Worcestershire County Council

Agenda
Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday, 17 June 2020, 10.00 am

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, Worcestershire County Council will be holding this meeting in accordance with the relevant legislative arrangements for remote meetings of a local authority. For more information please refer to: Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Please note that this is a public meeting, conducting remotely by videoconferencing between invited participants and live streamed for general access via a link on the Council's website to the Council's You Tube Channel

The Agenda papers and background papers can be accessed electronically on the Council's website. Members of the public and press are permitted to report on the proceedings.

DISCLOSING INTERESTS

There are now 2 types of interests:
'Disclosable pecuniary interests' and 'other disclosable interests'

WHAT IS A 'DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST' (DPI)?

- Any **employment**, office, trade or vocation carried on for profit or gain
- **Sponsorship** by a 3rd party of your member or election expenses
- Any **contract** for goods, services or works between the Council and you, a firm where you are a partner/director, or company in which you hold shares
- Interests in **land** in Worcestershire (including licence to occupy for a month or longer)
- **Shares** etc (with either a total nominal value above £25,000 or 1% of the total issued share capital) in companies with a place of business or land in Worcestershire.

NB Your DPIs include the interests of your spouse/partner as well as you

WHAT MUST I DO WITH A DPI?
- **Register** it within 28 days and
- **Declare** it where you have a DPI in a matter at a particular meeting
    - you must **not participate** and you **must withdraw**.
NB It is a criminal offence to participate in matters in which you have a DPI

WHAT ABOUT 'OTHER DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS'?
- No need to register them but
- You must **declare** them at a particular meeting where:
        You/your family/person or body with whom you are associated have
    a **pecuniary interest** in or **close connection** with the matter under discussion.

WHAT ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF ANOTHER AUTHORITY OR PUBLIC BODY?
You will not normally even need to declare this as an interest. The only exception is where the conflict of interest is so significant it is seen as likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

DO I HAVE TO WITHDRAW IF I HAVE A DISCLOSABLE INTEREST WHICH ISN'T A DPI?
    Not normally. You must withdraw only if it:
- affects your **pecuniary interests OR**
    relates to a **planning or regulatory** matter
- **AND** it is seen as likely to **prejudice your judgement** of the public interest.

DON'T FORGET
- If you have a disclosable interest at a meeting you must **disclose both its existence and nature** – 'as noted/recorded' is insufficient
- **Declarations must relate to specific business** on the agenda
    - General scattergun declarations are not needed and achieve little
- Breaches of most of the **DPI provisions** are now **criminal offences** which may be referred to the police which can on conviction by a court lead to fines up to £5,000 and disqualification up to 5 years
- Formal **dispensation** in respect of interests can be sought in appropriate cases.

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Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Wednesday, 17 June 2020, 10.00 am, Online only

Membership
Councillors:
Mr A D Kent (Chairman), Mrs M A Rayner (Vice Chairman), Mr G R Brookes, Mr K D Daisley, Mrs A T Hingley, Mr R J Morris, Prof J W Raine, Ms C M Stalker and Mr A Stafford

Agenda

Item No	Subject	Page No
1	**Apologies and Welcome**	
2	**Declarations of Interest and of any Party Whip**	
3	**Public Participation** *Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance in writing or by e-mail indicating the nature and content of their proposed participation no later than 9.00am on the working day before the meeting (in this case 16 June 2020). Enquiries can be made through the telephone number/e-mail address below.*	
4	**Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting (previously circulated)**	
5	**Update on Corporate and Communities in response to COVID -19**	To follow
6	**Member Query Case Management System**	1 - 4
7	**Worcestershire County Council Energy Purchasing Arrangements**	To follow
8	**Work Programme 2019/20**	5 - 10

All the above reports and supporting information can be accessed via the Council's website at here

Date of Issue: Tuesday, 9 June 2020

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CORPORATE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
17 JUNE 2020

MEMBER QUERY CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Summary

1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility (CMR) for Transformation and the Strategic Director of Commercial and Change have been invited to the meeting to update the Panel on developments regarding the identified need for a Member Query Case Management system to manage requests from Members to Service Area Managers, for information about their services.

Background

2. This issue was identified by the Panel as a priority from its Scrutiny Work Programme.

3. Currently, there isn't a system in place to manage Member queries to Service Area Mangers. Members make an enquiry by emailing a known contact in a Service Area and do not have oversight of how a query is progressing and in several cases no reply has been received to the query.

