

Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee

20 September 2019

Business Planning Group Report

Report by Chairman, Business Planning Group

Executive Summary

Each Select Committee has a Business Planning Group (BPG) to oversee the Committee's work programme and prioritise issues for consideration by the Committee. This report provides an update to the Committee of the BPG meeting held on 1 July 2019, setting out the key issues discussed.

Recommendation

The Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and endorse the Committee's Work Programme for 2019/20 (attached as appendix A).

1. Background

- 1.1 The Business Planning Group (BPG) met on 1 July 2019 with Mr Barrett-Miles, Mr Barling, Mr Jones and Mr S Oakley, in attendance to undertake work planning on behalf of the Committee.
- 1.2 Among the issues discussed:
 - **Total Performance Monitor Annual Outturn 2018/19** – a number of factors had led to a £5m overspend across the portfolio, including the delay in awarding the Highways Contract, a drop in income levels expected in the Library and Archive Service, the Highways Customer Service Hub not realising the expected savings and costs related to the Fire and Rescue Control Centre. No issues for further scrutiny were identified, it being noted that the Committee would be involved when a new waste strategy was forthcoming.
 - **FRS Performance Management**

The Group considered the latest performance data. It was agreed that the lead service officers would attend future meetings, to provide more detail on specific service areas if needed. The Group was concerned over the high percentage of false alarms and asked that some research is carried out and brought back to the Group at a future meeting. The Group learned that the backlog in the Safe and Well visits relating to homes had been cleared. The backlog in business visits was more challenging since specialist staff needed to

be trained to carry out these checks. The Group asked that there is greater visibility on the backlog and that this should be included in future reports.

- **Annual Community Safety Scrutiny**

The BPG agreed that Select Committee would look at the Exploitation Strategy and how it links to organised crime, cuckooing and County Lines. This is a fast-evolving area of criminality and will link in with a Member Development Day in January 2020. External speakers would be invited to attend and provide evidence at the session, schedule for 7 November.

- **Budgeting for Major Projects**

Matt Davey, Director of Highways, Transport and Planning gave a verbal update on the review of the processes for developing budgets for major projects. Although the cost forecasts on certain "legacy" projects had turned out to be under-estimates, consultants were now employed to assist with this activity. The consultants will report their findings in the autumn and the BPG agreed for this item to be scrutinised by the full Committee.

- **Highways, Transport and Planning Structure Review**

The Group heard a verbal update. The review included the work currently undertaken by consultants, to explore whether there was any beneficial basis for the to be brought in-house. The Group requested that the review be considered by the Committee, provisionally at the November meeting.

2. Work Programme Planning 2019/20

- 2.1 Informed by officers from the relevant service areas, BPG members considered the Work Programmes for 2019/20.
- 2.2 The output from this discussion is summarised in the revised work programme at Appendix A (2019/20) which reflects any subsequent decisions or alterations made since the meeting.

3. Equality Duty

- 3.1 An Equality Impact Report is not required for this report as it deals with internal matters only.

Andrew Barrett-Miles
Chairman, Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee

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**Appendix A - Environment, Communities and Fire Select
Committee
Work Programme 2019/20**

Appendix B - WSFRS Operational Performance Report

Background Papers - None