

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 JUNE 2017 AT THE KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Cllr Christine Crisp, Cllr Stewart Dobson, Cllr Howard Greenman, Cllr David Halik, Cllr Alan Hill (Vice Chairman), Cllr Ruth Hopkinson, Cllr Simon Jacobs, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Andy Phillips, Cllr John Walsh, Cllr Graham Wright (Chairman), Cllr Peter Fuller (Substitute) and Cllr David Jenkins (Substitute)

Also Present:

Cllr Chuck Berry, Cllr Richard Clewer, Cllr Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, Cllr Philip Whitehead, Cllr Jerry Wickham, Cllr Matthew Dean, Cllr Nick Murry, Cllr Ashley O'Neill and Cllr Steve Oldrieve

53 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Jon Hubbard, Jacqui Lay and Pip Ridout.

Councillor Hubbard was substituted by Councillor David Jenkins. Councillor Ridout was substituted by Councillor Peter Fuller.

54 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

55 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced that following the first meetings of three of the four scrutiny committees, an email had been sent to all non-executive members advertising vacancies on task groups and other ad hoc OS activities. These included new activities with no memberships in place as well as historic activities where one or two vacancies have arisen following the local elections. The Chairman encouraged all members to indicate their interest in participating as soon as possible.

With the agreement of the Committee it was also announced that the agenda order would be amended, to take the draft Business Plan and proposed alignment of the council staff structure ahead of consideration of the draft Digital Strategy.

56 **Public Participation**

There were no questions or statements submitted.

57 **Wiltshire Council Draft Business Plan 2017-2027**

The Business Plan is a policy framework document which sets the council's strategic direction, priorities and key actions. The last Business Plan was approved at the start of the previous council's term and ran from 2013-2017. A new draft Business Plan had been prepared by the administration following the May 2017 local elections, with a plan period of 2017-2027.

The Leader of the Council, Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, presented the draft plan along with a report received by Cabinet on 20 June 2017. She explained that the draft plan built on and extended the vision and goals of the previous plans, focusing on the key priorities of building stronger communities, a growing economy and protecting the vulnerable. The draft plan also provided a framework to ensure the council delivers on its priorities, with regularly reviewed multi-year service plans and quarterly updated financial models.

It was explained that Cabinet would be reconsidering the draft plan in light of any comments from Overview and Scrutiny as well as other partners on 3 July 2017, ahead of consideration by Council on 11 July 2017.

The Committee then discussed the draft Business Plan and sought additional details from the Leader and senior officers on how the draft plan would deliver the key priorities, as contained in the report appended to these minutes. In particular it was noted that the Business Plan had been produced following the election and therefore not much time was allotted for scrutiny, and that the context of the plan in conjunction with the medium term financial strategy was of continued reductions in government grants.

Other issues included questions on future plans to integrate health and social care services and transformation of adult care, details on apprenticeship growth, and arrangements for asset transfers to town and parish councils, including any potential for detailed guidance on best practice and level of assets recommended to be taken on at that level.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Committee is satisfied with the time and opportunity it has had to scrutinise the draft Business Plan 2017-21 and notes that the Plan will now go forward to Cabinet and Council for approval.**

- 2) That Cabinet be asked to take note of the comments of the Committee as detailed in a report to be approved by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

58 **Proposed Alignment of Council Structure to the New Business Plan**

The Leader of the Council, Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, presented a report previously considered confidentially at Cabinet on 20 June 2017, on aligning the council's management structure to ensure it could effectively deliver the proposed Business Plan.

It was noted that Wiltshire Council had made significant savings in relation to senior management when it eliminated the post of Chief Executive and reduced the number of Corporate and Associate Directors. The current model was for three Corporate Directors and thirteen Associate Directors, though interim arrangements had been in place since one of the Corporate Directors left the council in September 2016. The Leader requested her and the council's thanks be noted to the current Corporate Directors, Carolyn Godfrey and Dr Carlton Brand, and the Committee shared and endorsed this.

It was explained that discussions and analysis had shown that two Corporate Directors was not sufficient as a long term arrangement to deliver the strategic aims of the council and its Business Plan, and that in particular combined with the growing need to integrate health and social care services, it was felt that increasing the number to four Corporate Directors would deliver the most effective and efficient structure. It was also proposed that a single officer at Associate Director level hold the statutory post of Head of Paid Service, rather than rotate the role between Corporate Directors as with the current arrangements.

