

AGENDA

Meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
Place: Kennet Room - County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JN
Date: Tuesday 7 January 2014
Time: 10.30 am

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Kieran Elliott, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line (01225) 718504 or email kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225) 713114/713115.

This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Membership:

Cllr Christine Crisp	Cllr Jeff Osborn
Cllr Stewart Dobson	Cllr Mark Packard
Cllr Alan Hill	Cllr Pip Ridout
Cllr Jon Hubbard	Cllr John Walsh
Cllr Simon Killane (Chairman)	Cllr Bridget Wayman
Cllr Gordon King	Cllr Roy While (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Jacqui Lay	

Substitutes:

Cllr Glenis Ansell	Cllr John Noeken
Cllr Ernie Clark	Cllr Paul Oatway QPM
Cllr Brian Dalton	Cllr Helen Osborn
Cllr Mary Douglas	Cllr Ricky Rogers
Cllr Russell Hawker	Cllr Ian Thorn
Cllr George Jeans	Cllr Philip Whalley
Cllr Dr Helena McKeown	

PART I

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

1 **Apologies**

To receive any apologies or substitutions for the meeting.

2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (*Pages 1 - 6*)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2013.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee.

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any announcements through the Chair.

5 **Public Participation**

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public.

Statements

If you would like to make a statement at this meeting on any item on this agenda, please register to do so at least 10 minutes prior to the meeting. Up to 3 speakers are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each on any agenda item. Please contact the officer named above for any further clarification.

Questions

To receive any questions from members of the public or members of the Council received in accordance with the constitution. Those wishing to ask questions are required to give notice of any such questions in writing to the officer named above no later than 5pm on Monday 30 December 2013. Please contact the officer named on the first page of this agenda for further advice. Questions may be asked without notice if the Chairman decides that the matter is urgent.

Details of any questions received will be circulated to Committee members prior to the meeting and made available at the meeting and on the Council's website.

6 **Highways and Streetscene Contract** (*Pages 7 - 18*)

The Committee considered a request from Councillor Jeff Osborn at the last meeting and agreed to hold a Rapid Scrutiny Exercise on the content of the Cabinet Member's report.

The report on the outcome of the exercise held on 10 December is attached.

7 **Housing Allocation Policy** (Pages 19 - 20)

At its meeting on 5 November 2013 the Management Committee endorsed the outcome of a Rapid Scrutiny Exercise undertaken on 28 October 2013 on proposed revisions to the Council's Housing Allocations Policy.

Cabinet then considered the proposals and made their decision at their meeting on 21 November 2013. The extract of the minute of the meeting is attached.

The Management Committee is asked to note the decision of Cabinet.

8 **Staff Morale Update** (Pages 21 - 28)

At its meeting on 8 October the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee discussed a Member request from Cllr Jeff Osborn for a scrutiny review on the following:

“An objective investigation into the state of morale amongst the non senior staff of Wiltshire Council, in light of recent management restructuring, legal cap on salaries, extra work load and loss of job security.”

Following initial discussion including hearing the views of the Cabinet Portfolio holder and the Service Director, the Management Committee agreed to ask the Staffing Policy Committee to take a further look at statistical information available which might indicate the level of staff morale and to report findings back to the Management Committee.

Attached is a copy of the report on Employee Engagement presented to the Staffing Policy Committee at its meeting on 6 November 2013, together with a Minute Extract for that item.

The Management Committee is asked to note the conclusions of the Staffing Policy Committee.

9 **Overview and Scrutiny Councillor Development** (Pages 29 - 32)

At its meeting on 5 November 2013 the Management Committee were asked to comment on the Councillor Development - Scrutiny Skills training event held in October with a view to endorsing a rollout of a wider programme adjusted for less experienced non-executive councillors.

As a result of the mixed reaction to the event, it was decided to seek the support of the Council's Learning and Development Team to help review the training requirement.

An update report on a revised approach recommended by Learning and Development is attached.

10 **Council Motion - Supermarket Levy** (Pages 33 - 34)

A note providing details of the motion and some background information is attached.

The Committee is asked to decide how it wishes to respond to the referral.

11 **Overview and Scrutiny Profile and Communication**

At its meeting on 5 November, Members raised the issue of the need to increase the profile of the Overview and Scrutiny function through wider and more effective communication.

The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Scrutiny Manager met with representatives from the Communications Team on 2 December to discuss the issue and potential options. Communications have indicated that they will:

- Create a page on the intranet explaining what overview and scrutiny is, how it works etc. Make it as interesting, informative and easy to navigate as possible. The main objective is to change the perception of Scrutiny, so everyone is aware of its purpose and value.
- Send an elected wire message directly to members to create as much engagement across all non-executives as we can.
- Hold a follow-up meeting to review the action taken and develop ideas for an outward, public-facing communications tool.

The Committee is asked to note the discussions held to date and the further work planned.

12 **Task Group Updates**

The Committee is asked to note the following updates:

Financial Planning Task Group – It met for a second time on 11 December and considered a referral process to the select committees, the Cabinet budget monitoring report for period 7 and initial arrangements for overview and scrutiny engagement in budget setting for 2014/15. The next meeting has been arranged for 15 January 2014 to consider the Associate Director of Finance's report on next year's budget going to Cabinet on 20 January. The Chairman will update further at the meeting.

Area Boards Task Group – Following invitations for interest requested at the last meeting, Councillors Linda Packard, Mary Douglas, Ernie Clark, Stewart Dobson, David Jenkins, Simon Jacobs, Jose Green and Magnus MacDonald have been nominated to sit on the Task Group.

Its first meeting has been scheduled for 8 January. The meeting will include scoping the review supported by discussion with the Cabinet Member, Portfolio Holder, Associate Director for Communications and Communities and the Head of Community Engagement.

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Task Group – The members who have expressed an interest in being involved in the Task Group are Councillors Alan

Hill, Tony Deane, Mollie Groom, Jeff Osborn, Mark Packard and Pip Ridout.

The initial role of the Task Group is simply to meet with representatives from Swindon Borough Council to discuss the form any joint scrutiny of the LEP might take. In preparation, advice was received from Dr Carlton Brand, Corporate Director and now by Ian Gibbons, Associate Director Law and Governance. Contact has been made with Swindon Borough Council in order to arrange a first meeting to discuss a process for moving forward which will need to involve gaining a mutual understanding with the LEP itself.

13 **Forward Work Programme** (*Pages 35 - 36*)

The Committee is asked to consider the single work programme, updates from select committee chairmen and give direction on future overview and scrutiny activity as appropriate.

14 **Date of next meeting**

To confirm the date of the next meeting as 4 March 2014.

15 **Urgent Items**

Any other items of business which the Chairman agrees to consider as a matter of urgency.

PART II

Items during whose consideration it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed.

None

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 NOVEMBER 2013 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, MONKTON PARK, CHIPPENHAM, SN15 1ER.

