

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 JULY 2012 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER, MONKTON PARK, CHIPPENHAM.

Present:

Cllr Trevor Carbin (Chairman), Cllr Tony Deane (Vice Chairman), Cllr Peter Doyle, Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Alan Hill, Cllr Christopher Newbury, Cllr Mark Packard (Substitute), Cllr Ricky Rogers, Cllr Judy Rooke, Cllr Jonathon Seed and Cllr Carole Soden

Also Present:

Cllr John Brady, Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Christopher Cochrane, Cllr Lionel Grundy OBE, Cllr John Noeken and Cllr Dick Tonge

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Nigel Carter, Cllr Jon Hubbard and Cllr Peter Hutton. Cllr Mark Packard substituted for Cllr Jon Hubbard.

Apologies were also received from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Jane Scott.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 May 2012 were approved and signed as a correct record with the following note made:

That in relation to Item 9 – Establishment of Budget Task Group Cllr Alan Hill be removed from the list of members.

3 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

4 Chairman's Announcements

i) Visit by Cornwall Council

Cornwall Council were in the process of reviewing their governance arrangements. As part of this review a selection of councillors were

visiting different local authorities to gain evidence to assist with their restructuring arrangements.

A comparison study had been undertaken and it was noted that Wiltshire Council had recently reviewed its scrutiny arrangements. Cornwall Council had therefore approached Wiltshire Council to discuss governance structures.

A visit had been arranged to take place at 10:00am on Friday 27 July at County Hall, Trowbridge.

Scrutiny representation would be of help to inform discussion and therefore an invitation was extended to any members of the Committee wishing to attend.

ii) CfPS Annual Conference

The Chairman, along with Cllr Mike Hewitt and Paul Kelly, attended the CfPS Annual Conference on 12 June in London.

The event was jointly chaired by Nick Raynsford MP and David Brindle, Public Services Editor at The Guardian. The programme included a keynote speaker, Margaret Hodge MP, Chair of Public Accounts Parliamentary Select Committee.

Other highlights included Ben Page, Chief Executive of Ipsos MORI posing the question 'does good scrutiny depend on good data?', delivered in an entertaining style.

The event was interactive with plenty of opportunity to ask questions and give opinions, including discussion in breakout workshop sessions.

Copies of the presentations can be found on the CfPS website.

5 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

6 Business Plan Annual Update

The Chairman introduced the Business Plan Annual Update and supplementary report for consideration. This formed part of the Committee's Terms of Reference to review delivery of the Business Plan on an annual basis.

The Cabinet member for Finance, Performance and Risk was in attendance and provided background to the reports presented. This included that the 4 year business plan was agreed in February 2011 and detailed what the authority hoped to achieve by 2015.

The reports themselves included progress made to date with the supplementary report providing further clarity on key targets achieved.

The Annual Update report as presented to Cabinet on 19 June provided details of the 32 indicators of which 11 had been selected as priority. 22 of the 32 targets set had been achieved and, for those areas where targets had not been met many related to small numbers of individuals, i.e. in relation to Looked after Children attainment figures and adoption data. Of the 11 priority indicators it was noted that 8 were on target.

Although the Committee accepted that the setting of targets was critical to ensure performance was monitored effectively, it should be recognised that some areas were not always fully within the Council's control.

Clarification was provided that performance was monitored on a regular basis by managers within the individual teams to ensure slippages were identified at an early stage as possible.

Ensuing discussion on key indicators took place as follows:

Childrens

Examples of the impact of transferring numbers to percentages included the target for care leavers in suitable education, jobs or training and attainment levels. It was explained that as the number of children within these classification were low any variance in expected outcomes in relation to just one child could alter the possibility of reaching target.

Members of the Committee noted the impact of such figures and suggested that consideration should be given on how this information might be better reported in the future.

On a similar basis, the Committee questioned the validity of including targets against general school attainment levels noting that the authority undertook a monitoring role only in many circumstances.

Public Health

In addressing the reports, it was noted that there were 65 outcome measures across Wiltshire most of which were performing well although lifestyle issues remained a challenge.

Prioritised targets included reducing the gap between male and female life expectancy. Although the gap between best and worst cases were one of the lowest in the country, it was noted that health inequalities amongst males had widened.

