

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 APRIL 2013 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, MONKTON PARK, CHIPPENHAM, SN15 1ER.

Present:

Cllr Trevor Carbin (Chairman), Cllr Tony Deane (Vice Chairman), Cllr Peter Doyle, Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Alan Hill, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Peter Hutton, Cllr Ricky Rogers, Cllr Judy Rooke and Cllr Carole Soden

Also Present:

Cllr Fleur de Rhé-Philippe and Cllr Jane Scott OBE

79 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Christopher Newbury

80 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 February 2013 were approved and signed as a correct record.

81 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

82 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

1. That there had been no call-ins requested since the last meeting.
2. Thanked the Scrutiny Team for all their support and advice over the last twelve months, as this was the last meeting before the elections and reported that Stuart Figini was replacing Sharon Smith as the Committee's Democratic Services Officer following her recent promotion.

83 **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

84 **Job Creation and Economic Development**

The Cabinet member for Economic Development and Strategic Planning was in attendance to present an update report on Job Creation and Economic Development. The report provided details on the work being undertaken by the Economy and Regeneration Service, including the broad range of initiatives and projects underway. Further information was circulated following the briefing showing the targets against the performance figures in the table in paragraph 2.1.

The Cabinet Member explained that the report contained some very positive updates, and she was pleased to report that significant new investment had been attracted into Wiltshire to provide the right infrastructure, employment and skills provision, and planning to support the Council's vision to create stronger and more resilient communities. In particular, reference was made to the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the growing Places Fund for the delivery of the Castledown Phase 2, which would support the growth of the local economy through the provision of business facilities.

In supporting the comments made by the Cabinet Member and thanking the Economy and Regeneration Service for a very positive report, the Committee commented on a number of issues, including:

- the positive change over the last few years in the approach and culture of departments towards the way they work with partners, members and other departments.
- The successful Regional Funding bid for £10m to enable the development of Porton Science Park, bringing forward an innovation centre and infrastructure to enable serviced laboratory and office space to be delivered.
- Concerns at the length of time that Pre-Application Discussions took and the costs involved
- concern that small established companies were struggling and some were not in a position to take on apprentices. However it was noted that of the 139 business employers supported by the Wiltshire Apprenticeships Campaign 47 had taken on their first apprentice.
- A suggestion that the adoption of the Core Strategy would be a major step forward in helping to alleviate many of the issues being experienced by planning officers within the current planning framework.

The Chairman thanked both officers and the Cabinet Member for the update.

Resolved:

- 1. That the update on the Job Creation and Economic Development report previously considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 18 October 2012 be noted.**
- 2. That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee would receive further update reports at future meetings.**

85 Traded Services Task Group - Final Report

The Committee considered the conclusions and recommendations report of the Traded Services Scrutiny Task Group. The figure in paragraph 4 was corrected to £0.100m.

Councillor Doyle, Chairman of the Task Group explained that the Group had prepared a very comprehensive report. He confirmed that the Group had now completed its work on Traded Services and that the report before the Management Committee was the final report. It was noted that the Group decided from the outset of their work not to scrutinise a particular traded service, but to undertake an overarching approach in order to develop an appropriate policy and sound guidance criteria for future Council Traded Services.

Councillor Doyle thanked officers, in particular Jacqui white, Service Director, Business Services who gave their time, energy and helpful advice to facilitate background discussions which fed into the development of guidance for going forward with traded services. Councillor Doyle commended the report to the Management Committee and asked for the recommendations to be supported.

Officers explained the process for new traded services, which included how an initial concept would be evaluated and the help available to services considering a traded service, through to the business case pro-forma. Members spoke about the importance of retaining existing skills, experience and knowledge within the Council when consideration was given to a new traded service.

It was noted that there were restrictions in the Council's ability to make a profit as this was outside the scope of the Council's powers, however full cost recovery was allowed. Officers reported that there could be circumstances where full cost recovery was not achievable due to the costs involved. Members input was required to make decisions in relation to a traded service being subsidised from other service areas. Free swimming during school holidays was quoted as an example of this.