Present:

Cllr Christine Crisp, Cllr Stewart Dobson, Cllr Alan Hill, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Simon Killane (Chairman), Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Jacqui Lay, Cllr Jeff Osborn, Cllr Mark Packard, Cllr Pip Ridout, Cllr John Walsh, Cllr Bridget Wayman and Cllr Roy While (Vice Chairman)

Also Present:

Cllr Richard Clewer, Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Keith Humphries, Cllr John Noeken, Cllr Paul Oatway QPM, Cllr John Thomson and Cllr Philip Whitehead

131 Apologies

No apologies for absence were received for the meeting.

132 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved:

To approve and sign the minutes of the meetings held 8 October 2013.

133 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

134 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman advised that the outcome of the Staffing Policy Committee's consideration of staff morale would be reported to the next meeting of the Management Committee.

135 Public Participation

There were no comments or questions received from the public.

136 Housing Allocation Policy

The Committee were reminded of the process that had taken place for scrutinising the Housing Allocation Policy, and a copy of questions submitted by

Cllr Deane, and officer responses had also been circulated to the Committee. The Chairman outlined the recommendations contained within the Housing Allocations rapid scrutiny report. The Committee discussed the role of campuses and the location of housing allocations teams within them. It was clarified that campuses would act as a central signposting service, with no plans to relocate the staff currently based at Bourne Hill. Following discussion, the Management Committee;

Resolved:

To support the revised Housing Allocations Policy as appended to the report for approval by cabinet on the 21 November 2013 subject to the following being taken into account:

- 1) To support the benefit of seeking a common allocations policy among all social housing providers in Wiltshire.**
- 2) To change the description of the banding structure to a letter or number classification in order to signify that current arrangements have been extensively revised.**
- 3) To provide a graphical presentation of the new process in the form of a flowchart.**
- 4) To allow local connection to also mean officially recognised neighbourhoods as defined within an adopted neighbourhood plan encompassing more than one parish.**
- 5) To rename the new “expression of interest” category to better reflect that it no longer forms part of the revised Policy.**
- 6) To submit a further appendix to Cabinet and Council highlighting where the changes have been made within the banding structure.**
- 7) To utilise the Council’s hubs and new campus provision to improve access to housing services.**
- 8) To support an extensive housing newsletter for stakeholders and councillors.**

137 Highways and Streetscene Contract - Member Request

The Chairman outlined the position, and reminded the committee that the report and debate would direct the committee as to whether a scrutiny exercise would need to be conducted. The report proposed that a scrutiny exercise be undertaken in June 2014 after the first year of the operation of the contract.

The Chairman invited the Committee to comment on the report. There was a division of opinion between committee members with regard to evidence supporting the alleged contractual failings. The Committee discussed the bedding in period and the suggestion to scrutinise the contract document itself following the previous disbanding of the major contracts review task groups.

Cllr Phillip Whitehead (Portfolio Holder for Highways Contracts) responded to the Committee, detailing the arrangements in place for winter preparedness.

The Committee discussed some specific incidents of good and poor performance across the County and were concerned about addressing performance after events had transpired.

The Management Committee debated the potential areas of risk over the winter period and highlighted concern with reviewing performance after the event. At the conclusion of the debate, the Chairman proposed a three stage approach to the future scrutiny of this major contract.

Resolved:

- 1) A Rapid Scrutiny Exercise would be conducted on the content of the report to enable greater clarity on the concerns raised.**
- 2) A progress report would be presented to the Environment Select Committee after the winter, addressing operational performance.**
- 3) Environment Select Committee to conduct a full scrutiny exercise in June 2014 after the first full operational year of the contract.**

138 Overview and Scrutiny Councillor Development

The Management Committee were asked to comment on the Councillor Development: Scrutiny Skills training event held in October 2013, and to propose any recommendations for amendments to the session prior to the wider rollout.

The opinion of some of the Committee was that the session failed to address key training skills for scrutiny. The Committee agreed that for future events to be successful, greater focus would need to be placed on applied skills. Barry Pirie (Associate Director of People and Business Services) commented that the Council would be better placed to source training using in house expertise from the learning and development team.

Resolved:

To review the current training programme based on the comments received, and to make the necessary amendments before rolling out.

139 Task Group Update

Updates were made from the following task groups:

Financial Planning Task Group:

The Committee noted that monitoring procedures had now been more closely aligned with the financial plan, and another session would be held in November to finalise these arrangements. The Committee discussed how to engage members with the Financial Planning process, as the previous briefing session run by the Director of Finance held on 21 October 2013 was attended by only nine Councillors.

The Committee agreed that members could better engage with the process, stating that a lack of knowledge of task group accessibility and of financial reporting as potential reasons for limited member engagement.

Area Boards Task Group

The Committee noted that the Area Board Task Group was in the process of appointing members from a wide geographic area. There had been some opposition to the way appointments had been made. The Committee agreed that the opportunity for members to sit on the Task Group (and other activities) should be made available to all members.

Local Enterprise Partnership Task Group

The Committee noted that guidance on the Joint Scrutiny of the LEP had not been forthcoming, and requested that more rapid progress be made.

Resolved:

To note the updates from Task Groups.

140 **Forward Work Programme**

Following consideration of the Officers Report, the Chairman invited each of the Select Committees to comment on their own work plans.

The Committee expressed concern at the capacity to manage the burgeoning workplan of each of the Select Committees. A review of the work plan priorities was discussed by the Committee, with particular concern expressed over the engagement of members with some task groups. The circulation of the work programme to all Councillors was suggested, with the possibility of a scrutiny newsletter to keep members informed of the work programme also suggested.

Resolved:

- 1) To note the positive work undertaken to date in developing the work programme.**
- 2) To agree the first draft single overview and scrutiny work programme appended to this report.**
- 3) To note that it will continue to be informed through ongoing dialogue with the Executive linked to priorities in the Business Plan and other discussions.**
- 4) To receive an update on progress with activities and to review the content of the work programme at each future meeting.**

5) To note the possible need to prioritise activities in order to best utilise the resources available to each of the Select Committees.

141 Urgent Items

There were no Urgent Items.

142 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was noted as being 14 January 2014.

POST MEETING NOTE:

The date of the next Management Committee was confirmed as being held on the 7 January 2014.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 1.00 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Samuel Bath, of Democratic Services, direct line (01225) 718504211, e-mail samuel.bath@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115

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Wiltshire Council

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

7 January 2014

Report of the Highways and Streetscene Contract Rapid Scrutiny Exercise (Balfour Beatty Living Places - BBLP)

Purpose of report

- 1 To present the findings of the Rapid Scrutiny Group and to seek endorsement for its recommendations.

Background

- 2 As a member of the O & S Management Committee, Cllr Osborn submitted a request to the Committee for it to undertake a scrutiny exercise on the Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) contract. The request was considered at the meeting of the Committee on 5 November; to enable members to discuss the matter from an informed position, the executive had been invited to comment on the request and to supply any supporting information. A report was received from the Cabinet member and was discussed at the Committee meeting.
- 3 Following debate, the Committee agreed the following:
 - a) That a rapid scrutiny exercise would be conducted on the content of the report submitted by the Cabinet member to enable greater clarity of the concerns raised;
 - b) That a progress report would be presented to the Environment Select Committee after the winter, addressing operational performance;
 - c) That the Environment Select Committee conduct a full scrutiny exercise in June 2014, after the first full year of operation of the new contract.
- 4 The rapid scrutiny exercise being reported is the first of the three agreed actions.

