

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24 MAY 2016 AT THE KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Simon Killane (Chairman), Cllr Alan Hill (Vice Chairman), Cllr Chuck Berry, Cllr Christine Crisp, Cllr Stewart Dobson, Cllr Howard Greenman, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Jacqui Lay, Cllr Stephen Oldrieve, Cllr Tony Trotman, Cllr John Walsh, Cllr Bridget Wayman and Cllr David Jenkins (Substitute)

Also Present:

Cllr Andrew Davis, Cllr Laura Mayes, Cllr Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, Cllr John Thomson and Cllr Philip Whitehead

40 **Election of Chairman 2016/17**

Resolved:

To elect Councillor Simon Killane as Chairman for the following year.

41 **Election of Vice-Chairman 2016/17**

Resolved:

To elect Councillor Alan Hill as Vice-Chairman for the following year.

42 **Membership and Apologies**

Following the Annual Meeting of Council it was confirmed Councillor George Jeans had been appointed as a Member of the Committee, in the place of the late Councillor Jeff Osborn.

Apologies were received from Councillor Glenis Ansell. Councillor Ansell was substituted by Councillor David Jenkins.

43 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2016 were presented and it was,

Resolved:

To APPROVE and sign as a true and correct record.

44 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor David Jenkins declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of being a member of 'Keep Wiltshire Frack Free'.

45 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman announced he and the Vice-Chairman had met with the council's Head of System's Thinking to consider if the methods, resources or lessons of the service could aid the development of the Scrutiny function.

46 **Public Participation**

As detailed in agenda supplement 1 several questions had been received in relation to Minute no. 50 on the forthcoming members' briefing on Hydrocarbon Extraction.

As the briefing was still being developed, the formal response was provided to the questions as follows:

The Committee is grateful for the questions received. Officers are preparing a technical briefing for members of the council on hydrocarbon extraction and ONS Management Committee will be asked for their views on the approach to the briefing. The questions submitted will help members in considering this.

47 **Forward Work Programme**

Updates were received on the activity of the select committees including the following:

Health Select Committee

Details were provided on the work programme, including updates received in relation to the Good Neighbours Scheme, as well as meetings with the Cabinet Member emphasising the importance of communicating options to Area Boards in respect of Health and Wellbeing funding, and that the application of such be reviewed within 6 months. There would also be a future meeting with the Clinical Commissioning Group and Arriva regarding non-emergency medical transport.

Environment Select Committee

Details were provided on the work programme, including a presentation on leisure services in conjunction with the Health Select Committee, an update on the Library service and its budget for library stock, and the final report of the Resident Engagement Task Group.

Children's Select Committee

Details were provided on the work programme, including increased with the Wiltshire Assembly of Youth, a member of which attends meetings of the Committee and its briefings, and young people had been engaged to develop priorities in respect of bullying and other topics. The Obesity Task Group in conjunction with health had made initial observations, and the work of the Child Sexual Exploitation Task Group was ongoing. There was to be a special meeting on 21 June to look at government plans around academisation, and a briefing on Special Guardianship Orders.

48 **Management Committee Task Group Updates**

Updates were received as detailed in the agenda and as follows:

Military Civilian Integration Partnership Task Group

Due to turnover in roles in the army there had been some delays, and a meeting with army and police representatives to discuss continued issues was forthcoming.

Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Task Group

The Task Group had completed its initial pieces of work as detailed in previous updates, and was moving forward with further scrutiny.

49 **Review of the Budget Scrutiny Process**

The Financial Planning Task Group leads on member scrutiny of the council's draft Financial Plan on behalf of the Management Committee. It also makes recommendations to the Management Committee regarding arrangements for effective scrutiny input into the budget process.

Councillor George Jeans, on behalf of the Financial Planning Task Group, presented a report on a review of the scrutiny of the budget process for the 2016/17 budget. Scrutiny and Finance officers were thanked for their assistance in compiling the report.