Resolved:

That the recommendations of the Traded Services Scrutiny Task Group be endorsed, and that the report be forwarded to the Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Risk for consideration and response.

86 Legacy Items

The Management Committee considered the report of the Scrutiny Manager, Paul Kelly about the topics recommended by the Select Committees for inclusion in a legacy report for consideration by the new Council post May 2013 elections.

It was noted that the report not only highlighted the good work undertaken by the Select Committee's but also contained information about ongoing pieces of work recommended for inclusion in the overview and scrutiny work programme of the new Council. In reviewing the ongoing pieces of work detailed in Appendix B to the report, members made the following comments:

- Councillor Seed indicated that the Member Support in the Locality Task Group was still active and asked for it to be recorded as an existing Task Group and added to Appendix B.
- Councillor Hutton asked for a Review of Continence Services to be included in Appendix B
- Councillor Hubbard explained that the Environment Select Committee met on 4 April 2013 and confirmed that the following three existing Task Groups should be included in the proposed work programme for the new Council and asked for an additional item detailed at 4 below:
 1. Waste
 2. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
 3. Air Quality (jointly with Health Select Committee)
 4. A new topic to look at issues around Development Control and the timely delivery of adoptable estates.

The Chairmen of the Select Committees and some Chairmen of Task Groups expressed their thanks to the commitment, dedication, support and help throughout the year from members, partners, witnesses and officers including the excellent work of the Scrutiny Team.

The members also took the opportunity to thank the Chairman for the way he had supported and guided the Committee over the years.

Resolved:

- 1. That the members, partner organisations and officers who had positively contributed to the work of the select committees and in the effective delivery of the overview and scrutiny work programme be thanked.**
- 2. That the significant contribution that overview and scrutiny was now making to open and honest decision-making and to the overall good governance of the authority, be acknowledged.**

- 3. That the topics listed in the Appendix, attached to these minutes, be included in the Management Committee's legacy report for the overview and scrutiny work programme of the new Council, subject to the following:**
 - a. Add Waste Task Group**
 - b. Add Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Task Group**
 - c. Add Air Quality (jointly with Health Select Committee) Task Group**
 - d. Include a new topic for the Environment Select Committee to look at issues around Development Control and the timely delivery of adoptable estates**
 - e. To add the Member Support in the Locality Task Group as member support was continually developing**

- 4. That the next steps described in paragraph 10 of the report be noted.**

87 Overview and Scrutiny Member Remuneration

The Chairman reminded the Committee that the remuneration scheme agreed by the Independent Remuneration Panel applied to duties undertaken by councillors in the overview and scrutiny arena. The current amount of £10,000 was allocated at the discretion of the Chairman of the Management Committee.

In noting that the Chairman wished to be transparent in his dealings with the payments, he indicated his intention was to apply the principles detailed in the agenda sheet to the allocation of payments, identical to last year.

Members were informed that the principles were based on the original scheme devised in 2007 and refined over time in the light of experience and representations. It was clarified that bullet point 4 on the agenda sheet referred to the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Scrutiny arena only.

Members in supporting the principles for the allocation of payments made observations about the commitment of some Councillors once they had been appointed to a Task Group and the detailed work commenced.

It was suggested that there was a need to reward genuine commitment and this could be an issue to look at over the next twelve months. However, a number of members were not convinced that the current remuneration scheme made an impact on commitment and that it was more to do with having an interest in the topic and a feeling of making a difference that were the main factors. Other comments made included the length taken to conduct a review, an opportunity for back benchers to become involved in Task Groups, the use of a pro-forma for the setting up of Task Groups and the level of understanding by the membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Resolved:

- 1. That the arrangements for the allocation of scrutiny payments for 2012/13 as set out on the agenda sheet be agreed.**
- 2. That the Scrutiny remuneration scheme be reviewed over the next twelve months so that genuine commitment to Task Groups is rewarded in the most appropriate way.**

88 Urgent Items

There were no urgent items for consideration.

89 Date of next meeting

That the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee would take place at 10:30am on Thursday 23 May 2013 and would be held in Committee Rooms A-C, Monkton Park Offices, Chippenham.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 - 11.50 am)

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