Main considerations

- 5 The Rapid Scrutiny Group worked through the report provided by the executive systematically, and executive members, officers and a BBLP representative were present to respond to members' questions. The report was supplemented with updated performance data provided by the highways service.

- 6 The Committee is asked to consider the attached report of the BBLP Rapid Scrutiny Exercise and endorse its recommendations.

Proposal

- 7 To endorse the recommendations in paragraph 36 and refer the report to the relevant Cabinet members for response.

Paul Kelly, Scrutiny Manager and Designated Scrutiny Officer

Report Author: Maggie McDonald, Senior Scrutiny Officer
01225 713679 maggie.mcdonald@wiltshire.gov.uk

7 January 2014

**Report of the Highways and Streetscene Contract Rapid Scrutiny Exercise
(Balfour Beatty Living Places - BBLP)**

Purpose of report

- 1 To present the recommendations of the BBLP rapid scrutiny exercise.

Background

- 2 At the Council meeting on 9 July 2013 Cllr Jeff Osborn moved the following motion which, following a lengthy debate, was defeated.

That Council asks the Environment Select Committee to:

- undertake regular and close monitoring of this element of the new contract with Balfour Beatty Living Places;
- consider what lessons can be learned from how this contract was implemented to assist with planning future similar contracts and
- make recommendations as appropriate to the Executive'.

- 3 As a member of the O & S Management Committee, Cllr Osborn subsequently submitted a request to the Committee for it to undertake a scrutiny exercise on the Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) contract. The request was considered at the meeting of the Committee on 5 November; to enable members to discuss the matter from an informed position, the executive had been invited to comment on the request and to supply any supporting information. A report was received from the Cabinet member and was discussed at the Committee meeting. Following debate, the Committee agreed that:
 - a) A rapid scrutiny exercise would be conducted on the content of the report submitted by the Cabinet member to enable greater clarity of the concerns raised;
 - b) A progress report would be presented to the Environment Select Committee after the winter, addressing operational performance;
 - c) The Environment Select Committee conduct a full scrutiny exercise in June 2014, after the first full year of operation of the new contract.

Membership

- 4 The following members undertook the rapid scrutiny exercise:
Cllr Jeff Osborn (chairman)
Cllr Terry Chivers

Cllr Gordon King
Cllr Linda Packard
Cllr Pip Ridout
Cllr John Walsh.

Witnesses

- 5 Evidence was taken from:
- Cllr John Thomson, Cabinet member for Highways and Streetscene and Broadband
 - Cllr Philip Whitehead, Portfolio holder for Highways Contract
 - Carlton Brand, Corporate Director
 - Parvis Khansari, Associate Director, Highways and Transport
 - Peter Binley, Head of highways Asset Management and Commissioning
 - David Bailey, BBLP Business General Manager

Information provided by witnesses

- 6 Some disruption was caused at the start of the new contract due to lack of continuity of staff. This was due to six middle managers choosing not to transfer to the BBLP contract under the TUPE regulations at short notice. Under the regulations, staff are not obliged to transfer to the new employer or to give notice of their intentions.
- 7 The contract was introducing a fundamentally different way of working - bringing highways to the communities – and it was acknowledged that there had been some early disruption as a result. Two key elements were the introduction of the Community Teams and the application of the latest IT to support the service. It had been expected that these two elements would provide the biggest challenges.
- 8 The new IT systems include the introduction of the My Wiltshire App and hand held devices for all operatives. This is complex due to the requirement to ensure connectivity between different software from different companies. Development of the App is an ongoing process and improvements will continue to be made to the system as it is used. 'Clarence' will be phased out and a new number advertised. Residents can use the App directly or they can use the new free phone number, in which case customer care will input the details directly onto the App for them.
- 9 The previous contractor stopped grass cutting approximately two weeks before the end of the contract; they were only paid for the work they completed. This resulted in there being a backlog when BBLP took over. This was compounded by the lack of local knowledge of new staff, due to previous staff not transferring under TUPE. BBLP brought in the resources

needed to deal with the backlog, but competing demands had to be balanced and prioritised.

- 10 BBLP have reviewed grass cutting and identified all areas that should be cut. At the request of the rapid scrutiny members, it is understood that councillors will be provided with a list of grassed areas in their wards which are covered by the contract. Grass cutting frequency is based on the specification of the individual area. It was suggested by the Group that inadequate equipment was used to cut large areas of grass and the efficiency of this was questioned.
- 11 The contract indicates that bi-monthly programmes of work should be provided to the Area Boards. Councillors receive a list of major works in their areas but were interested to know about the smaller, local activities. Councillors were informed that they can contact their community coordinators for more information.
- 12 BBLP explained that they had good relations with the unions and that in a recent exercise two staff had been made redundant and others had moved teams. They had recruited three managers and continued to review their requirements. They use agency staff to provide flexibility.
- 13 Each community area now has its own community team (although they can be shared in an emergency). Representatives from the Community Teams plan to visit each Area Board after Christmas and provide updates. It is also proposed to visit each Area Board regularly every 6 -9 months with BBLP staff.
- 14 The Council, BBLP and Atkins meet monthly to review all projects, during which they score each other across all areas on a 1 – 10 scale (1 is poor), ie the Council and Atkins score BBLP etc; guidance is provided for the scoring. If a score is too high or too low, the scorer is obliged to comment. Scores provided for BBLP for October showed that they were scoring well in seven of the eight service areas, the weakest at 4.5 being local highways and streetscene. Members agreed that this area was of most concern as measured by complaints that councillors receive. BBLP were delivering on budget. The Group acknowledged that BBLP was performing well in the area of major maintenance on highways and larger schemes.

BBLP October scores by service

Service Area	Score
Highways major maintenance	7.10
Drainage works	8.00
Integrated transport	6.90
Local highways and streetscene	4.50
Major schemes	7.70
Street lighting maintenance	7.80

Street lighting improvements	7.70
Structures	6.70

- 15 There is good engagement at the weekly officer meetings held to review the Action List, which comprises registered concerns. Most issues have been resolved, those outstanding are IT related and will be complete by the end of the year. Some issues are due to the configuration of the Council network. Both BBLP and the Council have responsibility for IT. BBLP have procured a bespoke system for the Wiltshire Council contract. BBLP are able to purchase nationally or locally, to obtain the best product/service.
- 16 It was confirmed that the benefits outlined in Appendix A of the report from the Cabinet member were beginning to be realised. An additional potential benefit was identified, that of localisation of services.
- 17 The contract contains a number of undertakings, which are monitored to ensure delivery. One is the provision of six apprenticeships. Recruitment for the places has not yet started and a date could not be given. It was explained that it would be inappropriate to recruit until BBLP had established its employee needs. It was looking to extend its operations and this could provide opportunities.
- 18 The BBLP Performance Review provided was a 6 month 'snapshot'. The figures for 'highways major maintenance' represented total activity possible within the budget. Priority was on ensuring safe roads. 'Integrated transport' showed few schemes completed although many had been issued. Delivery is behind as there are issues around workflow, but progress is now being made. These represent many small schemes which are traditionally slow, often encountering difficulties through the consultation period. CATG projects account for approximately 25% of the programme.
- 19 Members posed a series of questions which required a response from the Legal Department. Members' questions and the subsequent responses from the Legal Department are contained in Appendix A to this report at the request of the group.

