

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER 2018 AT KENNET ROOM - WILTSHIRE COUNCIL OFFICES, COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE.

Present:

Cllr Chuck Berry, Cllr Christine Crisp, Cllr Matthew Dean, Cllr Stewart Dobson, Cllr Mary Douglas, Cllr Howard Greenman, Cllr David Halik, Cllr Alan Hill (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Ruth Hopkinson, Cllr Pip Ridout, Cllr John Walsh, Cllr Graham Wright (Chairman), Cllr Brian Dalton (Substitute), Cllr Gavin Grant (Substitute) and Cllr Roy While (Substitute)

Also Present:

Cllr Tony Jackson, Cllr John Thomson, Cllr Ian Thorn and Cllr Philip Whitehead

66 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Jon Hubbard, Gordon King and Stuart Wheeler.

Councillor Hubbard was substituted by Councillor Gavin Grant. Councillor King was substituted by Councillor Brian Dalton. Councillor Wheeler was substituted by Councillor Roy While.

67 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2018 were presented for consideration and it was,

Resolved:

To approve and sign as a true and correct record.

68 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations.

69 **Chairman's Announcements**

Through the Chair there were the following announcements or comments:

- 1) It was requested that Select Committee Chairs or Vice-Chairs were unable to attend Cabinet when an item previously considered by their committee was

being considered to please advise the Scrutiny team so that alternative arrangements could be made.

- 2) It was also stated that the Chairman, following discussion with the Vice-Chairman, would if the Committee were content, to ask the Chairman of the Council to move forward the receipt of the Council Minute Book at Full Council meetings so that any updates or comments committee chairs wanted to raise could be heard earlier and during periods of higher attendance of the meeting.

70 **Public Participation**

There were no questions or statements submitted.

71 **Corporate Peer Challenge Update**

Following the formation of a new council in 2017 and the agreement of a new 10-year business plan the council invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to arrange a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) for Wiltshire which took place over four days in November 2017. During their time at the council the LGA group spoke to more than 130 individuals including councillors, staff and partners; attended more than 40 visits and meetings; collectively spent more than 260 hours investigating and deliberating to reach their conclusions. An action plan was then agreed by the council on how to address the recommendations of the LGA, including timescales, lead officers and councillors, and how success would be measured. The plan was considered by the Committee in March 2018.

A report from the Corporate Directors was received outlining the action plan on the Peer Challenge along with the latest updates for each recommendation. Councillor John Thomson, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Communications, Communities, Leisure and Libraries, was in attendance to provide further details and take questions from the Committee. Councillor Thomson highlighted that the Peer Challenge had been very positive in many areas, as well as providing some more challenges to make more and better use of community area boards in supporting services and devolve decision making, and other organisation challenges in children's and adult's services.

It was noted that a number of actions were behind schedule as a result of disruptions to the additional demands placed on the corporate leadership team, among others, from the incidents in Salisbury and Amesbury earlier in the year, but following queries it was confirmed that new positions had been backfilled to lead on the recovery and support operations and programmes in the south, and that the corporate leadership structure was now in a position to devote full focus to the delivery of regular corporate and strategic aims.

The Committee also discussed the restructuring of the communities' service to provide deeper and more efficient support to Community Engagement Managers now the service was combined with the Leisure service and the Committee welcomed having positive involvement with that as it progressed, and in response to queries it was stated a report was being taken to Cabinet to

attempt to speed up the procedures for the transfer of community assets to parishes.

Resolved:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee:

- 1) Note the positive update on progress against the Corporate Peer Review Action Plan described in the report; and**
- 2) Note the invitation for Overview and Scrutiny to contribute to the actions coming out of the community working review; and**
- 3) To delegate to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to determine how that scrutiny involvement would take place.**

72 Management Committee Task Groups

Written Updates were received in relation to Task Groups set up by the Management Committee as detailed in the agenda papers.

It was also reported that the Financial Planning Task Group was meeting later in the day and work was ongoing looking at the process for approval of the council's budget. In relation to the Third-Party Advertising Task Group work had been delayed due to staff working on Salisbury incident issues, and further updates would be forthcoming.