Job Creation and Safeguarding

Discussion took place on the most appropriate scrutiny to be undertaken in relation to this target, noting that much was dependant on the economic circumstances.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman would discuss the most appropriate way in which to undertake this activity.

Superfast Broadband

Confirmation was provided that BT and Fujitsu had been appointed as suppliers. Contracts were expected to be signed around October 2012. The Project Board was due to meet later this week where further updates would be available. Rollout of improved broadband was due to commence at the end of the year.

Congratulations were given by the Committee on the work of the Project Board and supporting team noting the continued efforts to strive towards 95% coverage.

Reduce the roads maintenance backlog by 10% by March 2015.

The calculation of the backlog had now been rebased using more accurate data, including a revised backlog figure for 2010/11 of £59m (which was inclusive of supervision and design work for delivering the scheme). To minimise the public impact much of the work was now being undertaken out of hours. However this had increased cost implications. Based on the rebased figures there was confidence that the target would be reached.

Unclassified roads were also raised with confirmation provided that the condition of Wiltshire roads were of a higher standard than many other authorities however the emphasis would always remain on prioritising roads in most use.

The Committee recognised that Highways was an item identified for consideration by the Environment Select Committee and accordingly would defer future consideration to this Committee.

Customer Telephone Call Connection Rates

In noting that the target of 95% had not been achieved for 2011/12 the following information was asked to be taken into consideration by the attending Service Director for Business Services.

An update document specific to Customer Services Performance Indicators was referred to at the meeting. This included details of the key challenges faced and progress made to help improve performance.

The Committee was asked to note that the 'connection rate' target had now been amended to reflect a more realistic goal of 90%. This, together with progress made in addressing the contributing factors, had resulted in much better performance figures with a connection rate of 92.8% achieved in May increasing to 93.4 in June.

In summarising the Chairman praised the achievements made by reaching the majority of targets set within the Business Plan. However it was noted that the presentation of the report could be improved in order to highlight the achievements made and provide clarity on target information.

Resolved:

- 1) To thank the officers and Cabinet members in attendance; and**
- 2) That the Cabinet members would take into consideration the comments made by the Committee when producing future reports.**
- 3) The individual select committees to be aware of performance issues relevant to their areas.**

7 Legacy and Future Work Programme

The Committee at its previous meeting held on 30 May 2012 resolved to undertake consultations between the Chairman and Vice Chairman of each Select Committee and Cabinet and CLT/ELT members to review legacy issues identified from previous scrutiny arrangements and to identify future work programming, in line with the Terms of Reference for each Committee.

A report by the Scrutiny Manager outlining the outcomes of these meetings was circulated and included an appendix of recommended topics (Appendix C).

A revised appendix, inclusive of the outcomes of discussions in relation to both the Environment and Children's Select Committees which were not available at the time of agenda despatch was circulated.

The Committee was asked to consider the report and attached appendices and provide comment as appropriate.

Resolved:

- 1) To note the report; and**
- 2) To agree that the recommended topics proposed within Appendix C of the report become the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programme.**

- 3) **To note that further work would be done to refine the detail within the work programme for regular consideration by the Management Committee.**

8 Information Systems Update

The Committee were asked to comment on the Update on Information Systems report which provided details on progress made within Information Systems since the in-sourcing of services.

A report providing details of the latest position on the implementation of the ICT Strategy would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting in September.

Ensuing discussion included whether the Committee would benefit from retaining an ICT Task Group, noting the positive work that the Group had undertaken to date.

Discussions also included the support to be received by members of the Council post elections in April 2013 with a proposal made that the Member Support in the Locality Task Group should also be retained.

The Chairman proposed that no decision should be made in relation to the retention of the ICT Task Group until consideration of the ICT Strategy had taken place in September but agreed that the support received by members following elections should be addressed.

Resolved:

- 1) **To note the report provided;**
- 2) **To receive an update report on the implementation of the ICT Strategy at the Committee's next meeting in September; and**
- 3) **To reinstate the Member Support in the Locality Task Group to review member support arrangements post election in April 2013.**

9 Urgent Items

No urgent items were requested for consideration.

10 Date of next meeting

6 September 2012.

(Duration of meeting: 10:30 am – 12:35 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Sharon Smith, of Democratic Services, direct line (01225) 718378, e-mail sharonl.smith@wiltshire.gov.uk

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