

Notice of Meeting

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Councillor Angell (Chairman),
Councillor Virgo (Vice-Chairman),
Councillors Mrs Birch, Brossard, Gbadebo, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle,
McLean, Mrs Mattick, Mossom, Porter, Temperton and Tullett
Tracey Wright, Parent Governor Representative
Mark Glanville, Parent Governor Representative



Wednesday 12 August 2020, 6.30 - 9.00 pm

Online only

Agenda

Item	Description	Page
1.	Apologies for Absence	
	To receive apologies for absence and to note the attendance of any substitute Members.	
2.	Minutes	3 - 6
	To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission held on 9 July 2020.	
3.	Declarations of Interest and Party Whip	
	<p>Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary or affected interests and the nature of that interest, including the existence and nature of the party whip, in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.</p> <p>Any Member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter should withdraw from the meeting when the matter is under consideration and should notify the Democratic Services Officer in attendance that they are withdrawing as they have such an interest. If the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is not entered on the register of Members interests the Monitoring Officer must be notified of the interest within 28 days.</p> <p>Any Member with an Affected Interest in a matter must disclose the interest to the meeting. There is no requirement to withdraw from the meeting when the interest is only an affected interest, but the Monitoring Officer should be notified of the interest, if not previously notified of it, within 28 days of the meeting.</p>	
4.	Urgent Items of Business	
	Any other items which, pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman decides are urgent.	
5.	Public Participation	
	To receive submissions from members of the public which have been	

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	submitted in advance in accordance with the Council's Public Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny.	
6.	Council's response to Covid-19 pandemic	7 - 12
	<p>The Commission has asked for further information about the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Hunter, Director: Planning, Place and Regeneration will be attending to discuss the Council's proposed Renewal Strategy; and • Stuart McKellar, Director of Resources will be attending to discuss the severe pressures and risks on the Council's budget. <p>Members of the Commission will be able to provide input into the proposals as well as seek clarification on the measures being taken.</p>	

Following the close of the meeting the Commission to continue discussions on the Overview and Scrutiny work programme in light of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Date of next meeting

The next Overview and Scrutiny Commission meeting is scheduled for 15 September 2020. The focus of the meeting will be the Council's budget to date.

Sound recording, photographing, filming and use of social media is permitted. Please contact Kirsty Hunt, 01344 353108, kirsty.hunt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk, so that any special arrangements can be made.

Published: 4 August 2020

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION
9 JULY 2020
7.30 - 8.30 PM**



Present:

Councillors Angell (Chairman), Virgo (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Birch, Brossard, Gbadebo, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle, McLean, Mrs Mattick, Mossom, Temperton and Tullett
Mark Glanville, Parent Governor representative

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Porter and Tracey Wright, Parent Governor representative

Also Present:

Councillors Ms Gaw, Kirke and Neil

In attendance:

Kevin Gibbs, Executive Director: Delivery
Bobby Mulheir, Assistant Director: Customer Experience, Digital and ICT

10. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 27 May 2020 be approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

11. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

There were no declarations of interest.

There were no indications that members would be participating while under the party whip.

12. Urgent Items of Business

There were no items of urgent business.

13. Public Participation

No submissions had been made by members of the public under the Council's Public Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny.

14. Customer Experience and Digital Strategies

In advance of the meeting Bobby Mulheir, Assistant Director: Customer Experience, Digital and ICT presented background information and outlined the key themes for the development of the new customer experience and digital strategies. Members separated into three workshops to discuss:

- Enabling a Digital Workforce
- Embracing Innovation to Improve the Customer Experience
- Expanding Multi-Channel Service Delivery

The notes collected from the first group's session were shared with the meeting and Councillor Tullett fed back on the group's discussions:

- Integrating platforms and scalability it was suggested the system should be integrated enough to adapt to the customer's experience e.g. be intuitive
- Need for digital skills training and addressing the digital divide
- Culture change and requirement for digital leadership by the Council core part of transformation plan
- Consideration of digital voting in the future
- Lone working and staff safety to be considered
- Look to private sector partners to share their experiences e.g. Royal Mail and Experian
- Need to monitor spend as this is a complex issue
- Need to respond to the future requirements of schools
- Cyber security, GDPR not to be forgotten
- Future updating and maintenance

The notes collected from the second group's session were shared with the meeting and Councillor Mrs Birch fed back on the group's discussions:

- drones could be used for trouble shooting e.g. fallen tree issue and possible link to planning issues but not to replace site visit instead enhance by sharing video of site at a meeting
- Ecard used by Customer Services and whether this could be available via mobile phones or using an App to get through all parts of the Council all the services can be displayed. Direct payments using your phone e.g. bin.
- Opportunity to use digital method of getting in touch with people to determine customer satisfaction and get feedback to improve our services
- Do not forget the elderly who are not so digitally able

The notes collected from the third group's session were shared with the meeting and Councillor Virgo fed back on the group's discussions:

- multichannel delivery to give the user many platforms to contact the council which would be a better experience e.g. put them straight through to the officer, several services linked digitally to speed up and improve the system
- use of chat bots that some councils and utilities are using but these can be very alien to the users
- IT tend to design things for ICT and don't design them for the user so important that user has a big influence on designing the system and user test the system.
- Communication to Councillors to enable them to support implementation of new IT systems and answer residents' queries.
- Both Wokingham Borough Council and Silva Homes have Tenancy Involvement Teams and use this diverse group of individuals to test system before it is implemented with the wider community.

