

INFORMAL PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

NOTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 27 June 2013 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 1.00 pm.

Present:

Members: Councillor Liz Brighthouse, OBE – in the Chair

Councillor Lynda Atkins
Councillor John Christie
Councillor Sam Coates
Councillor Yvonne Constance
Councillor Neil Fawcett
Councillor Mark Gray
Councillor Jenny Hannaby
Councillor Richard Langridge
Councillor Lawrie Stratford

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Lovatt

Officers:

Whole of meeting Alexandra Bailey, Corporate Performance & Review Manager; Eira Hale (Lead Analyst, Chief Executive's Office), Sue Scane, Chief Finance Officer, Sue Whitehead (Chief Executive's Office)

Part of meeting

Agenda Item

4

Officer Attending

Jim Leivers, Director for Children Services; Frances Craven, Deputy Director - Education and Early Intervention; John Jackson, Director for Social & Community Services; Lucy Butler, Deputy Director, Adult Social Care; Sara Livadeas, Deputy Director, Joint Commissioning; Mark Kemp, Deputy Director – Commercial; Val Messenger, Deputy Director of Public Health; David Etheridge, Chief Fire Officer and Head of Community Safety.

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports [agenda, reports and schedule/additional documents] are attached to the signed notes.

1/13 REMIT AND DIRECTION OF THE PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
(Agenda No. 4)

Councillor Brighthouse in introducing the item referred to the recent Governance Review and highlighted the differences between this new Committee and how scrutiny had operated previously. She hoped that it would be about objective data and how it can be used across the Council to improve performance. She proposed that the Committee should set its own outcomes and review progress against the Committee's own project plan and performance indicators.

During discussion there was general support for the aspirations of the new Committee.

2/13 OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AT OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
(Agenda No. 5)

Alexandra Bailey explained the new approach to managing performance and detailed how the information would be used. She emphasised that the new information would provide a more complex picture that linked the performance and financial information.

In response to a question about the quarterly nature of the information the Committee was assured that if there was an area of concern that this would be raised with the Chairman and brought to the Committee in advance of the quarterly monitoring information if necessary.

3/13 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR BUSINESS MANAGEMENT MONITORING
(Agenda No. 6)

The Committee had before them a paper setting out proposed key performance indicators. They considered the presentation from each Directorate on the indicators in the context that they would provide the basis for reporting on performance to the Performance Scrutiny Committee for 2013/14. The Committee adjourned at 10.45 am reconvening at 11.12 am following the flag raising ceremony for Armed Forces Week.

During discussion the following general points relating to all performance information across the board were raised:

- 1) It would be helpful to have some indication of the context of performance indicators and targets. Were they nationally or locally set.
- 2) Some concern was expressed about the number of indicators and it was suggested that the information should show those that were statutory and those that were discretionary.
- 3) The Committee would want to explore the story behind some of the figures. For example the Council could be meeting its targets for assessments but this did not tell the Committee about the quality of those assessments.

- 4) When looking at the appropriateness of indicators some consideration should be given to how far they were in the control of the County Council but it was still reasonable to scrutinise performance.

Children Education & Families

- 1) With regard to education this Committee was focussed on performance. Attainment would be for the Education Scrutiny Committee to consider and any matters that came to light through this Committee would be referred back to the Education Scrutiny Committee..
- 2) With regard to getting behind the indicators on keeping children safe Jim Leivers commented that there was a full range of audit information available mostly through the Safeguarding Board. Members queried whether it was possible to drill down through the information to find for example the number of child protection reviews and the number of children referred. Following discussion it was **AGREED** that a flow chart of the process be produced. It was possible to produce the numbers coming in to the process and the outputs with percentage shifts over time.
- 3) Following further discussion on the story behind the figures in relation to thriving families he suggested that it would be possible to produce the figures and a few sentences to explain the current position.

Social & Community Services

- 1) The Performance Indicators currently would not pick up issues of poor care in homes such as Winterbourne View or in individual's own homes. There was discussion about how the right information could be obtained around a range of issues such as direct payments, individual living fund, safeguarding and thresholds. It was **AGREED** that a seminar be arranged for members on these issues and that an item on a future agenda looks at how to get the right performance data to ensure issues are dealt with. The Chairman referring to Item 9 on the agenda commented that this was an area that she wished to look at and that would take it forward with officers in consultation with Councillors Fawcett and Stratford.
- 2) Lucy Butler undertook to re-circulate to all councillors the information on "Adopt-a-Care-Home".

