

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
HELD ON 31 MAY 2016 FROM 7.30 PM TO 9.10 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Simon Weeks (Chairman), John Kaiser (Vice-Chairman), Parry Batth, Prue Bray, Michael Firmager, Ken Miall, Philip Mirfin, Ian Pittock and Shahid Younis

Other Councillors Present

Councillors: Lindsay Ferris

Officers Present

Neil Carr, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Julie Holland, Service Manager, Business Improvement

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Kate Haines, Pauline Helliars-Symons and John Jarvis.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7 March 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

5. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

6. COUNCIL PLAN PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2015/16 - QUARTER 4 REPORT

The Committee considered a report and supporting Appendix, set out on pages 15 to 54, which provided performance management information in relation to the Council's activities and services.

Julie Holland, Service Manager, Business Improvement, introduced the report and stated that the majority of performance indicators were currently on track and were rated Green. A number of indicators were currently rated Amber or Red as follows:

Amber Indicators

- % Children who are currently subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP) who are subject to a CPP for a second or subsequent time within 24 months;
- % Looked After Children living within 20 miles of their home;
- Number of WBC Councillors and Social Care staff who are known to be "Dementia Friendly";
- Cumulative % of the eligible population aged 40-70 who received an NHS health check;
- HIV diagnosed prevalence per 1,000 people aged 15-59;

- Berkshire West Joint Commissioning Forum
- % Secondary Schools with a current Ofsted rating of “Good” or better;
- Kgs of residual household waste per household per annum;
- % household waste reused, recycled or composted;
- Capital Budget monitoring forecast position;

Red Indicators

- % care proceedings completed in 2015/16 within 26 weeks of application;
- Reduce the education gap at Key Stage 2 level 4 between disadvantaged and other pupils for Reading, Writing and Maths;
- Number of affordable dwellings completed.

Julie Holland gave a further update on two indicators:

- Fosters – construction of the replacement building had started in April 2016;
- % of service users satisfied with Environmental regulatory services – quarter 4 performance was reported at 82% (Green).

Julie Holland also reported that service departments were in the process of reviewing indicators and targets to ensure that Officers and Members were receiving key information to enable them to carry out their respective roles effectively. Members felt that greater clarity on the tolerance range for Red, Amber and Green indicator status and the timeframe for each indicator (monthly, six-monthly or annual) would also assist Members.

The Committee considered each section of the report in turn. Members raised the following comments and questions in relation to specific indicators.

Community

Agenda page 18 - % Care Proceedings completed in 2015/16 within 26 weeks of application – Members queried the value of the indicator which was influenced by the actions of partner organisations which were outside the Council’s control.

Agenda page 19 - % Looked After Children living within 20 miles of their home – Members requested further information on the actions being taken to achieve the indicator target.

Agenda page 31 – Reducing the education gap at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 – Members asked for further information on the impact of the new Ofsted regime and the implications for the Council if the education gap did not narrow.

Agenda page 32/33 - % of schools with a current Ofsted rating of “good” or better – Members requested an update on the implications for local schools of the Government’s recent policy changes on the forced academisation of schools.

Place

Agenda page 37 – Kgs of residual household waste per household per annum – Members requested further information on the factors underpinning the reduction in wood recycling.

Agenda page 38 - % of household waste reused, recycled and composted – Members requested further information on the options under consideration to increase recycling

rates, the operation of the permit scheme at the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) and the anecdotal evidence that plastics were being separated at the Bracknell HWRC.

The Committee considered the format of the performance report and felt that the use of colours to illustrate the Red, Amber or Green status of indicators would assist Members' deliberations.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) the Council Plan Performance Monitoring Report – Quarter 4 (2015/16) be noted;
- 2) additional information relating to the issues raised by Members on specific performance indicators be circulated outside of the meeting;
- 3) future performance reports include coloured bars to illustrate the Red, Amber or Green status of performance indicators;
- 4) a further report be submitted to the Committee on the process for identifying key indicators and the way in which performance targets were set.
- 5) the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee be asked to consider the issues highlighted in relation to reducing the education gap at Key Stages 2 and 4 and to report back to the Management Committee.