In response to a request that disabled people within the community were not forgotten and provided with support, Assistant Director: Customer Experience, Digital and ICT explained that accessibility was a key element of the strategy. It was accepted that there would be some within the community that could develop digital skills and even with support others who would not be able to access services this way.

The Assistant Director: Customer Experience, Digital and ICT thanked everyone for participating, undertaking research in advance and providing inciteful feedback which would help shape the strategy for digital and cultural experience.

15. **ICT Performance during lockdown**

Bobby Mulheir, Assistant Director: Customer Experience, Digital and ICT provided members with an update on the actions taken during the pandemic. Arising from the following discussion it was:

- confirmed that the ICT team consulted professional partners when reviewing strategies and worked with others for each new element of what it delivered e.g. licensing, SharePoint and migration of services
- explained that the Council's intranet DORIS was being redesigned and the test site was available with 500 pages created already ensuring that content previously unavailable to the search function as hidden within pdfs. Members were encouraged to look at the Democratic and Member pages which were a work in progress.
- noted that it was not possible to make eye contact via video conferencing but that social activities were being encouraged amongst service teams to provide social support
- noted that work is ongoing on how to safely introduce certain activities such as workshops or find better technology and developing etiquette which allows time for interaction
- confirmed that the ICT team would provide feedback on user experience to Councillor Tullett's Isolation and Loneliness scrutiny review activity
- explained that when benchmarked with others the Council is quite near the front as evidence pack contained case studies from others but were things the Council had already done but had not been funded by LGA to undertake the activities
- reported that the Council has funding to work with Croydon and other local authorities to develop a website template in Drupal that any Council could brand and use. The Council had been invited to be part of that project.
- noted Councillor Mossom had taken part in user testing of the new intranet on SharePoint and reported it was very good
- noted that the Council was continuing to adapt to the new way of meeting remotely and could investigate electronic voting systems to capture responses
- reiterated that the Council had demonstrated an embracing of technology and continued to function even in the face of a pandemic and the opportunity should not be missed to report this

The Chairman of the Commission thanked the Assistant Director: Customer Experience, Digital and ICT and her team for running the workshop and attending the meeting.

16. **Overview and Scrutiny Commission work programme**

Councillor Angell, Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Commission advised the meeting that he had suggested reinstating the meeting on 12 August 2020 so that the Commission could begin to question the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Council. This could be achieved by considering the Council's Renewal Strategy and understanding the financial impacts of the national health pandemic. The following would be invited to attend the meeting:

- Councillor Heydon, Executive Member for Transformation and Finance
- Andrew Hunter, Director: Place, Planning & Regeneration
- Stuart McKeller, Director of Resources

He asked members of the Commission to start to think about the existing work programme and whether they wanted to continue with that or whether they had new ideas due to the changing circumstances facing the Council.

He suggested that an additional meeting in early September be set up to look at the current year's Council's budget.

Commission members supported the suggestions and discussed that:

- hard copies of the budget papers should be provided for the September meeting
- considering the impact of Covid-19 on the Council's finances would be useful before the usual budget review timetable
- the two meetings should not be filled with presentations as the information should be provided in advance otherwise it would not allow enough time for questions
- the Executive Member should be asked to lead the presentation/discussion of information

Kevin Gibbs, Executive Director: Delivery advised that it was anticipated that two brief presentations would be provided to cover the Council's Renewal Strategy and the national financial impact of Covid-19.