The Committee discussed the report from the Leader, noting that one Corporate Director role would be a joint appointment with the Clinical Commissioning Group to reflect the growing integration and partnership, and details were sought on the nature of the role, confirming it would have equal standing and salary as the other senior roles.

During discussion it was confirmed it was legal for the Head of Paid Service position to not be held by an officer in the top tier position of a structure, and Wiltshire had previously operated under such an arrangement. Details were also sought on any implications for the numbers of Associate Directors, and it was explained there would be a review of the roles following appointment of the Corporate Director posts, which included two new posts and an additional vacancy when Carolyn Godfrey left the organisation in the autumn of 2017.

Resolved

To note and support the proposed alignment of the council structure to the new Business Plan.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee received a presentation in January 2016 on the development of the MyWiltshire system, a system to enable the public and officers to remotely report a range of issues to be resolved. Following this, the Committee established the MyWiltshire System Task Group with terms of reference to consider and contribute to the development of the system, focusing on customer experience; system scope; development and resourcing; and councillor interface. On 6 June 2017 Management Committee re-established the MyWiltshire System Task Group as the Digital Strategy and Implementation Task Group with amended terms of reference to focus on the wider issue of the council's Digital Strategy.

Councillor Howard Greenman, a member of the Task Group, presented its report following an initial meeting to consider the draft Digital Strategy. The Task Group was recommending a number of points be considered by the relevant Cabinet Member for the draft, and that the Task Group continue its work to monitor implementation of the Strategy.

The Cabinet Member with responsibility for IT, Councillor Philip Whitehead, was in attendance with the Portfolio Holder for IT, Councillor Ashley O'Neill, and responded to the report of the Task Group, welcoming its recommendations. He noted that the Digital Strategy was about transforming the way the council performed many of its functions to better meet customer needs, giving an example of 75% of those who had renewed their Green Waste bin online, did so after 7pm, when under historic methods could not have occurred. He emphasised that those unable or unwilling to use digital methods or new technology would still be able to contact the council in the same ways as presently, but that the more work that could be undertaken digitally would free up resources to help those people, as well as making significant financial savings.

The Committee discussed the report, with reassurance sought that the digital infrastructure, data definitions and IT system foundations of the council were sufficient to cope with any planned expansion of public facing systems. Questions were also raised on commercialisation, and it was stated some local authorities carried ads on their websites, although such a step would need to be considered very carefully. It was also stated through partnership working, for example with Wiltshire Police, partner organisations could be charged for utilising Wiltshire Council systems, and there may be more opportunities, within reason.

At the conclusion of discussion, it was,

Resolved:

To continue the work of the Digital Strategy and Implementation Task Group as a standing task group and for it to receive the draft tender document and regular updates on the progress of the Digital Strategy and its implementation.

And to endorse the recommendations of the Task Group as follows:

- 1) To ensure that feedback from users is collected and reflected in the development of the new system to ensure that the system is designed to be accessible to all customers.**
- 2) To amend the governance structure diagram to demonstrate where users are engaged and where user feedback is considered and applied.**
- 3) To include, if endorsed, the Digital Strategy and Implementation Task Group in the governance structure.**
- 4) To ensure that the Digital Strategy project clearly outlines the key project milestones and their anticipated timescale.**
- 5) To make clear in the Digital Strategy that the digital assessments process will be performed with support from the project team, and to encourage a proactive approach which works with service leaders to implement the Digital Strategy.**

60 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next scheduled meeting was confirmed as 26 September 2017.

61 **Urgent Items**

In light of recent events in Kensington, the Chairman permitted a question on the status of emergency planning for disasters in Wiltshire. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection, Councillor Jerry Wickham, provided details of the regular meetings between the council and partners such as the police, as well as rehearsals for specific tragic scenarios and agreements with bodies such as the Red Cross.

It was agreed a report would be provided at the next meeting on the processes for emergency preparation in Wiltshire, and the status of current plans.

(Duration of meeting: 9.30 am - 12.10 pm)

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet 3 July 2017

Council 11 July 2017

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee Report on the Draft Business Plan 2017-2027

Purpose of report

1. To report to Cabinet and Full Council a summary of the main issues discussed at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee held on 21 June 2017.