7. CONSIDERATION OF REQUESTS FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEWS IN 2016-17

The Committee considered a report, set out on Agenda pages 55 to 74, which set out details of the Overview and Scrutiny issues considered in 2015/16, the ongoing work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and a list of new Overview and Scrutiny suggestions for 2016/17.

The Committee was reminded of the established review selection criteria to be used in considering new Overview and Scrutiny suggestions:

- Whether the issue was of local and, preferably, current concern;
- Whether a review could be linked to the Council's Vision, Priorities and Principles;
- Whether the topic was already being reviewed elsewhere within the Council;
- Whether the topic was capable of being influenced by the Committee or the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
- Whether the scope of the topic was manageable;
- Whether sufficient resources were available to support the Scrutiny work;
- Whether, if a review was warranted, the priority was low, medium or high;
- Whether a review should be undertaken by the Management Committee, one of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees, or a time-limited Task and Finish Group.

The Chairman reminded the Committee of the ongoing organisational change programme: 21st Century Council. It was likely that some of the Overview and Scrutiny review suggestions would fall within the work of the 21st Century Council programme. Members felt that it would be useful to receive a briefing on the 21st Century Council programme as it would impact significantly on the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees over the next few years.

The Committee considered each of the Overview and Scrutiny request submissions in turn. During the Committee's discussions Members made the following points:

End to End Reporting of Data and Analytics Capability – Councillor Shahid Younis

Members were referred to the details of the suggestion, set out on Agenda page 63. Councillor Younis presented the suggestion and highlighted the importance of accurate, timely information for both Officers and Members. Members needed up-to-date information in order to oversee performance and identify issues as quickly as possible. With modern technology there was no reason why this could not be achieved.

It was agreed that this suggestion was supported in principle and should be referred to the Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration. Members also noted that the suggestion may fall within the 21st Century Council work programme and may not be pursued if it was duplicating work already under way.

Housing Rents and Housing Benefits – Councillor Lindsay Ferris

Members were referred to the details of the suggestion, set out on Agenda page 64. Councillor Ferris presented the suggestion and highlighted the importance of joined up working when different services interacted with Council tenants and other customers.

It was agreed that the suggestion had merit, but it was felt that this issue, along with similar service issues, would fall within the remit of the 21st Century Council project. Consequently, it would be discussed as part of the proposed Overview and Scrutiny Member briefing on 21st Century Council.

Public Sector Equality Duty – Councillor Prue Bray

Members were referred to the details of the suggestion, set out on Agenda page 64 to 65. Councillor Bray presented the suggestion and highlighted the Council's statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 to set equality objectives and to publish information relating to progress made in relation to the Act. Members noted that work was under way to update the Council's policies and procedures relating to the duties under the Equality Act.

It was agreed that a report be submitted to the Management Committee in September 2016, setting out the draft policies and procedures relating to the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

The Cost, Use and Effectiveness of Cycle Lanes – John Redwood MP

Members were referred to the details of the suggestion, set out on Agenda page 65. Members considered the development and usage of cycle lanes across the Borough and the funding stream through the Sustrans programme. In line with Government policy, investment in cycle lanes was part of the development of sustainable transport solutions.

It was agreed that Members continue to monitor the effectiveness of the Borough's cycle lanes through the quarterly performance monitoring report and that John Redwood be notified of the rationale for introducing cycle lanes in the Borough.

Introduction of Multi-disciplinary Wardens – Mr P Windley

Members were referred to the details of the suggestion, set out on Agenda pages 65 to 66. Members noted the introduction of multi-disciplinary wardens in other authorities but felt that the adoption of Civil Parking Enforcement powers would not be a suitable vehicle. It was also noted that the 21st Century Council programme would address the potential for introducing multi-disciplinary teams across a range of services.

It was agreed that Mr Windley be notified that the suggestion would be considered as part of the 21st Century Council programme.