Annex Notes from workshops

CHAIRMAN



Overview and Scrutiny Commission August 2020

Recovery and Renewal Principles

1

Approach to Covid1-19



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Response - 5 Pillars for decision making



Response to Lockdown

- Follow Government/PHE strategy
- Business Continuity activated and trying to maintain all one to few or non-contact services as far as possible
- Closures of social contact services
- Maintaining service capability when new normal arrives
- Recovery
 - Framework for approaching recovery decisions itself based upon:
 - Overall strategy remains to deliver Council Plan objectives by 2023
 - Acceptance that some delivery mechanisms will change
 - Operational recovery limited by service capability so phased
- PROVIDED A FRAMEWORK FOR MAKING DECISIONS - MAKING DECISIONS PREDICTABLE

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Initial Recovery Principles



- Opportunities should be taken to move to a new normal incorporating COVID-19 learnings
- All BFC to transition to the new normal where it is able to, accepting that this may be a temporary state
- Transition to be phased where required to support operations / colleagues
- Readiness for transition to be assessed prior to resuming new normal activities
- Each service area will be assessed separately and will transition in the most appropriate way for them
- Dependencies between services will be considered to determine the order/ timescale of transition

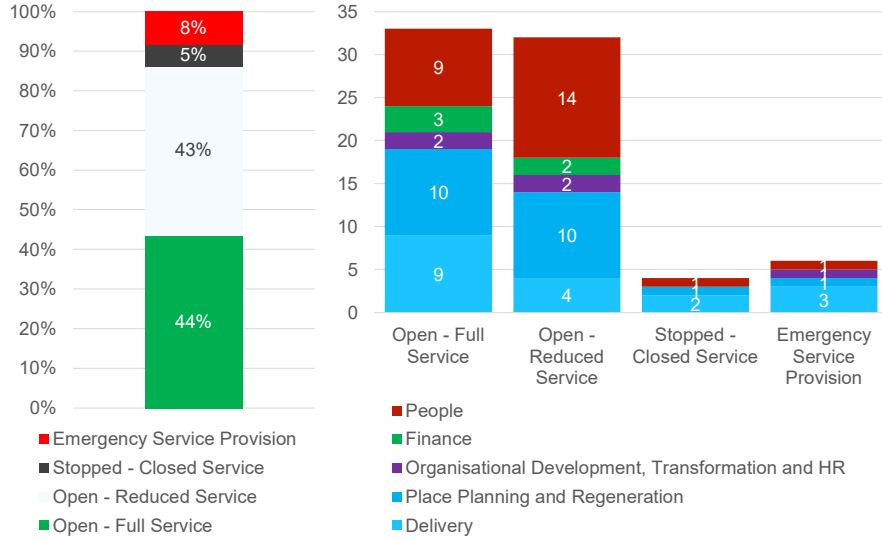
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Initial status of Services

Overall and by directorate

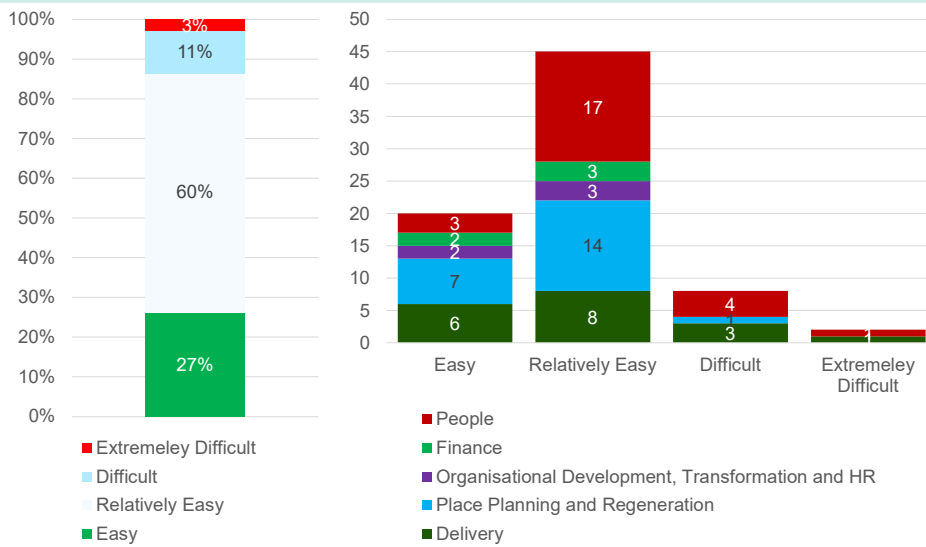


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Ease of transition

Overall and by directorate



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Operational Recovery Strategy



- Overall strategy remains to deliver (as closely as possible) the Council Plan objectives set out up until 2023
- An acceptance that the delivery mechanisms will change over time and in response to changing circumstances
- Work on triaging services identifies areas of transformational opportunity
- Operational recovery will be limited by service capacity and as such will be in phases
- New areas of work such as Outbreak Management will become part of business as usual for at least the medium term

BFC Response and Recovery Groups



Media and Communications
Data/insight/intelligence

Towards a Post-COVID Renewal Strategy



Context

The Council and its partners have a clear community leadership role

We will continue to adapt to the impact of the pandemic on our communities and may need to re-prioritise some objectives in Council Plan 2019

Pre-COVID-19 financial pressures are likely to increase and decision making must reflect this

The overarching priority is the health and economic well-being of residents

Against this context our place based strategy is to:

- Work with partners and communities to protect and promote the physical and mental health of our population
- Support town and neighbourhood centre vitality and look to support our local economy by retaining businesses within the borough
- Provide short term support and refocus some activities to deal with post COVID-19 spikes in demand
- Integrate services with partners and locate them wherever possible within the community that use them
- Look to involve the community and voluntary sector in supporting people and services wherever possible
- Whilst
- Containing/reducing expenditure in the long term (including refocussing/ delivering differently/stopping some services)
- And ...
- Maximising the opportunities to address carbon reduction across all of our activities

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Principles for civic offices and working arrangements



Principles for civic offices and working arrangements

Collaboration space – space to meet, discuss, collaborate (with and without Social distancing)

Shared Space – space shared with partner agencies so that collaboration is maximised (cost sharing)

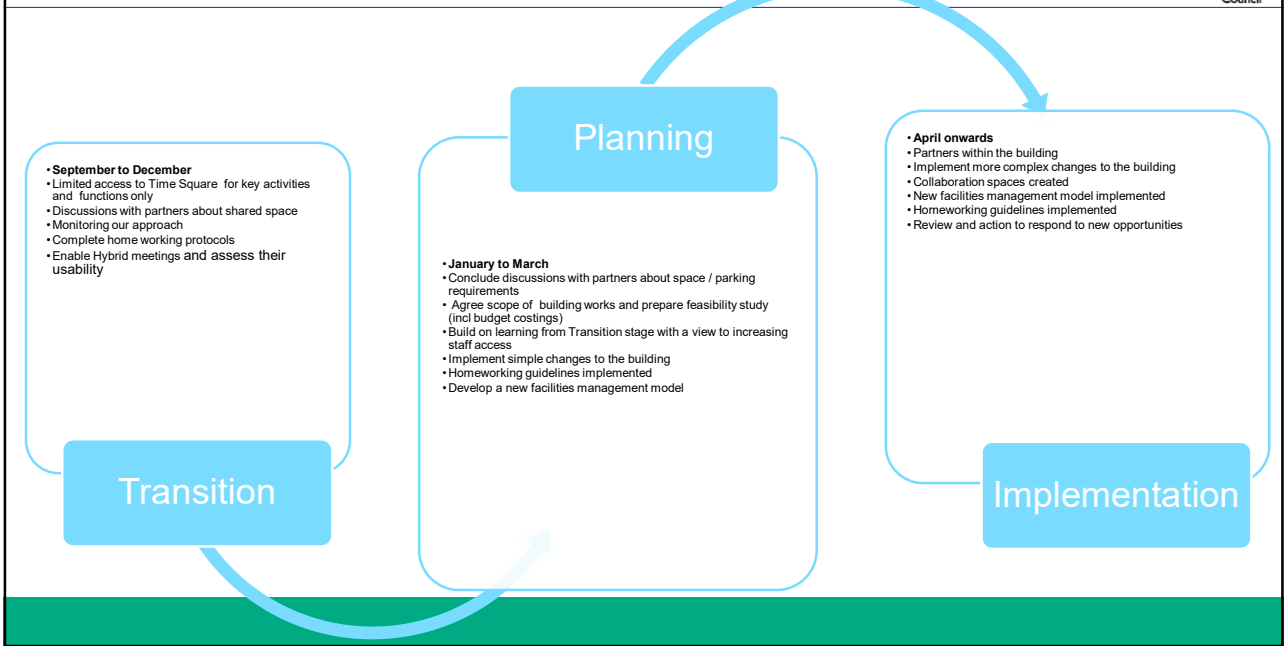
Community space – bookable space for the community and voluntary functions (community hub)

Home working - desk based individual tasks and virtual meetings e.g. one to ones and small team meetings

Space will transition to adapt to the above – an iterative development of the space overtime

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Where and how we work



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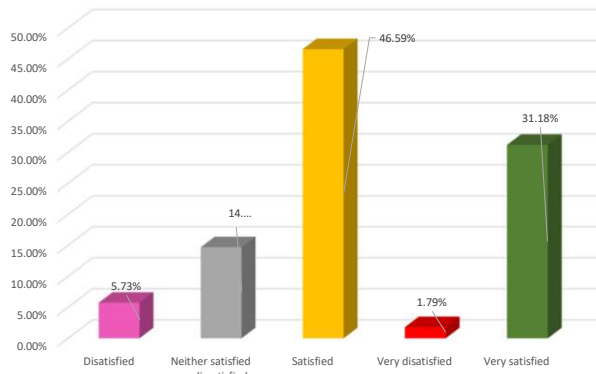


Work Arrangement Satisfaction

How satisfied are you with your current work from home arrangement?

On the whole staff appear to be satisfied with their current home arrangement, with 78% of the respondents being either satisfied or very satisfied.

BFC Satisfaction With Current Work Arrangement



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