



EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT COVER SHEET

Title of Report:	Chairman of the Scrutiny (Value for Money Council Services) Committee: Annual Report 2016/17
Meeting of:	Council
Date:	6 th March 2017
Is this an Executive Decision:	NO
Is this a Key Decision:	NO
Is the Report Confidential:	NO
If so, please state relevant paragraph from Schedule 12A LGA 1972:	N/A
<p>Essential Signatories:</p> <p>ALL REPORTS MUST BE IN THE NAME OF A HEAD OF SERVICE</p> <p>Monitoring Officer: Angela Wakefield</p> <p>Date Signature</p> <p>Chief Finance Officer: Sal Khan</p> <p>Date Signature</p>	

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Council

Date: 6th March 2017

REPORT TITLE:	Chairman of the Scrutiny (Value for Money Council Services) Committee: Annual Report 2016/17
PORTFOLIO:	Leader of the Council
HEAD OF SERVICE:	Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER:	James Abbott (Programmes and Transformation Team Leader) x1244
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	Non-specific

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1. To provide a summary of the Scrutiny activities undertaken by the Scrutiny (Value for Money Council Services) Committee during 2016/17.

2. Background

2.1. The Council's various Scrutiny Committees discharge the overview and scrutiny function under Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

2.2. The Committees are tasked with:

2.2.1. Reviewing and/or scrutinising decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;

2.2.2. Reviewing and scrutinising the performance of the Council;

2.2.3. Serving as consultees in relation to executive decisions and key elements of service plans when required; and

2.2.4. Producing progress reports and recommendations to the Executive arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process or refer to the Executive

entire reports produced as a result of the scrutiny process. However it is the decision of the Executive whether or not such a report is subsequently submitted to Full Council.

3. Contribution to Corporate Priorities

3.1. This report can contribute to all priorities to some degree (depending on the subject matter of the scrutiny review in question); however the remit of this particular Scrutiny Committee is to consider services within the corporate priority area of “Value for Money Council Services”.

4. Scrutiny Activities

4.1. Burton Market Hall

4.1.1. The Market Hall reopened to the public in June 2014 following an extensive refurbishment, and in February 2016 the Committee began a review of this service.

4.1.2. The review looked at a range of subjects relating to the Market Hall including footfall, occupancy levels, turnover of trade, rent rates, marketing and events being held at the venue.

4.1.3. Following completion of the review, a report will be presented to the Cabinet in March 2017 containing the recommendations below.

4.1.4. The Committee recommended that a specific business plan is drawn up (drawing in the facts, data and suggestions gathered during the review) which focuses on delivering the objective of a bustling daytime economy, whilst also ensuring that the market delivers either a surplus or break-even position within a specific time bound period.

4.1.4.1. The business plan should consider options such as an extensive and detailed exercise on learning from other markets, it should investigate and consider options such as an external board, partnering with other groups, and bringing in external expertise where appropriate.

4.1.4.2. The business plan should also include further input and feedback from tenants, former tenants, prospective tenants, shoppers and other stakeholders.

4.1.5. Where specialists are procured to provide advice on future projects such as this (or similar) that particular consideration is given and due diligence is undertaken to ensure appropriate experience and expertise, and also appropriate safeguards built into the process to ensure that the Council has a strong position to seek recourse from these specialists should issues arise in the future based on the veracity of their advice or expertise.

4.2. Future Reviews

4.2.1. The Committee has agreed to carry out a review on the historical purchase of Bargates by the Council from Tesco. As a result of the commercially sensitive nature of the subject matter the review will be conducted in the private part of the agenda.

5. Financial Considerations

This section has been approved by the following member of the Financial Management Unit: Lisa Turner

5.1. There are no financial issues arising from this Report.

6. Risk Assessment and Management

6.1. The main risks to this Report and the Council achieving its objectives are as follows:

6.1.1. **Positive** (Opportunities/Benefits):

6.1.1.1. None

6.1.2. **Negative** (Threats):

6.1.2.1. None

6.2. The risks do not need to be entered in the Risk Register. Any financial implications to mitigate against these risks are considered above.

7. Legal Considerations

This section has been approved by the following member of the Legal Team: Angela Wakefield.

7.1. There are no significant legal issues arising from this Report.

8. Equalities and Health

8.1. Equality impacts: The subject of this Report is not a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.

8.2. Health impacts: The outcome of the health screening question does not require a full Health Impact Assessment to be completed. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.

9. Human Rights

9.1. There are no Human Rights issues arising from this Report.

10. Sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures)

- 10.1. Does the proposal result in an overall positive effect in terms of sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures)
N/A

11. Recommendation(s)

- 11.1. To note the report

12. Background Papers

- 12.1. None

13. Appendices

- 13.1. Appendix 1: Scrutiny (Value for Money Council Services) Committee Reviews 2016/17

Appendix 1: Scrutiny (Value for Money Council Services) Committee Reviews 2016/17

Burton Market Hall

Background and Scope

Background

Burton Market Hall is a beautiful Victorian building that has been renovated with sympathy to preserve its historic character. It is located in the centre of town and includes both an indoor market hall and an outdoor market. Following a £1.5 million redevelopment, Burton Market Hall once again opened its doors to the public on Saturday 21st June 2014.

There are 29 'fixed' shop units situated around the outside of the Market Hall as well as on the balcony and can be used by several types of retailer including food and beverage. They vary in size and appearance and are available on annual lease terms of 1, 3, 5 or 7 years.

Scope

The following questions have been suggested in order to provide a focus for this review. Please note that the list below is not exhaustive. The committee is not limited to answering only the questions contained within this scoping paper.

1. Of the original traders who opened when the Market Hall re-opened after refurbishment how many are still trading?
2. What has the 'churn' been for traders at the Market Hall?
3. Do we know why traders have left the Market Hall?
4. What are the current trader occupancy levels for the fixed shop units?
5. How are rents calculated for the Market Hall?
6. Are rents comparable with other markets and shopping environments?
7. What is being done to market and advertise the Market Hall and Market Place both for customers and traders?
8. Is any additional support given to traders at the Market Hall?
9. What are footfall figures for the Market Hall?
10. What is being done to attract stallholders and traders?
11. Have the social and economic benefits that were cited in the original business case been delivered with the refurbished Market hall?
12. Is the Market Hall being utilised to its full potential in terms of events?
13. What and how many events have been held at the Market Hall since its reopening?

Recommendations Arising

The information identified in the scope of the review was collated and a comprehensive report was compiled. The recommendations included in the report presented to Cabinet on 13th February 2016 are as follows:

1. That the findings of the review are considered by the Council
2. The Committee recommends that a specific business plan is drawn up (drawing in the facts, data and suggestions gathered during this review) which focuses on delivering the objective of a bustling daytime economy, whilst also ensuring that the market delivers either a surplus or break-even position within a specific time bound period. The business plan should consider options such as an extensive and detailed exercise on learning from other markets, it should investigate and consider options such as an external board, partnering with other groups, and bringing in external expertise where appropriate. It should also include further input and feedback from tenants, former tenants, prospective tenants, shoppers and other stakeholders.
3. Where specialists are procured to provide advice on future projects such as this (or similar) that particular consideration is given and due diligence is undertaken to ensure appropriate experience and expertise, and also appropriate safeguards built into the process to ensure that the Council has a strong position to seek recourse from these specialists should issues arise in the future based on the veracity of their advice or expertise.

Post Committee note from the Chairman of the Value for Money Services Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Ray Faulkner:

These recommendations were agreed at the Committee when I had sent my apologies. The meeting was chaired by the Vice Chairman, Councillor Duncan Goodfellow.