation. Officers were doing their best across the county and a lot of work had been done with private sector landlords prior to the pandemic in terms of offering incentives to accept people on low income; however, there was very little take-up as private landlords were able to find their own tenants easily.
- 86.7 A Member supported the recommendation that no further reports be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and he noted that the Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan was due to be considered at the next meeting of the Committee but he asked whether the Council still worked with P3 Housing as he could not find any reference to this on the website. The Head of Community Services confirmed that references would be to Street Link which was delivered by P3 Housing. The Member indicated that he was particularly concerned about the lack of rural social housing and was interested to know how the Council's relationship with Bromford, in particular, worked given that the Council's housing stock had been transferred a long time ago.
- 86.8 A Member asked for clarification as to what had happened to the Environmental Health team and whether this would be reviewed again and was advised that Environmental Health had evolved over the years – 40 years ago it was commonplace for Officers to work in a particular patch on all of the various disciplines but within the last 20 years this had changed as Officers began to focus on specialisms. The Head of Community Services explained that Tewkesbury Borough Council had a very small team of specialist Officers so it would be difficult to expect them to become experts in all areas and that was not the way the profession was trained anymore. Nevertheless, it had worked in other places and the idea was that it could work in Tewkesbury Borough so it had been trialled but was not logical for a small team which could not maintain the expertise required. The team had spoken to him and explained the reasons why it was not working and he had been in complete agreement to revert back.
- 86.9 A Member indicated that he would have liked to have known what had actually been done with regard to each action rather than just a tick in a box on the action plan to say it had been implemented and he would like Officers to take this on board for future reports. The Head of Community Services noted the comment and it was

RESOLVED

That the update on progress of the Community Services Improvement Plan be **NOTED** and it be **AGREED** that no further reports be brought to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

OS.87 SEPARATE BUSINESS

87.1 The Chair proposed and it was

RESOLVED That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely discussion of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

OS.88 SEPARATE MINUTES

88.1 The separate Minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2023, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

OS.89 TRADE WASTE PROJECT UPDATE

(Exempt – Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))

89.1 Members considered an update on the trade waste project and noted that a report would be taken to the Executive Committee before the end of the Council term.

The meeting closed at 6:45 pm