Views of the members of the rapid scrutiny exercise

- 20 The portfolio holder and officers stated that they had anticipated that two areas of work would cause the most challenge and that had proved to be the case; the areas being local highways and streetscene and IT. Members concurred that these remained areas of concern and required further scrutiny, particularly as they relate to the public.
- 21 It had been felt by members that inadequate equipment was being used to cut large areas of grass. They would like to be re-assured that the most

appropriate grass cutting equipment is available, that personnel are fully trained and that productivity has improved.

- 22 It was noted that BBLP used agency staff to provide flexibility but members were concerned that the use of agency staff resulted in a lack of important local knowledge and continuity.
- 23 Members were concerned that redundancies amongst Wiltshire Council staff meant that the appropriate people were not always in post. This resulted in a shortfall of communication between the public, the Council and BBLP.
- 24 Members were also concerned that issues were reported repeatedly but that nothing appeared to be done or there was too long a period between reporting and action being taken. The Portfolio holder explained that often action was being taken but that the process could take time eg where a notice period was required because of the necessity to close a road, but it was acknowledged that feedback was not as good as it should be. Members believed that the circle of reporting/feedback must be completed and must be seen to be completed.
- 25 Members suggested that early communications about the innovations arising from the new local highways and streetscene system may have raised the public's expectations unrealistically. There was also confusion among the public and parishes over terminology eg 'parish stewards', 'community teams', 'community days'.
- 26 It was noted that no action had yet been taken in respect of recruiting the six apprentices in Wiltshire which is an undertaking within the contract. Also that BBLP indicated that the apprenticeships might arise out of work they have yet to identify or develop.
- 27 Whilst acknowledging that different area boards may require different forms of engagement, it was noted that there was inconsistency in the way Community Coordinators engaged with area boards and parishes, particularly around the provision of local work programmes and progress reports. It was felt that they should have greater visibility in some areas.
- 28 Members now have a better understanding of the aspirational working of the contract, but still have questions on the absence of default notices and the role of early warning notices.
- 29 It was felt that it would be helpful for the legal department to provide members with a summary of the key elements of large contracts (the BBLP contract comprises 700+ pages). Members were surprised that these were not routinely provided to councillors.

- 30 Members consider that worthwhile scrutiny of any contract should include the tracking of its progress from development of service specification through to award and early performance. It was felt that lessons could be learned from the case of the BBLP contract.

Conclusions

- 31 Members were reassured that the contract was performing satisfactorily in seven of the eight main areas of the contract.
- 32 The local highways and streetscene element of the contract had been identified as a main area of concern within the contract, and the IT system as a concern within that; improvement must be sought in both these areas.
- 33 A fully effective reporting and feedback procedure was key to the effective operation of the local highways and streetscene contract. Members need to be convinced that an effective feedback mechanism exists in response to issues that are reported under the new system.
- 34 There was confusion over the terminology used in respect of the Community Teams and this needs to be addressed.
- 35 Members felt that the role of active local councillors was crucial in making the relationship work between parish councils, area boards, local highways and streetscene and BBLP.

Recommendations

- 36 **The Rapid Scrutiny Group recommends that:**
- a) **The members who undertook the rapid scrutiny exercise meet again in March 2014 to evaluate the work undertaken on IT, local streetscene and the reporting/feedback procedure;**
 - b) **Prior to the meeting in March, the rapid scrutiny group is provided with:**
 - **up to date evidence of the effective reporting and feedback procedure;**
 - **information on the role of early warning notices and the absence of default notices, and copies of the standard clauses used in the contract;**
 - **evidence that the most appropriate grass cutting equipment is available, that personnel are fully trained to use the equipment and that productivity has improved.**

- c) **The outcome of the second rapid scrutiny exercise is reported to the Environment Select Committee to coincide with the presentation of a progress report addressing operational performance after winter;**
- d) **The Highways team undertake a well planned and publicised re-launch of the Community Team service, which should be shared with the rapid scrutiny group prior to implementation then the group should have the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the relaunch.**
- e) **A copy of the report of the rapid scrutiny group should be sent to all councillors with a covering letter, requesting feedback from them on any areas of concern on the local streetscene aspects of the BBLP contract. Their feedback to be sent to the Scrutiny Team and collated to inform the second meeting of the rapid scrutiny group in March.**
- f) **The legal department should, in future, provide summaries of the key elements of large contracts for circulation to councillors.**
- g) **The Audit Committee should arrange for a full audit of the Highways and Streetscene contract as soon as possible, the outcome of which should be reported to the O & S Management Committee.**
- h) **The report should be forwarded to the relevant Cabinet members for response.**

Next steps

37 The report will be submitted to the O & S Management Committee on 7 January 2014 for endorsement.

Cllr Jeff Osborn - Chairman, Rapid Scrutiny exercise

Report Author: Maggie McDonald, Senior Scrutiny Officer
01225 713679 maggie.mcdonald@wiltshire.gov.uk

Appendices

Appendix A Members' questions and responses from the Legal Department

Members' questions and responses from the Legal Department

Q1: *The contract is dated 1 June 2013 but I have an email from Peter Binley dated 17 July 2013 stating that it has not yet been signed. I also have an email from Peter dated 26 September 2013 stating that it has now been signed. I understand that there were negotiations of a legal nature taking place. Exactly what was being negotiated in the period between the 1 June 2013 and the actual date the contract was signed?*

A1: The negotiations that were carried out after the 1 June were to do with the leases of the depot sites. The Council had included in the tender documentation forms of leases for the depots which were based on the then existing leases with Ringway. We received no comments or indication that the leases were not acceptable to BBLP until after BBLP had been told that they were to be awarded the contract. In around the last week of May BBLP sent the draft depot lease to their external lawyers (Pinsents). Pinsents raised a large number of issues on the leases immediately prior to the planned execution date (1 June) and we were told that BBLP would not execute unless and until the issues were resolved. As it turned out there were few strictly "legal" issues – the main point of negotiation was what services to the depots would be supplied free by the Council and what would BBLP pay for.

Q2: *What was the actual date the contract was signed?*

A2: The contract was fully executed on 4 September.

Q3: *The contract is with Balfour Beatty Living Places (LP) and is guaranteed by Balfour Beatty (BB) The guarantee does not appear to have been executed. Is there a reason for this?*

A3: The guarantee was executed on the same day, 4 September.

Q4: *LP is a £100 company and has no income or assets. What was the advantage to Wiltshire Council to enter into an agreement with LP instead of with BB direct?*

A4: The benefit of this sort of special purpose company is for the organisations delivering the services. It allows (in this case) Balfour Beatty plc to identify and isolate liabilities. These sorts of companies are very common in large contract and PFI arrangements (e.g. the Council's social housing PFI arrangements). The

Council has to rely on the PCG to have BB plc to stand in for liabilities that are too big for BBLP to absorb.