It was also proposed following discussion with Cabinet Members and officers that tasks groups be established regarding how the council consults with the public, and how information is communicated to councillors, in particularly locally relevant information.

At the conclusion of discussion, it was,

Resolved:

- 1) To note the update on OS task group activity provided.**
- 2) To note that following discussion with the Cabinet Member for Finance the Annual Budget scrutiny process will commence earlier this year, with the Financial Planning Task Group holding a series of thematic meetings in Autumn/Winter. These will focus on budget priority areas, with the relevant select committee chairmen and vice-chairmen invited to attend and contribute.**
- 3) To note the update on the council's advertising and sponsorship activity provided and that the Third-Party Advertising Policy Task Group will reconvene in January 2019 for a more detailed review of progress.**

- 4) **To endorse the establishment of a Public Consultations Task Group with the terms of reference outlined within the report.**
- 5) **To endorse the establishment of a Communications with Councillors Task Group with the terms of reference outlined within the report.**

73 **Forward Work Programme**

The Forward Work Programmes as detailed in the agenda pack were considered along with updates of recent activities at the select committees.

Additional points raised but were not limited to a request supported by the executive for a task group to look at the council's homelessness strategy be established, updated priorities from young people showing homelessness, knife crime and refugees rising as concerns. Other matters discussed included early intervention on school readiness, receipt of the annual review of the servicing of highways, updates on gypsy and traveller site disposals, plastic waste recycling and plans for future engagement with the Sustainability Transformation Partnership.

The final report of the waste contracts task group was expected in January 2019, and details were provided on rapid scrutiny exercises on the extension of specialised commission contracts on supported living, and extension intermediate care bed service contracts which would later be taken to Cabinet, and a rapid scrutiny exercise on a maternity transformation plan.

At the conclusion of discussion, it was,

Resolved:

- 1) **To note the Overview and Scrutiny forward work programme and the updates provided.**
- 2) **To approve the establishment of the Homeless Strategy Task Group with terms of reference as discussed.**

74 **Outcomes from the Overview and Scrutiny Councillor Workshop**

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has a responsibility to ensure that those councillors undertaking overview and scrutiny (OS) activity have appropriate knowledge and skills. In June 2018 the Committee approved a learning and development (L&D) programme for OS councillors during the 2017-21 council. A report was received on the main discussion points and outcomes from a workshop held on 10 October 2018 as part of that development programme. This followed a survey of non-executive councillors to identify themes for workshop sessions. The theme of the first session was 'Making OS meetings effective'.

It was reported that the event had been the first as part of its OS learning and development programme which had been organised and delivered entirely with

internal resources, and that there had been around 25 attendees including some members of the executive. Various strengths and weaknesses of the current meetings were identified, with suggested actions to address weaknesses detailed in the report.

The Committee discussed the report, with comments that the internal organisation had led to a more beneficial session as the themes were focused specifically on the needs of the OS service within Wiltshire, though it was agreed even more attendance would be preferred as all non-executive members could have involvement with scrutiny, not merely committee members and substitutes. It was agreed that some changes that would be needed to increase effectiveness related to member behaviour and all members were advised to be mindful to retain countywide approaches when considering matters.

The Committee also discussed if it would be beneficial or viable to seek further engagement with parish councils on how to raise potential scrutiny issues, and appreciate any positive outcomes that did develop.

At the conclusion of discussion, it was,

Resolved:

- 1) **To note the discussion points and outcomes of the OS councillor workshop held on 10 October 2018.**
- 2) **To note that further workshops on ‘Gathering and using evidence’ and ‘Questioning and listening skills’ will now be arranged.**
- 3) **To note the strengths of OS meetings in Wiltshire listed under paragraph 9 of the report.**
- 4) **To agree the actions listed under paragraph 10 of the report to address the development areas identified.**

75 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next scheduled ordinary meeting was confirmed as 22 January 2019.

76 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 - 11.55 am)

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