

Committee: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 7th January 2016

Agenda item: 5

Wards: All

Subject: Commercial Services Task Group - Scoping Report

Lead officer: Stella Akintan Scrutiny Officer

Lead member: Councillor Abigail Jones , Chair of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Contact officers: Stella Akintan, Scrutiny Officer, stella.akintan@merton.gov.uk, 020 8545 3390

Recommendations:

That Members consider and approve the proposed Terms of Reference, timescales, sources of evidence, and witnesses for the Commercial Services task group review .

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To make proposals to Members for the commercial services task group review, and to seek agreement on the proposed Terms of Reference, timescales, sources of evidence and witnesses for the review.

2. DETAILS

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 2nd September 2015, it was agreed to conduct a task group review of Commercial Services.
- 2.2 The following Members were nominated to sit on the Task Group: Cllr Russell Makin (Chair), Cllr John Sargeant, Cllr Najeeb Latif and Cllr James Holmes

3. AIM OF REVIEW

- 3.1 To explore the council's approach to commercialisation and opportunities within the Environment and Regeneration Department to increase income from services delivered, with a particular focus on the following services:
 - Green Spaces
 - Leisure and Cultural Services
 - Development and Building control
 - Future Merton
 - Property

4. Proposed terms of reference and key lines of enquiry for the review:

- 4.1 The terms of reference of the task group review, as discussed and agreed by the task group are as follows:

To consider what the opportunities are and the areas that can be commercialised to buy in revenue.

Consider the success has Merton had to date

- Identify the success the council has had to date in pursuing commercial opportunities;
- Review the commercial strategies and marketing plans for services identified above (and any others of interest to Members in this review);

Consider what Merton needs in place to operate commercial services

- How can we utilise council assets in developing commercial services?
- Determine what resources, capacity and skills we have within the organisation to develop and manage commercial services;
- Determine the financial investment required to take forward commercial services in these, and other, areas;
- Identify the risk and governance arrangements required to enable the council to charge for these services;
- Identify the barriers to maximising commercial income within the council, including culture, skills and systems and processes;

Good practice

- Determine what models have been successfully taken forward in the private and public sector and how Merton might benefit from lessons learned;

Consider the other factors need to be considered when operating on a more commercial basis

- Consider the reputational impact on the council and how service users, communities, partners and staff will be engaged in taking forward commercial services;
- Identify what role partners will play in developing commercial services

-

5. POTENTIAL SOURCES OF EVIDENCE AND WITNESSES FOR THE REVIEW

Other local authorities
Private sector organisations
Council officers
Partner organisations

6. OFFICER SUPPORT

- 6.1 Members of the Housing Supply Task Group will be supported by:

Stella Akintan, Scrutiny Officer and officers from the Environment and Regeneration Department

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1 The Panel may choose to agree a different scope and terms of reference to those proposed in this scoping report.

8. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 8.1 Members are asked to give consideration to if, and how, they would like to engage witnesses in this review.

9. TIMETABLE

- 9.1 It is envisaged that the Task Group will undertake and complete its review within 6 months.

10. CO-OPTION

- 10.1 Members are asked to give consideration to co-opting representatives onto the Task Group for part, or the duration, of the review to assist the Task Group. In accordance with the Constitution any representative co-opted onto the Panel or Task Group will be a non-voting member of the Task Group and will be required to adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.

11. PUBLICITY

- 11.1 Members can publicise the review to encourage and facilitate resident and partner engagement and to promote the outcomes of the review upon completion. The following mechanisms for promotion/publication may be utilised throughout the review: -

- Press release in local press;
- My Merton;
- Community Forums;
- Merton council website;
- Ward councillors;
- Posters/materials in libraries and Merton Link;
- Staff bulletin board and plasma screens in civic centre; and
- Residents' panel and Centre for Public Scrutiny (outcomes)

12. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are none specific to this report. Any financial, resource and property implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

13. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 None for the purposes of this report. Any legal and statutory implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

14. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

14.1 None specific to this report. Any human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

15. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

15.1 None specific to this report. Any crime and disorder implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

16. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

16.1 None for the purposes of this report. Any risk management and health and safety implications arising from the review will be accounted for in the Task Group's Final Report.

17. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

17.1 None

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

18.1 None