Background

2. The Business Plan is a policy framework document which sets the council's strategic direction, priorities and key actions.
3. The meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee provided an opportunity for non-executive councillors to question the Leader of the Council and senior officers on the draft Business Plan 2017-2027 ahead of final consideration by Cabinet on 3 July 2017 and Full Council on 11 July 2017.
4. The Leader of the Council, Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, supported by Dr Carlton Brand, Corporate Director, and other members of the Executive, was in attendance to present the draft Business Plan and to provide clarification and answers to issues and queries raised by the Committee.
5. Details included in the introduction from the Leader and the Corporate Director had included but were not limited to:
 - That the draft Business Plan built upon and extended previous versions, reflecting on priority areas following the recent election
 - That significant external challenges, particularly in relation to reduced funding and increased pressures in key areas, required changes to the way the council operated and the draft plan reflected this.
 - The key priorities of creating stronger communities, a growing economy and protecting the vulnerable remained, with corporate planning cycles for service plans and reviews to ensure these were delivered.

Main issues raised during questioning and debate

6. The Chairman invited the Chairmen of the Select Committees to lead off discussion, before opening to general queries. Points raised together with any responses are provided in the following paragraphs.
7. Details were sought on the intention to integrate health and social care, in particular the emphasis on personalisation of care and safeguarding services. It was stated some people would always have difficulty accessing services they needed, and an adult care transformation programme had begun to identify how resources could be

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focused best on those who need them while still being affordable. It was also noted that it was intended for there to be a joint Corporate Director between Wiltshire Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group, and that at lower levels there needed to be further partnerships to deliver integrated services.

8. Questions were raised relating to the transfer of assets to town and parish councils, and it was stated that in the financial climate it was the case that if towns and parishes chose or were unable to take on management of some assets, some services would need to cease. It was argued that towns and parishes were better able to identify local needs for particular services and assets, and better able to justify precept rises to pay for those local services and assets, and manage them efficiently.
9. It was noted that the process of transferring assets, as for example with the Salisbury City Council CCTV, had been very expensive and time-consuming, and work was taking place to attempt to simplify the process considerably, with a revised asset transfer policy to be presented to Cabinet later in the year. Additionally, some members considered it would be beneficial if a template financial model or best practice guide between Wiltshire Council and towns and parishes were produced, giving all parties a clearer view of what was considered to be an appropriate level of assets or services to be managed or paid for at town and parish level. This was also raised in relation to area board grants, and the expectations that towns and parish contribute to projects within their area rather than rely on the area board and focus purely on keeping precepts low, rather than on delivering services for their areas, and that application forms for grants should further emphasise towns and parishes.
10. The lack of any specific comment on carbon emission reduction and other environmental issues was raised during debate. In response it was stated that it was already council policy to make its buildings environmentally friendly, there was a carbon management plan in place, all Cabinet reports had sections for environmental sustainability and the Core Strategy had policies in relation to environmental issues.
11. The ongoing financial situation was discussed and how well the Business Plan could deliver on its aims and priorities as a result, with some members feeling that Wiltshire had not historically received a good deal from central government. In response it was stated lobbying on Wiltshire's behalf always took place, and the principal issue was the assessment of needs, and that Wiltshire believed a greater emphasis should be placed on rurality and associated costs, and the increase in elderly population and attendant increase on specific services.
12. The need to work in partnership with other bodies in order to deliver the aims and priorities was raised, and potential difficulties for example with increasing numbers of individual academies.
13. Other issues included whether youth services had a high enough priority, rail strategies as part of stronger communities, whether the council's prioritisation of key services had been appropriately communicated, housing strategies for Looked After Children as part of protecting the vulnerable, and whether the council could lead the way with even more apprenticeships especially for former children in care.

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14. In summary, it was felt that the Business Plan was an aspirational document with appropriate priorities and themes, and that it would be necessary to monitor progress in its delivery by all Select Committees.

Conclusion

15. That the Committee is satisfied with the time and opportunity it has had to scrutinise the draft Business Plan 2017-21 and notes that the Plan will now go forward to Cabinet and Council for approval.

16. That Cabinet be asked to take note of the comments of the Committee as detailed in this report.

Councillor Graham Wright
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

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27 June 2017

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