The report considered the overall process had been robust and constructive, and made a series of recommendations to maintain or where possible improve the process further.

The Committee discussed the report, noting the importance of select committees sharing information with and utilising the resources of the Financial Planning Task Group, although it was also felt that it was important select committees assist with scrutiny of specific topics in relation to the budgets affecting their areas throughout the year.

At the conclusion of discussion it was,

Resolved:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee:

- 1) Agrees that overall the budget scrutiny process for 2016/17 was robust and constructive and can be repeated without significant adjustment in 2017/18;**
- 2) Repeats its invitation to all opposition groups to bring budget proposals to the Management Committee for discussion prior to Full Council in 2017/18;**
- 3) Endorses the task group's suggestion of greater select committee engagement in the budget scrutiny process so that their knowledge of specific services and issues can be brought to bear. This to include meetings between the chairmen of the task group and select committees to discuss the relevant key savings and investments, both in terms of financial monitoring and service impact.**

50 Appointment to the Constitution Focus Group

The Constitution Focus Group is a cross party working group established through the Standards Committee to lead on the review and assessment of the council's Constitution and make recommendations to Standards. As detailed in the terms of reference included with the agenda, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has a representative on the Focus Group, and this had been Councillor Jeff Osborn.

Resolved:

To appoint Councillor Jon Hubbard to the Constitution Focus Group.

51 Motion No. 31 - Referral from Full Council - Academisation

On 10 May 2016 Council received a Motion from Councillors Jon Hubbard and Glenis Ansell entitled 'Forced Academisation of Schools', and which was included with the agenda. As a result of recent announcements from central government on planned academisation, the motion was replaced with the following referral:

To refer the motion to Scrutiny, to suggest a working group investigate with the executive on options for Wiltshire Council to explore what routes are available to continue to support schools, such as county wide multi academy trusts or other options.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Councillor Laura Mayes, stated she welcomed further input, as there were critical changes to children's education being decided within the next few years which needed discussion.

Resolved:

To formally refer the motion to the Children's Select Committee for further discussion and scoping of future work.

52 **Members' Briefing on Hydrocarbon Extraction**

At its meeting on 1 March 2016 the Committee received a motion, originally submitted to Council on 23 February 2016, on hydrocarbon extraction, following the granting of Petroleum Exploration and Development Licences (PEDL) in the county. After discussion the Committee requested officers undertake an investigation into hydrocarbon extraction, to include technical explanations, local and national policies and what functions are devolved to local authorities, for a briefing for all members.

A presentation was received from Alistair Cunningham, Associate Director, Economic Development and Planning, on the current progress in preparing the briefing, as well as a summary of some of the basic details in advance of that briefing.

It was noted that although a PEDL licence had been granted, no application had yet been received to begin exploration, although analysis would have been undertaken prior to applying for the licence. Details were provided on the areas covered by the licence, the phases of exploration, appraisal, development and restoration that the process entailed and that planning applications and public consultations would be required for most actions. In response to queries it was stated pre-application consultation would be encouraged, and that the lack of it would be a relevant consideration to some extent. It was also highlighted that there was a presumption in favour of development from central government.

Members discussed the update, seeking additional details on policies and processes in the council. It was confirmed any applications would be considered by the Strategic Planning Committee, and that there was no specific policy on hydrocarbon extraction in place. It was stated it would need to be assessed whether the current policies such as on mineral extraction, were suitable.

At the conclusions of discussion, it was,

Resolved:

To note the information on hydrocarbon extraction provided and the progress to date in producing the requested Members' Briefing.

53 **Wiltshire Online Project Update**

The 'Wiltshire Online' project for superfast Broadband rollout across Wiltshire was designed to deliver fibre broadband to the county. A Wiltshire Council Project Board has responsibility for overseeing the rollout under the direction of the responsible Cabinet Member, Councillor John Thomson, and assistance and monitoring had been provided by a scrutiny representative on the Board, Councillor George Jeans. The last update was received on 7 July 2015, when the Committee received updates from Directors of British Telecom(BT).