4. The current situation in the Council:

- There is no centralised process or system in place for logging, managing and responding to member enquiries across the Council
- Members have no oversight of how a query is progressing and in several cases no reply has been received to the query
- Members make enquiries through a variety of channels via phone and email including contacting:
  - Senior Officers such as the Chief Executive or Assistant Directors directly; these enquiries are logged and passed to appropriate officers for response
  - Cabinet Members with Responsibility; these enquiries are also logged and passed to appropriate officers for response
  - Teams or Officers directly that are known to members; these enquiries are not logged
- There are no formal Service Level Agreements in place for responding to Member enquiries in the Council. However, local targets exist for responses to Member enquiries e.g. one week for enquiries received by the Chief Executive and Assistant Directors
- The type of enquiries made by Councillors are wide ranging and can include questions about providing social care and other support to residents e.g. residents who are not coping and may need assistance or residents who need accommodation due to flooding. Other types of enquiries include requests for information concerning highways and transport matters and

requests for information to clarify enquiries or complaints made to them by residents

Examples from Other Local Authorities

5. Two local examples of how other organisations deal with and respond to their Member enquiries:

City of Wolverhampton Council:
- Don't have a specific system for managing and responding to Member Enquiries
- Member enquires relating to residents are logged in the Customer Relationship Management system under the resident's name
- A VIP list is used to identify when a councillor is contacting them
- Wolverhampton have Business Managers in each directorate who are the point of contact for day to day things (e.g. MP letters etc.)
- The two political groups each have a Political Assistant (Council employee) who work with Scrutiny Officers on specific issues
- The controlling group also have their own case management system which Councillors use, this isn't provided or supported by the Council

Worcester City Council:
- Issues with responsiveness to members enquiries in a Service Area are resolved by allocating responsibility for overseeing all enquiries coming into the service to a single officer, all enquiries are logged and reviewed monthly
- Member enquiries come in through various channels including email and phone calls
- The Mitel phone system software in use at Worcester City Council is being investigated for use as a case management system to deal with Member enquiries.

Issues for the Panel to Consider

6. The Panel is asked to consider the options listed below for further investigation and delivery:

Option 1: Member Query Case Management System is provided in house (recommended option)

7. A new Member Query Case Management system can be provided in house by the Digital Transformation Team by utilising our existing Freedom of Information request management system.

- This solution can be implemented within a short timeframe as it utilises existing functionality already available within our Freedom of Information enquiry system
- The Information Access Officers in the Council who co-ordinate and manage Freedom of Information requests will also be able to co-ordinate responses to Members enquiries using the Member Query Case Management system

- The Member Query Case Management system can be customised to meet the requirements of Members and Officers in Service Areas to make sure that queries are managed, co-ordinated and tracked effectively and that satisfactory answers are received in a timely manner
- There will be no additional cost to the council to implement the system

8. The new Member Query Case Management System will provide Members with:
- An on-line form to log an enquiry regarding a Service Area detailing the name and contact information for the member, details of the enquiry and the facility to upload any supporting documents as required
- An on-line Dashboard to view all their submitted enquiries, review the status of queries, responses to queries, check reply deadlines and request updates on queries

9. Information Access Co-ordinators will be able to:
- View all new Member Queries, the details of the query and the documents uploaded with the query
- Assign the query to the appropriate lead Information Access Co-ordinator and additional Information Access Co-ordinators across the organisation as required
- Contact and co-ordinate responses to a query from relevant managers and Council officers
- Monitor and manage responses times for each query effectively to make sure they are responded to within the required time limit

Option 2: Use Microsoft Teams Software

10. Microsoft Teams Software is currently being reviewed by a consultant on behalf of the Council with a view to assessing its functionality and suitability for use in the organisation. The findings of the review will be assessed against the needs of the organisation and an implementation plan will be developed based on the recommendations of the review.

11. The review process and implementation planning is likely to take between 6 to 12 months to complete.

Option 3: Modern.Gov

12. Modern.Gov is the market leading solution for governance and meeting management, used by councils in England and Wales. The solution facilitates committee and decisions management for organisations with an obligation to report and explain decisions.

13. Modern.Gov is specifically for governance and meeting management and not designed for member query case management.

Option 4: Purchase Third Party Case Management System

14. **e.g. iCasework:** Proven system used across NHS, central and local government. It allows for the recording and management of data for a variety of purposes especially for regulators and Appeals processes. Also suitable for managing specialist workflows such as the member query case management.

15. Indicative implementation costs for a system such as iCasework would be approximately £30K and would incur ongoing per user licence costs or ongoing Token Base Pricing.

Timing and next steps

16. The IT department is currently supporting the response phase of the County Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and resources are focussed on this activity.

17. Next steps will be to confirm the preferred option and develop a detailed implementation plan to include service and user engagement, technical and behavioural analysis and effective ongoing support for the system once in place.

18. It is envisaged that this work will commence in September 2020.

Purpose of the Meeting

19. The Panel is asked to consider the options detailed in the Report and determine whether they wish to provide comments to the CMR or require further information at this stage.