Environment & Economy

- 1) There was some discussion over the accuracy of the figures relating to customer satisfaction and discussion of how these figures were obtained.
- 2) Members highlighted particular concerns over the performance with regard to pot holes and asked that the final indicators find some way to measure this aspect.
- 3) It would be useful to see some indicators of performance in the area of economic growth.
- 4) The Directorate was involved in a great deal of partnership work and there was some concern that the indicators did not capture this. The Committee was advised that much of this work was through the Local Enterprise Partnership and there had been recent changes to the way they worked. It should be possible to bring something back on this area.

- 5) Responding to comments about road safety Mark Kemp advised that performance indicators on this were included under Community safety.
- 6) A number of specific issues were raised around congestion and Dial-a-Ride indicators.

Public Health

- 1) It was noted that the indicators focussed on inputs rather than outputs and there was a query whether the figures were being gathered against ethnicity.
- 2) Prevention being better than cure the number of people being offered a health check was important. It was an area where some work could be done with the Oxfordshire Clinical Care Commissioning Group.
- 3) It was noted that the Director for Public health reported to the Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee on a regular basis and it was important to avoid duplication.
- 4) Some work was needed to obtain proper performance indicators rather than numbers through. It was important to understand what was being achieved against the money spent. Hard evidence would be vital when looking at the budget. Val Messenger referred to the annual evaluation work they undertook, for example with diabetes and the Chairman asked that some work be undertaken to look at this to see how it could be useful to the Committee.

Fire Service

- 1) In response to a comment David Etheridge, Chief Fire Officer, acknowledged that it was preferable to use the term On Call rather than retained.
- 2) It was agreed that the Annual Report that contained many of the indicators referred to in discussion be circulated to all Members and considered at a future meeting if appropriate.

4/13 FINANCIAL REPORTING TO PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY 2013/14 (Agenda No. 7)

The Committee received a brief presentation on financial reporting and its links to the service and resource planning process which is was **AGREED** be circulated to Committee Members.

There was discussion on what information would be most useful to the Committee. It was **AGREED** that dashboard style reports that would highlight any concerns would be best suited to the Committee's needs. This could be supplemented by further reports on specific matters of concern as necessary. The Chairman referred to the importance of getting at the financial performance indicators from the previous report and linking this to the performance monitoring of service areas.

5/13 CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER 2012/13
(Agenda No. 8)

..... The Committee had before them the corporate plan performance report for the fourth quarter of 2012/13. Members noted that this would be the last report based on the old approach and it gave some indication of why changes were necessary. There was some discussion over the lack of context about the level of need/demand and a lack of clarity over what the figures were being measured against. The use of RAG reporting was supported but it would be helpful if there could be some indication of the direction of travel.

There was some discussion about how main contracts could be measured to ensure they were meeting key success factors. The Committee accepted that it was a complex picture and that they could not be directly involved in direct contract monitoring. However they needed to get an assurance that performance management of contracts was being done correctly and perhaps to consider it in terms of gap analysis. It was suggested that the Committee could look at a very large contract that directly impacted the public. A number of suggestions were put forward and a member asked whether it would be possible to provide a list of contracts banded by price. The Chief Finance Officer advised against assuming that there was a problem with contracts as she did not believe that generally this was the case. In response to the Chairman referring to a number of performance indicators that were the responsibility of contract but not being met Alexandra Bailey replied that the starting point was where outcomes were not being met however provided and whether we had the right information to have confidence that performance issues would be managed.

6/13 COMMISSION ON ADULT SOCIAL CARE
(Agenda No. 9)

The Committee agreed that the Chairman take this forward with officers in consultation with Councillor Fawcett and Councillor Stratford*.

* Spelling of Councillor Stratford’s name corrected at meeting on 26 September 2013.

7/13 PROTOCOL FOR CALL-INS
(Agenda No. 10)

The Committee noted the call-in protocol.

8/13 CABINET FORWARD PLAN
(Agenda No. 11)

With the agreement of the Committee the Chairman withdrew the item commenting that detailed scrutiny of the Forward Plan was not the role of this Committee.

..... in the Chair