Q5: *The guarantee states in clause 1 “ Notwithstanding any other provision of this Guarantee, the Guarantor shall have no greater liability under this deed than it would have had if the Guarantor had been named as joint contractor with the Contractor under the contract” This clause maybe interpreted as the Guarantor only being liable for 50% of LP liability as it does not state “joint and severally liable”. If this is correct why was this agreed to?*

A5: The use of a joint liability makes BB plc totally liable under the PCG for BBLP failure to perform its obligations under the service contract. There is no question of BB plc only having a 50% liability. But what the PCG does do is give BB plc a liability which is no more than BBLP’s liability arising out of BBLP’s failure to perform or breach of contract.

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EXTRACT OF CABINET HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2013

Key Decisions Matters defined as 'Key' Decisions and included in the Council's Forward Work Plan are shown as 

Minute 106 Wiltshire Council's New Housing Allocations Policy

Cllr Keith Humphries presented a report which reported on the outcome of consultations and sought Cabinet approval of a new Housing Allocations Policy effective from April 2014.

The proposed new Allocations Policy would help to deliver on the Council's vision to create stronger and more resilient communities by focussing on local homes for local people. This would also help bring communities together to enable and support them to do more for themselves which was a key priority within the Council's Business Plan.

The Policy would remain a choice based lettings scheme covering the Wiltshire Council area. It would include eligible and exclusion criteria for registration, property size criteria, a new banding structure that determines how applicants would be assessed and prioritised and how homes would be allocated. Cllr Clewer, Portfolio Holder explained points of detail on the Policy.

Scrutiny engagement had taken place at key milestones in developing the revised policy. A Rapid Scrutiny exercise was held on 28 October, the outcome of which had been endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 5 November 2013. Cllr Simon Killane, Chairman of the Management Committee explained the Scrutiny recommendations.

Cllr Humphries acknowledged the helpful input from Scrutiny, with many of their recommendations taken on board. Key points from the consultation had been incorporated in the robust policy. This included allocation to people with a local connection, which 71.8% of respondents to the consultation requested.

Concern was raised by Cllrs Tony Deane and George Jeans over the allocations policy being too prescriptive. It was suggested that the Policy should include provision for those with a local employment connection as in need, if they are not able to afford accommodation within the village or parish in which they work. It was also suggested that those building affordable housing should also be happy with the Council's Allocation Policy. A suggested form of wording was proposed.

Cllr Humphries explained that whilst he was not prepared to accept the suggested wording without first examining the implications, he would be happy to discuss the matter further with Cllrs Deane and Jeans and make any minor changes if considered appropriate. It was also agreed to delete the word 'existing' from paragraph 9.3 of the policy to read:

9.3 *Existing Planning agreements and former exception sites*

It was noted that work would take place to promote and explain the revised Policy to members, the public and parish councils.

The proposed Policy as amended was proposed. An amendment was also made to change the delegation from the Associate Director to the Corporate Director.

Resolved:

That Cabinet approves the new Allocations Policy to be implemented from April 2014 and delegates to the Corporate Director with responsibility for Housing any necessary final minor amendments (including the deletion of the word 'existing' from paragraph 9.3) in consultation with the Cabinet member for Public Health, Protection Service and Adult Care and Housing.

Reason for decision:

The Housing Act 1996 Part VI (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) and Localism Act 2012 requires the Council to have a scheme which determines how allocations and nominations will be made. In Wiltshire we operate a Choice Based Lettings policy called Homes4Wiltshire which was adopted shortly before unitary.

The purpose of the Council's Choice Based Lettings Policy is to set out clear guidelines to ensure that affordable housing is allocated fairly and according to an applicants' need for housing while at the same time taking into account effective management of the affordable housing stock across Wiltshire. Following the introduction of the Localism Act we had the opportunity to review our allocations policy to consider some of the new freedoms that the act introduced. Following extensive consultation we have proposed some fundamental changes to our policy and have taken full advantage of our new freedoms to ensure we make best use of our limited affordable housing stock and give priority to local people.

These decisions were published on the 2 December 2013 and will come into force on 10 December 2013
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The Officer who has produced these minutes is Yamina Rhouati, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718024 or e-mail Yamina.Rhouati@wiltshire.gov.uk
Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

Extract from the Minutes of the Staffing Policy Committee

6 November 2013

45 **Workforce Information - Update on Levels of Employee Engagement**

The Committee considered a report by the Associate Director, People & Business Services which provided an update on current levels of employee engagement based on available information and data.

It was noted that recently some concerns about the current levels of employee engagement had been raised by some members and the branch office of UNISON, against a backdrop of significant change including a recent council wide voluntary redundancy programme and increases to senior management pay.

At a meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee on 8 October 2013, a review of staff engagement and moral levels using an external provider was proposed and discussed. That Committee agreed that instead the data available internally should be used to provide an update on current employee engagement levels to this Committee.

The Committee noted the number of initiatives that had been taking place to maintain employee engagement and also the challenges that the Council had been facing since it became a unitary authority in 2009. Each of these challenges had and would continue to shape initiatives aimed at reducing the impact on staff to ensure employee engagement could be maintained during unsettling periods.

Members were pleased to note that despite the lengthy periods of change that had been taking place, employee engagement had improved with the information suggesting that employees were more engaged with the Council now than when monitoring began in 2011.

After further discussion,

Resolved:

- (1) To note the contents of the report.**
- (2) To note that the analysis of all the available data showed that concerns about staff morale could not be substantiated.**
- (3) To conclude that all of the available data suggested that, despite the changes that had been taking place and the challenges being faced, employees were engaged.**

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Workforce Information

Update on levels of employee engagement

Purpose of the report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Staffing Policy Committee with an update on current levels of employee engagement based on the information and data available.

Background

2. Employee engagement is crucial to the success of the council and the delivery of the council's vision and the new business plan, and is an indication of the level of staff morale in an organisation. HR already monitors employee engagement and uses the national "engage for success" motion (started by the MacLeod Report, 2009) to support this. This is a central government initiative and gives the evidence for monitoring and improving engagement and is referred to throughout this report.
3. Recently, concerns about the current levels of employee engagement have been raised by some members and the branch office of UNISON, against a backdrop of significant change including a recent council wide voluntary redundancy programme and increases to senior manager pay.
4. At a meeting of Overview and Scrutiny on the 8th October a review of staff engagement and morale levels using an external provider was proposed and discussed. It was agreed that instead the data available internally should be used to provide an update on current employee engagement levels to Staffing Policy Committee.
5. It is important to understand the context around the initiatives that have taken place to maintain employee engagement and the challenges that the council has faced since it became a unitary in 2009. These challenges have included:
 - Doubling the size of the workforce by bringing together five councils
 - Placing over 2500 employees at risk of redundancy since 2009
 - 820 redundancies as a result of over 83 service reviews and a council wide voluntary redundancy programme
 - Bringing together five cultures, behaviours and terms and conditions
 - Deleting the chief executive post and implementing a new leadership model for the council
 - No annual pay award for Hay graded staff since 2008, and all other staff since 2009.
 - A freeze on the payment of increments for all staff since April 2010.
 - Introduction of new ways of working, including hot desking, and a requirement for staff to work more flexibly.
 - An increase in senior manager pay as a result of a review of market pay for jobs at the same level in the public and not for profit sector, the first such review since 2008.
 - A council wide voluntary redundancy programme, resulting in 253 further redundancies
 - A recent senior management re-structure resulting in the realignment of services and a reduction in senior management posts.