Contact Points

Andrew Spice, Strategic Director of Commercial and Change
Telephone: Office: 01905 846678
Email: aspice@worcestershire.gov.uk

Geoff Hedges, Digital Transformation Manager
Telephone: Office: 01905 843154
Email: ghedges@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer, in this case the Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager (Interim Monitoring Officer), there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.

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CORPORATE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
17 JUNE 2020

WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

Summary

1. From time to time the Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel will review its work programme and consider which issues should be investigated as a priority.

Background

2. Worcestershire County Council has a rolling annual Work Programme for Overview and Scrutiny. The 2019/20 Work Programme has been developed by taking into account issues still to be completed from 2018/19, the views of Overview and Scrutiny Panel Members and the findings of the budget scrutiny process.

3. Suggested issues have been prioritised using scrutiny feasibility criteria in order to ensure that topics are selected subjectively and the 'added value' of a review is considered right from the beginning.

4. The Corporate and Communities O&S Panel is responsible for scrutiny of:

- Commissioning, contracts and commerce and ensuring the corporate commissioning cycle works well
- Transformation
- Finance
- Localism and Communities
- Organisation and employees

5. The current Work Programme was agreed by Council on 12 September 2019.

Dates of Future Meetings

- 21 July 2020 (tbc)
- 9 September 2020
- 18 September 2020
- 18 November 2020

Purpose of the Meeting

The Panel may wish to consider the 2019/20 Work Programme and consider whether it would wish to make any amendments. The Panel will wish to retain the flexibility to take into account any urgent issues which may arise.

Supporting Information

- Appendix 1 – Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2019/20

Contact Points

Specific Contact Points for this Report
Samantha Morris/Alison Spall, Overview and Scrutiny Officers, Tel: 01905 844963/ 846607
Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer, in this case the Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager (Interim Monitoring Officer), the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and minutes of Council on 12 September 2019 - available on the Council website here

- Agenda and Minutes of OSPB on 24 July 2019 - available on the Council website here

2019/20 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME: Corporate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting	Issue for Scrutiny	Date of Last Report	Notes/Follow-up Action
18 March 2020 – cancelled due to COVID-19	Performance and In Year Budget Monitoring Period 9/Quarter 3 (October -December 2019)		
	Progress Monitoring of the Organisational Change programme.		
	Council's Energy providers and costs. Report back from task group – verbal update	10 December 2019	Referred from Economy & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel 11 September 2019
	Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system for councillors		Referred from Economy & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel 11 September 2019
2 June 2020 – cancelled due to COVID-19	Commissioning including the Development of the Procurement Strategy	23 October 2018 13 March 2019 3 September 2019	Report to include detail about how contract specifications are developed and monitored and KPI's
	Council's Apprenticeship Strategy		Referred to in Care Work as a Career Scrutiny Task Group, January 2020.
	Council's Energy providers and costs. Report back from task group		
17 June 2020	Update on Corporate and Communities in response to Covid 19		
	Organisational Re-design Programme Update		
	Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System for Councillors		

	Council's Energy providers and costs.		
21 July 2020	Performance and In Year Budget Monitoring (Outturn 2019/20)/Quarter 4 (January-March 2020)		
	Worcestershire Councillors Divisional Funding Scheme – Annual Report		Annual Report.
9 September 2020	Performance and In Year Budget Monitoring - Quarter 1 (April to June 2020)		
9 September 2020	The County Council's Talent Programme		Referred from OSPB in November 2019
18 November 2020	Performance and In Year Budget Monitoring - Quarter 2 (June-September 2020)		
January 2021	Corporate Complaints and Compliments system – annual report	3 September 2019 10 December 2019	
Possible Future Items			
TBC	Adult Education service – revenue raised and how it is being utilised	n/a	
TBC	Communications – How we ensure residents have easy access and we communicate service levels? WCC brand and the postal service.	n/a	
TBC	County Hall – is it fit for purpose? Value for Money? Usage?		

TBC	Culture: How can we utilise the Culture of Worcestershire to maximise the benefit to the County?	n/a	
TBC	Feedback and Progress on the Maximising Income Generation session (March 2019) including fees and charges	22 May 2018 22 January 2019	
TBC	Gypsy service – an update		
TBC	IT enhancements and progress.		
TBC	Liberata	n/a	
TBC	Place Partnership		
TBC	Information sharing with District Councils		.
TBC	Re-commissioning of the customer services contract (Civica)		
TBC	The Council's process for handling Freedom of Information (FOI) and Subject Access requests (SAR) and how the Council complies with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)		
TBC	Trading Standards		

TBC	Volunteering	n/a	
TBC – July?	Worcestershire County Council Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 Policy (RIPA)	n/a	
Standing Items	Performance Management Quality Assurance Budget Scrutiny Councillors Divisional Funding Scheme	Jan/March/July/Sept/Nov Annually	