



**REPORT TO:** Cabinet 3 April 2019  
**FROM:** Councillor Grenville Chamberlain, Chairman, Scrutiny and Overview Committee

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## **Update from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee Chairman**

### **Purpose**

1. This report is to inform Cabinet of the discussions of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee at its meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> March 2019, which Cabinet may wish to take into account in its decision making.

### **Scrutiny ICT Working Group update**

2. The committee's Vice Chairman provided an update on the work of the Scrutiny ICT Working Group and explained the concerns the group had with the ICT Shared Service. The Chief Executives of all the partner authorities were in attendance for this item and explained the founding principles of the ICT Shared Service and the structures that had been put in place when it was set up. A lengthy in depth discussion took place between committee members and the Chief Executives. The main concerns identified by the committee related to governance, transparency and the lack of an exit plan. There was also concern that information was being held separately by each of the three councils and it was thought that this should be held collectively.

The Chief Executives acknowledged that governance could be better and had been exploring how to improve this and whether a different structure was needed. They also explained that the potential allowance for collective scrutiny was being thought about, whilst bearing in mind that the service should not be over scrutinised.

Despite the assurances provided by the Chief Executives, the Scrutiny and Overview Committee still has concerns regarding the governance and transparency of the ICT Shared Service. The committee suggested the Terms of Reference for the service be reviewed and that the formal process for reporting back to the partner councils needs to be improved. The committee supported the Chief Executives looking further at the governance arrangements for the service.

### **Shared Services 2019/20 Business Plans**

3. Each shared service business plan was discussed in detail, with heads of service present to answer questions.

The reasons for the ICT outage were discussed. The committee thought the Council should seek compensation from the suppliers for the severing of the fibre cable which had contributed to the outage, and requested the Chief Executive look into this.

Recommendations:

- The committee decided not to recommend approval of the ICT business plan by Cabinet, and noted the report.
- The committee was supportive of the other business plans and recommended to Cabinet that it approves the business plans for the Planning, Waste, Building Control, Internal Audit and Legal Shared Services
- The committee agreed to recommend to Cabinet that an external party should be commissioned to develop an ICT Security Policy and asked the Chief Executive to raise this with the other Chief Executives.

**Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023**

4. The committee was broadly supportive of this and recommended its approval by Cabinet.

**Request to assist with the resettlement of Syrian Refugees**

5. The committee was broadly supportive of the proposal and recommended Cabinet approves the adoption of a joint pledge to resettle three to five Syrian refugee families, via the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and the Resettlement of Vulnerable Children Scheme. Concern was however raised by some committee members that agreeing to resettle up to five refugee families, might impact on the waiting time of those in high level need who were already waiting for housing. It was however not anticipated by the head of service that this waiting time would increase.

**Request from Cambourne Town Council regarding illegal traveller encampments**

6. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee Chairman had received a letter from Cambourne Town Council, requesting urgent attention be given to illegal traveller encampments. The potential for a task and finish group to be set up to look at this, would be discussed with the Chief Executive and relevant Lead Cabinet Member. In the meantime, the Chief Executive was asked to respond to Cambourne Town Council on the Chairman's behalf and that an officer who had been involved in setting up temporary traveller sites, be asked to talk to Cambourne Town Council.