6. Each of these challenges has and will continue to shape initiatives aimed at reducing the impact on staff to ensure employee engagement can be maintained during unsettling periods for staff.

Steps taken to monitor and understand levels of employee engagement

Workforce data

7. The transformation that has been taking place at the council since 2009 highlighted the need to monitor levels of employee engagement and in 2011 the first Wiltshire Council staff survey took place. In addition other steps were taken at the same time to ensure effective processes were in place to collect data that could reinforce the results of the staff survey. This included adapting the exit interview questionnaire and introducing more robust and effective monitoring of sickness absence levels and turnover. All of this data help us to understand the levels of employee engagement, and where appropriate enable the council to take action to address any issues.
8. Both the staff survey, which was repeated in 2012, and the exit interview questionnaire monitor engagement levels by asking six questions that monitor the three elements of employee engagement. The following questions are based upon ORC International's employee engagement model which is the product of 25 years of experience and development:
 - i. I am proud to work for Wiltshire Council
 - ii. I would recommend Wiltshire Council as a good place to work
 - iii. I feel a strong sense of belonging to Wiltshire Council
 - iv. I feel committed to the organisations goals
 - v. Working for Wiltshire Council makes me want to do the best job I can
 - vi. Wiltshire Council motivates me to do more than is normally required in my role
9. Please see Appendix 1 to view the results of these questions during both 2011 and 2012.
10. Using the statistics from the answers to these 6 questions has enabled the identification of engagement levels and the areas where improvements can be made.
11. Sickness and turnover information has also helped to monitor possible changes in employee engagement by looking at the levels of absence and turnover and the reasons for absence, particularly stress related absence.

Steps taken to maintain and improve levels of employee engagement

12. Enablers for maintaining and improving employee engagement are defined in "engage for success" the government initiative for monitoring and improving engagement. There are 4 enablers and the council has taken action against each. This has included:
 - i. Visible, empowering leadership providing a **strong strategic narrative** about the organisation, where it's come from and where it's going.

Actions taken:

- New business plan (2013 – 2017) which clearly defines the councils priorities and the outcomes required
- People Strategy (2012- 2015) which provides the rationale for further change and acknowledges the workforce as the council's most important asset.

- Hub visits, staff & manager forums, to provide staff with leadership visibility and raise the profile of the councils priorities and the role of staff in delivering them
- Management blogs & the use of social media, to keep staff informed
- Behaviours framework launched in 2012 to define how we expect staff to behave

ii. **Engaging managers** who focus their people and give them scope, treat their people as individuals and coach and stretch their people.

Actions taken:

- New and revised HR policies and procedures to provide managers with information that clearly defines their role and responsibilities
- Management matters courses to develop core people management skills
- 76 coaches trained, to reinforce and develop effective leadership skills
- Embedding the behaviours framework in policies, procedures, learning & development, appraisals and staff awards.

iii. There is **employee voice** throughout the organisation, for reinforcing and challenging views, between functions and externally, employees are seen as central to the solution.

Actions taken:

- Hub visits, staff & manager forums, giving staff to ask questions and challenge the information being provided.
- Staff surveys & the use of new social media for staff to feedback their views
- Staff survey action plans developed by staff in each service area in reaction to staff survey results
- Opportunities to join staff user groups to support and influence the transformational activities (travel, agile working etc)
- Introduction of monthly and annual employee awards to recognise contribution, aspirational behaviours and “can do” attitude

iv. There is organisational **integrity** – the values on the wall are reflected in day to day behaviours. There is no ‘say –do’ gap.

Actions taken:

- Introduction of a behaviours framework to clearly define the expected, desirable and aspirational behaviours required from staff, and embedded in policies, procedures, learning & development, appraisals and staff awards.
- Implementation of a new electronic appraisal solution focused on future performance and behaviour
- Monthly and annual employee awards assessed against the behaviours required and defined in the framework and recognising aspirational behaviour
- Hub visits, staff and manager forums, information cascaded reinforces the behaviours required
- New business plan which clearly outlines the importance of behaviours and the culture on delivery of the council’s priorities

Employee engagement analysis

13. The following section identifies our employee engagement levels based upon the analysis of staff survey results, voluntary turnover & exit interviews and sickness absence

Staff surveys

14. Staff surveys took place in February 2011 and October 2012.
15. Despite the challenges facing the council throughout this period (over 400 redundancies, deletion of the chief executive post) the 2012 results showed that significant improvements had been made in the following sections:
 - 'Managing Change' saw a 32% increase
 - 'Management and Leadership' saw a 10% increase
 - 'Employee Engagement' saw a 19% increase up to 51% (engage for success suggest only 33% are engaged across the country)
 - Questions regarding workload stayed consistent
 - 12 of the 14 questions used in both surveys saw increases in positive responses, the highest being for 'Wiltshire Council manages change effectively' where positive responses almost doubled.

Voluntary Turnover & Exit Interviews

16. Voluntary turnover decreased between the 2009/10 and 2010/11 financial years by 1.6%.
17. Since then though voluntary turnover has increased by 0.6%, and turnover for the current year is above the local government benchmark. The main reason given for leaving the council is "resignation for alternative employment. Despite this, analysis of the data from exit interviews shows that:
 - a. 90% were happy in their team
 - b. 65% left because they wanted a change in their career
 - c. 20% left due to better terms and conditions
 - d. 10% left due to a lack of job security and work life balance, which is a reduction when compared to 2009 when 20% gave this as the reason for "resignation for alternative employment".
18. The fact that job security and work life balance as a reason for leaving has reduced is an indication that the council has been able to manage effectively the changes that have taken place, including 274 redundancies so far in 2013.
19. This data suggests that employee engagement has not been a cause of voluntary turnover. This is reinforced by the results of the staff surveys in February 2011 and October 2012 which showed an increase of 19% in employee engagement.

Sickness Absence

20. Sickness levels were high during the first year of unitary (2009/10), with 9.4 days of absence per full time equivalent (FTE) but this dropped to 8.7 days during the following year, (2010/11).
21. Since then the levels of sickness absence has remained constant with little variation. However despite this the level of sickness absence attributed to stress has decreased by 15% in 2012/13 compared to 2009/10.
22. The fact that stress related sickness absence has decreased indicates that the cause of work related stress are being managed well despite the challenges being faced by the council and the impact of those challenges on the workforce.

Peer Review

23. The data analysis and the actions taken to maintain and improve employee engagement during a period of significant change is supported by initial feedback from the peer challenge which has been extremely positive on staff and culture. The peers were impressed by the council's positive and community focused organisational culture. They found that the council has a highly engaged workforce with a real sense of pride in the organisation, a clear understanding of the council's vision and purpose, an emerging single view of change, strong leadership and trusted relationships between officers and councillors. They concluded that this reduces the risk of failure of the transformation and will also ensure that robust decisions are made by the council and resources are allocated to ensure delivery of the business plan.