Councillor Jeans informed the Committee of the quarterly meetings of the Project Board which included officers from Wiltshire and South Gloucestershire, the Cabinet Member and managers from BT, and that BT were continually challenged to prove that milestones were being met with the monies provided, and that an assurance review had stated the Board had been achieving its aims well. Councillor Jeans thanked the officers supporting the Board for their efforts.

Councillor Thomson then provided further updates to the Committee on the status of the rollout, with over 80000 homes connected and 400 structures built. There was a focus not just on delivery of broadband across the county but ensuring satisfactory speed of that broadband, which could be challenging particularly in rural areas, but the project remained on time and on budget, with final signoff to be in December 2017. There had also been £2 million secured for Ultrafast broadband, aimed at businesses, with more funding being sought from the Local Enterprise Partnership, along with efforts to secure further wireless solutions to those not yet covered under the first two phases.

The Committee discussed the updates received, with some concerns expressed that large urban estates in some areas were currently missing out due to being listed as being in commercially viable zones not covered by the scheme, but being told by providers it was not commercially viable. It was stated there had been some problems with areas with exchange only liens, but that providers were being contacted on their current plans at a postcode level, so that solutions could be investigated. There were also questions on whether parish councils could aid solutions financially or not and how to improve take up of the broadband.

Resolved:

To note the update.

54 **My Wiltshire System Update**

Following a request from the Environment Select Committee on 27 October 2015, on 5 January 2016 the Management Committee received a presentation on development of the MyWiltshire system, a system which enables the public and officers to remotely report a range of issues to be resolved, and which had primarily been utilised to date on highways matters such as reporting potholes

and flytipping. The Committee had suggested a Task Group be formed looking at the wider Digitisation programme, but it was not felt at this stage that the programme was in a position where a Task Group could operate.

A further presentation of development of the MyWiltshire system was therefore received to determine if a more focused examination of the system, its processes and its promotion could be improved through scrutiny involvement.

Details were provided on a new communications plan to increase the profile of the system, and in particular the awareness that all items were logged onto it, not just those people using the smartphone app. New layouts and functionality were being added, such as the ability to report bins being missed on collection rounds, and potentially reporting of Child Sexual Exploitation concerns. A business case was being prepared for a retender of the system as the current provider contract would end in 2017, and it was being seen if it could be managed in-house by the council. It was highlighted that increased reporting via the internet was a priority, being both more efficient and inexpensive.

The Committee discussed the update. Members continued to encourage that methods be explored for local members to access logs of issues raised in their area, and it was stated it remained an ultimate goal, with efforts at this stage to transfer issues from the area board reporting system to the app and provide Community Engagement Managers with such access. It was also confirmed in response to queries that issues submitted always received assessment by an officer, that they were not automatically assessed by the system. The Committee also discussed other functionality they felt would be suitable for use on the system.

At the conclusion of discussion, it was,

Resolved:

To seek expressions of interest for a Task Group on the MyWiltshire system, and delegate to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to agree the membership.

55 **Scrutiny Councillors Learning and Development Programme Update**

Details were provided on the ongoing 4-year Scrutiny Councillors' Learning and Development Programme, including a recent workshop on clarifying the role, interface and partnership of scrutiny members with the Executive.

Resolved:

To note the update.

56 **Overview and Scrutiny Member Remuneration 2015/16**

The Committee received a report on the Overview and Scrutiny Member Remuneration Scheme for 2015/16, which remained unchanged in its application from 2014/15.

Resolved:

To note the allocation of the fund for 2015/16 as detailed in the appendix of the report.

57 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 5 July 2016.

58 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 1.15 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Kieran Elliott (Senior Democratic Services Officer), of Democratic & Members' Services, direct line (01225) 718504, e-mail kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk

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