Speed of Trains into London Waterloo from Wokingham – Mr S Stockford

Members were referred to the details of the suggestion, set out on Agenda page 66. Members noted that there had been some recent public debate about this issue. However, the development of potential solutions lay with the relevant train operating company (South West Trains) and Network Rail.

It was agreed that Mr Stockford be notified that the suggestion would be referred to South West Trains and Network Rail for consideration.

In addition to the list of new Overview and Scrutiny suggestions, Members considered the existing work programmes for each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. In discussing the existing work programmes Members made the following points:

- Councillor Anthony Pollock would be attending the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee meeting on 12 July 2016 to discuss the public Budget consultation programme for 2016;
- The Council's Executive Members would be invited to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee during the year to discuss their portfolios and any emerging issues;
- The recent refresh of the Council Plan was a potential item for consideration, depending on its links to the 21st Century Council programme;
- The report of the recent corporate Peer Review of the Council was a suitable item for consideration by Overview and Scrutiny;
- The potential item on income generation opportunities from the Crossrail project required further clarification and scoping;
- Progress on the two ongoing Task and Finish Groups (Better Care Fund and Shared Services) was noted.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) the current work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees be noted;

- 2) the work programmes for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees be developed to reflect the Committee's discussion;
- 3) the residents who submitted Overview and Scrutiny suggestions be thanked and be notified of the outcome of the Committee's deliberations.

8. IDEAS FOR IMPROVING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The Committee considered a report, set out on Agenda pages 75 to 79, which gave details of a number of suggested improvements to Overview and Scrutiny processes and procedures. The suggestions were based on best practice examples from other local authorities and the Centre for Public Scrutiny. The aim of the suggestions was to improve public awareness about Overview and Scrutiny and make meetings and reports more effective.

The specific suggestions related to:

- More rigorous agenda setting in order to improve meeting formats;
- Improving the content of reports to focus on clear recommendations;
- Introducing Calls for Evidence to raise the profile of new Scrutiny reviews;
- Improvements to the Council website to raise the profile of Overview and Scrutiny;
- Greater use of social media to increase awareness of ongoing reviews and upcoming meetings;
- Introducing an Overview and Scrutiny section into Wokingham Borough News;
- Monitoring of public questions to the Executive and Council;
- Tracking of Overview and Scrutiny recommendations to ensure that decisions are followed up;
- Ensuring that Task and Finish Groups carry out a self-evaluation to support continuous improvement.

Members discussed each of the suggestions and agreed that they were worthy of support.

Members also considered a suggestion from the Chairman that future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee commence at 7.00pm rather than 7.30pm. If agreed, this change would bring the start time of the Management Committee into line with the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) the proposed suggestions for improving Overview and Scrutiny be approved;
- 2) the impact and effectiveness of the proposals be monitored and reviewed by the Management Committee during the year;
- 3) future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee commence at 7.00pm.

9. CONSIDERATION OF THE CURRENT EXECUTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION FORWARD PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a copy of the Executive Forward Programme, as set out on Agenda pages 81 to 86, and the Individual Executive Member Decision Forward Programme as set out on Agenda pages 87 to 88.

Members considered that the proposed Waste Strategy – re3 report (June 2016 Executive item) may be a suitable item for consideration by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Forward Programme and the Individual Executive Member Decision Forward Programme be noted.

10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEMBER TRAINING

The Committee considered the format and content of an Overview and Scrutiny training event, to be held on Monday 6 June 2016.

The aim of the event was to build an understanding of the key elements of Overview and Scrutiny and the development of skills which would assist Members in their roles. The session would explore the operation of Overview and Scrutiny at Wokingham Borough Council and use examples of best practice from around the country.

Members considered the itinerary for the training session and confirmed that the format and proposed content were suitable.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the proposed format and content for the Overview and Scrutiny training event on 6 June be confirmed:
- 2) Overview and Scrutiny Members be reminded about the event and be encouraged to attend.

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