Summary

24. The report highlights that, although the council has been through a lengthy period of change and faced many challenges that have had an impact on the workforce; employee engagement has improved with the information suggesting that employees are more engaged with the council now than when the monitoring began in 2011.

25. The report also highlights the actions that have been taken to maintain and increase employee engagement across the council, recognising its importance in delivering the council's vision.

26. The analysis of all of the data available shows that concerns about staff morale cannot be substantiated. The conclusion is that all of the data available suggests that despite the changes taking place and the challenges being faced that employees are engaged.

Barry Pirie
Associate Director People & Business Services

Report Author: Joanne Pitt, Service Head, HR Strategy & Policy

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report: None

Appendix 1 – Staff survey employee engagement results

			% Positive	
			Wiltshire 2012	Wiltshire 2011
Say	38	I am proud to work for Wiltshire Council	55	49
	39	I would recommend Wiltshire Council as a great place to work	45	34
Stay	40	I feel committed to the organisation's goals	66	55
	41	I feel a strong sense of belonging to this organisation	43	34
Strive	42	Working for Wiltshire Council makes me want to do the best job I can	57	51
	43	Wiltshire Council motivates me to contribute more than is normally required in my work	38	33
Employee Engagement Index			51	43

Training Proposal for Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

What is the overall aim of the learning?

To prepare all councillors to successfully contribute to the scrutiny process in select committees and task groups.

What is the outcome that we expect this learning to achieve?

To ensure that councillors work together in a non-politicised way to effectively challenge and review subject matter.

Background

28 Councillors had a 30 minute introduction to scrutiny given by Paul Kelly as part of the induction programme on 8/9 May 2013 (one in Chippenham and one in Salisbury).

28 Councillors (not all same as above) had a half day session on Scrutiny training with Paul Kelly on 16th May 2013.

9 Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee members and 3 officers had a half day training session in October which was delivered by Charles Jack of Gateway training to a brief given by the Council's Scrutiny Team. This was not well received by all who attended. It included content on: appreciative inquiry, communication-types of questions, non-verbal cues, and transactional analysis, and also how people react at meetings.

Understanding the need

In discussions at the Management Committee on 5 November about refining further training requirements, an initial approach was made by Paul Kelly (Overview and Scrutiny Manager) to the Council's Learning and Development Team to support this work; this was followed up by meeting with Paul and the chair and vice-chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee Simon Killane and Roy While. We had a full discussion on the background to the request and the options for moving forward on this. In order to establish more clearly what happened previously and ascertain the type of training needed we asked the members of the management committee to give us some feedback. Unfortunately we only had three responses. They each said the training was too long and ineffective. They recommended that 50% of the workshop should be focused on the scrutiny process and there should be less emphasis on personal skills.

We also discussed the training with the Councillor Development Group who considered that it was important to include some emphasis on constructive criticism and how to get the most out of people. It was also suggested that the training should

ensure that people concentrate on overview which is about good policies and processes as this is often overlooked.

Research into other options

Following the negative feedback on the previous training we then looked at other options offered by training providers already delivering workshops on communicating and working together better, SW councils and SE councils, RADA and Centre for Public Scrutiny.

Recommendation

A three hour workshop covering 60% scrutiny concept and process and 40 % developing and improving communication skills and techniques.

OBJECTIVES

- To develop an understanding of the concept of scrutiny and its role in the democratic process in relation to executive powers
- To identify key skills, behaviours and approaches which will promote effective scrutiny
- To explore how to structure good investigations and basic research methods

CONTENT

Where Overview and Scrutiny (OS) fits in

- The constitutional fit, the political management fit, the cultural fit
- Core principles in the context of how the council manages and operates OS arrangements
- Developing effective working relationships with the executive/policy making function and other parts of the local government framework. New legal provisions

The OS function in context

- Relationships with the executive/policy making function
- Acting on behalf of and with the local community
- Partner scrutiny – what it means and how it operates
- The degree of influence for this non-decision making role – developing influence and making a difference
- Leadership and management of the function

Developing OS skills

- Gain new information through effective questioning techniques
- Hidden messages and clues
- Techniques to check and build understanding
- Active listening techniques
- Managing contributions and participation through effective chairing

Also use some of the time for interactive discussion work using case studies from WC or others where scrutiny has successfully influenced the outcome and work

through scenarios in groups of 5 (these could be chosen at random or to reflect political balance).

Recommendation for training provider

We recommend using a training provider from the SW Councils pool called Ann Reeder who has experience of working with councils on scrutiny issues. Paul Kelly has spoken with her to discuss the training to ensure the development activity meets our needs and reflects Wiltshire's context. She has offered to observe an overview and scrutiny meeting in the New Year to gain a greater understanding. At this stage she is holding some time available in the last week of March for the workshop.

Cost

The cost is £495 + VAT + travel.

For the training to be viable we would need to have a minimum of 10 councillors attending with a maximum of up to 15. The most preferred time for councillor training appears to be daytime and we would suggest a half day of either morning or afternoon. The most popular venue is Trowbridge. We would recommend running one session initially using Ann Reeder and then repeating a second session later if the demand is there as all non-executive councillors would potentially benefit from the training.

Background of Ann Reeder of [Frontline Consulting](#)

Ann established Frontline Consulting to support councillors in their frontline roles and to respond to changes in the public sector.

She has been an active ward councillor, a cabinet member with a portfolio covering consultation and local democracy, and in the leadership of the council. Ann also has experience in a minority administration on a hung council, and in addition spent two years in opposition. She has been on the board of a regeneration project, chaired a town centre partnership and was an environmental lead.

Ann focuses on governance issues on councils, having had practical experience on the working group that introduced new structures in her authority, and having worked in both the committee system and the executive scrutiny split. She therefore is well placed to support changes arising from the Localism Act 2011. She specialises in community engagement and overview and scrutiny, having conducted reviews across the country.

Ann also is an Expert Adviser and Regional Advocate for the South West with the Centre for Public Scrutiny, a Tutor with South West Councils and a Consultant with the Local Government Information Unit. She has worked with the IDeA (now LG Improvement and Development) and Local Government Leadership (formerly the Leadership Centre for Local Government)

Options for dates and venues

One in County Hall Trowbridge at the end of March for up to 15 people

Repeat once or twice in the same or in a different venue (either Chippenham or Salisbury) from June onwards depending on demand.

Promoting and advertising the workshop

- Add to the Elected Wire as one of a list of councillor workshops
- Add to the list of workshops available for councillors on The Wire.

Further Options for advertising

- Send a targeted email from Simon Killane and Roy While to the 75 councillors who are eligible to attend inviting them to participate.
- Write to the management committee inviting them to recommend the workshop to their select committees.
- Send a calendar invite with the details of the event to the 39 who are on the select committees.
- Additionally a further incentive could be that anyone who wants to be part of the scrutiny process will need to have attended this training?

Judith Cooper

Organisation Development Lead, Organisational Development and Learning Service

Wiltshire Council

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

7 January 2014

COUNCIL MOTION - SUPERMARKET LEVY

- 1 Council at its meeting on 12 November referred the following motion proposed by Councillor Jeff Osborn and seconded by Councillor Terry Chivers to Overview and Scrutiny for consideration and report back.

