

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 JUNE 2013 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, MONKTON PARK, CHIPPENHAM, SN15 1ER.

Present:

Cllr Stewart Dobson (Substitute), Cllr Alan Hill, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Simon Killane (Chairman), Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Jacqui Lay, Cllr Paul Oatway, Cllr Jeff Osborn, Cllr Pip Ridout, Cllr Bridget Wayman and Cllr Roy While (Vice Chairman)

Also Present:

Cllr Richard Gamble, Cllr Nina Phillips, Cllr Jane Scott OBE, Cllr John Thomson, Cllr Dick Tonge and Cllr Stuart Wheeler

103 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Peter Hutton, Mark Packard, John Walsh.

Councillor Stewart Dobson replaced Councillor Peter Hutton for this meeting only.

104 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes for the meeting held on 23 May were approved and signed as a correct record.

105 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

106 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

107 **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

108 **Business Plan Scorecard Year End Report**

The Management Committee considered the Business Plan Scorecard end of year report, prepared for Cabinet, on progress against the targets set for the delivery of the Business Plan.

The Chairman explained that the report had been considered by the Cabinet on 18 June 2013 and the outcome of the discussion at that meeting was reported to the Management Committee. The Committee had the opportunity to comment on key areas for consideration by the Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance, Risk, Procurement and Welfare Reform.

Councillor Dick Tonge, Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance, Risk and Welfare Reform spoke to the report and in particular mentioned that indicator 1005 'use of in-house foster carers (proportion nights)' had been amended from amber in the original report to red as it was considered to be outside of the 5% target. It was noted that the format of future reports would be amended to reflect the new Business Plan once adopted by the Council.

Members expressed concern that they were unable to scrutinise some areas of performance and that this was an important area especially in the role of policy formation. It was suggested that an on-going Task Group of the Management Committee be set up to look at future targets against performance data. The Leader of the Council, who advised caution at the speed of establishing the Task Group especially as the new performance framework would evolve out of the adopted Business Plan 2013-17 from September 2013. However discussions around developing the new performance framework should involve Overview and Scrutiny.

Resolved:

1. That the progress for the year end 2012/13 be noted
2. That an on-going Task Group be established to look at performance data derived from the new performance framework.

109 **Review of the Business Plan**

The Management Committee considered the draft Business Plan for 2013-2017 which contained the draft priorities of the Executive for adoption by full Council in September 2013 and a covering report from the Corporate Leadership Team.

The Chairman reminded Members of the significance of the development of the Council's new Business Plan which formed the major policy framework document for the next 4 years. He also explained that the Management

Committee was asked to review the Plan's content and report its views to Cabinet at its meeting on 23 July 2013.

The Management Committee heard from the Leader of the Council, who highlighted the main issues detailed in the draft Business Plan and explained that it was, at this stage, a very draft document mainly due to the timing of the local elections. However Cabinet were very keen to have a Business Plan in place early on in their administration and welcomed the views of Overview and Scrutiny in its formation. It was noted that the business plan would be supported by detailed service plans from which a performance structure would be developed.

It was reported that the Children's Services Select Committee at its meeting on 6 June 2013 recommended that the Management Committee request each of the select committees to establish a rapid scrutiny exercise to review relevant sections of the draft Plan for report to Cabinet. Members generally welcomed the proposal for involvement of the Select Committees and felt that this was a vital piece of work to be undertaken. However the Management Committee would need to collate a final report to Cabinet on 23 July 2013. Councillor Hubbard was very concerned at the timescales which he felt were impossibly short for such a piece of scrutiny work to be undertaken in.

Members were reminded that they did not have to scrutinise the detail of the draft Business Plan, as that would be their task over the next 4 years, but to take a high level approach. The Leader referred to the existence of a list of 12 priorities/deliverables arising from the Business Plan and asked that these be made available to Overview and Scrutiny to help in the above process.

Resolved:

That the Select Committees and Management Committee be asked to urgently consider the draft Business Plan 2013-17, based on the 12 priorities/deliverables of the Council, with comments being considered collectively by the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Select Committees and Management Committee in order to produce a final report for consideration by the Cabinet on 23 July 2013.

110 Appointment to the Focus Group on the Review of the Constitution

Resolved:

That Councillor Jeff Osborn be nominated as the Committee's representative on the Focus Group on the Review of the Constitution.

111 Forward Work Programme

a) Forward Plan

The Management Committee were reminded that it was responsible for the co-ordination of the single work programme, and had agreed the continuation of the legacy topics for scrutiny from the last Council as reported to the new Management Committee at its first meeting. These were also formally adopted by the select committees at their recent round of meetings and would now be added to the work programme.

Action was underway to hold a series of meetings involving the chairs and vice-chairs of select committees with relevant Cabinet members, portfolio-holders and service directors to discuss service priorities and overview and scrutiny engagement. The outcome of these meetings would recommend topics for the work programme.

The new Business Plan would provide the main focus for future overview and scrutiny activities and it was clear from early discussion between leading councillors and seniors officers that an increased expectation would be placed on the overview and scrutiny function to undertake significant work at policy development and pre-decision stages, much of which would be co-ordinated through the new Executive Office and Transformation.

The Chairman reported that all Councillors had been consulted about providing information on their work and professional experience, areas of interest and availability to undertake overview and scrutiny activities. This also included expressions of interest to join the legacy task groups. This would then form a “database” from which chairs and vice-chairs of select committees could be consulted when making appointments.

Potential topics for scrutiny review identified from councillor induction as reported to the last meeting were being investigated at select committee level. Those that were seen as the direct responsibility of the Management Committee were the subject of a report considered by the Committee.

In considering the two topics (i) Improving the experience of customers making complaints to the Council and (ii) Increasing the public’s trust in politicians and public engagement with local democracy, arising from the Councillor Induction event relevant for this Committee, Members felt that in relation to (i) above, as there were a number of changes taking place in the service a review at this stage would not add value. In relation to (ii) above Members generally felt

that this was not an appropriate area for the Management Committee to look at and that no action be taken on this suggestion.

Resolved:

To note the above report and that no action be taken on the proposed topics arising from the Scrutiny Councillor Induction event.

b) Overview and Scrutiny Councillor Development

Centre for Public Scrutiny Annual Conference

The Management Committee received a report on the Centre for Public Scrutiny national conference. The report highlighted the key messages coming out of the conference and summarised the workshops attended by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

Ongoing Development

The Management Committee were informed that feedback had been positive from the overview and scrutiny induction events. The next step identified was to deliver a session on the specific skills needed to operate effectively as a scrutiny member. Following initial discussion with an external provider, it was proposed to target the first session at the newly appointed chairs and vice-chairs of the select committees to help build "the team". This would then be followed-up with roll-out targeted at the wider non-executive membership.

It was noted that this proposal was currently being developed for consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Management Committee before submission to the Councillor Development Group with a delivery target date of September 2013.

Resolved

That the comments on (i) members attendance at the Centre for Public Scrutiny National Conference, and (ii) members ongoing development be noted.

112 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

113 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee would take place at 10:30am on Monday 23 September 2013 in the Council Chamber at Monkton Park, Chippenham.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.55 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Stuart Figini, of Democratic Services, direct line (01225) 718376, e-mail stuart.figini@wiltshire.gov.uk

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