“This council requires officers to investigate the opportunities provided in the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 to levy a charge on all Wiltshire supermarkets with the object of reducing parking charges in our city and market towns.

A report should be presented in sufficient time before the next full council to enable a notice of motion to be prepared so that a debate can take place on the matter.”

- 2 The Sustainable Communities Act (SCA) provides a process by which local communities can, through their respective council, propose changes at a national level (such as legislation or policy) that could improve the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of their local area.
- 3 Local authorities do not currently have the power to levy this tax, hence the call under the SCA for Government to grant this power. As a power, the local authority can then decide whether it wishes to make use of that power or not. If powers were granted, then further detailed consultation would need to be carried out if the Council were to consider using the powers to implement a levy.
- 4 The Committee will be aware that this motion (and similar ones elsewhere) is as a result of a national campaign by an organisation called Local Works, an umbrella organisation who were instrumental in bringing about the Sustainable Communities Act and working with councils and the community to ensure it is used to achieve its objectives. It is understood from Local Works that Oxford City, Southwark Borough, Derby City, Weymouth & Portland Borough and Enfield Borough Councils have resolved to support a supermarket levy.
- 5 Currently Northern Ireland is the only part of the UK which operates a large retail levy. There has been a 15% retail levy on properties with a rateable value of £500,000 or more since April 2012. Scotland has introduced a public health supplement levy, a 9.3% supplement on retail outlets with a rateable value of over £300,000 that sell both alcohol and tobacco. Wiltshire currently has 76 properties with a rateable value of £500,000 or more of which 25 are retail shops.

- 6 There is research material available both nationally and within Wiltshire covering various mechanisms of rate relief and levy and the potential impact on business and communities which can be made available. The Committee may feel this motion raises some wider issues to do with town centre regeneration etc. and therefore the review could take on a broader remit?
- 7 The Committee is asked to decide how it wishes to respond to the referral by Council within its current work programme commitments. It may see certain similarities with the work undertaken by the Community Infrastructure Levy Task Group and that to shortly begin by the Parking Charges Task Group. Both of these operate under the Environment Select Committee.

Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan

Committee	Review / Task Group	Nov-13	Dec-13	Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Scrutiny Officer	STATUS (incl. date)	
		Cabinet 21st Nov	Cabinet 17th Dec	Cabinet 21st Jan	Cabinet 11th Feb	Cabinet 18th Mar	Cabinet 22nd April	Cabinet 20th May	Cabinet 17th Jun	Cabinet 22nd Jul			
		Council 12th Nov			Council 4th and 25th Feb			Council 13th May		Council 29th Jul			
O & S MANAGEMENT	Financial Planning Task Group	Ongoing									PK/ED	Next meeting 15 Jan	
	Review of Area Boards Task Group										HP	First meeting 8 Jan	
	Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Task Group										PK/ED	Joint with Swindon BC. Membership invited first meeting being arranged	
	Campus Governance										PK	Timing and details to be decided	
	Broadband Rollout										PK	Timing and details to be decided	
	Development of the Procurement Service										PK	Timing and details to be decided	
	Housing Allocations Policy Rapid Scrutiny	Management 5 Nov			Management 7 Jan							PK	Outcome of rapid exercise being reported to Cabinet 21 Nov
	Highways and Streetscene Contract - Member Request	Management 5 Nov			Management 7 Jan							PK/MM	Rapid scrutiny completed, report to MC Jan 2014
	Staff Morale - Member Request				Management 7 Jan							PK	Report back from Staffing Policy Committee
	Scrutiny Representation of Project Boards and Focus Groups										PK	Regular updates provided to Committee	
Supermarket Levy to pay for car parking				Management 7 Jan							PK/ED		
CHILDREN'S	Further Education in the Salisbury Area Task Group - 18 month review				Children's Jan 2013							HP	Task Group undertaking 18-month review. Report to Committee on 28 Jan 2014.
	Pupil Performance data 2013				Children's Jan 2013								Annual report on pupil attainment from Foundation to KS5
	Early Help Strategy - update				Children's Jan 2013			Children's March 2013				HP/RB	Draft Strategy rec'd Dec 2013. Update on final version and imp' plan requested. CSC to monitor success indicators.
	Safeguarding Children & Young People Task Group	Review in progress									HP	Final' report endorsed March 2013. Task Group currently developing their new FWP.	
	Further Education Task Group	Review in progress									HP	Membership being sought and scoping meeting to be arranged.	
	SEND Task Group	Review in progress									HP	Membership being sought and scoping meeting to be arranged.	
	Schools and the Local Authority Task Group	Review in progress									HP	Membership being sought and scoping meeting to be arranged.	

Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan

Committee	Review / Task Group	Nov-13	Dec-13	Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Scrutiny Officer	STATUS (incl. date)			
		Cabinet 21st Nov	Cabinet 17th Dec	Cabinet 21st Jan	Cabinet 11th Feb	Cabinet 18th Mar	Cabinet 22nd April	Cabinet 20th May	Cabinet 17th Jun	Cabinet 22nd Jul					
ENVIRONMENT	Air Quality Joint Task Group (Env / Hlth)	Review in progress			Environment Feb 2014						MM	Task Group review complete, report to Committee Feb 14			
	Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Task Group		Environment Dec 2013	Review in progress							MM	Task Group presented proposed rate of CIL to ESC and Cabinet Dec 13. Work to continue due to changing legislation.			
	Waste Task Group		Environment Dec 2013								MM	Task Group presented final report to ESC and Cabinet member Dec 13. Still to scrutinise comms strategy for rounds remodelling.			
	Adoptable Estates Task Group	Review in progress				Environment Feb 2014							MM	Task Group reviewing systems and communications around planning processes Report to Committee Feb 2014	
	Investing in Highways												MM	Direction to be agreed in consultation with Cabinet member Dec 2013	
	Parking Review												MM	Members appointed, Task Group to convene Jan 2014	
	20 mph Policy		Environment Dec 2013										MM	Policy supported. Task Group to review developing policy Jan 2014, members appointed	
	Speedwatch												MM	Members appointed, Rapid Scrutiny to convene Jan 2014	
	Highways and Streetscene Contract BBLP						Environment Feb 2014							MM	Review performance of winter operation followed by annual review in June
	Flood Plan Annual Report												MM	Annual report - duty to review Date to be confirmed	
HEALTH	Air Quality Joint Task Group (Env / Hlth)	Review in progress		Health Jan 14								MM	Task Group review complete, report to Committee Jan 14		
	Transfer to Care Task Group					Review in progress					MM	Task Group reviewing systems across relevant agencies			
	Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Task Group					Review in progress					MM	Task Group reviewing CCG progress in relation to Community Transformation programme			
	Continence Services Task Group					Review in progress					MM	Task Group reviewing provision of continence products			
	Review of AWP services (Dementia)					Review in progress					MM	Task Group reviewing provision of revised dementia services			
	Help to Live at Home												MM	Task Group to commence in 2014, members appointed	
	Urgent Care/Winter Pressures												MM	Task Group to commence in 2014, members appointed	
	Local Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report												MM	Annual Report Next due Sept 2014	
	Public Health Annual Report												MM	Annual Report Next due Sept 2014	