

OXFORDSHIRE PLACE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday, 28 June 2023 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 12.35 pm

Present:

Councillor Kieron Mallon – in the Chair

Councillors:

Andrew Coles
Arash Fatemian
Ted Fenton

Kate Gregory
Judy Roberts
Richard Webber

David Rouane

By invitation: Cllr Duncan Enright, Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Travel and Development Strategy;
Cllr Pete Sudbury, Cabinet Member for Climate Change Delivery and Environment;
Matthew Barber, Police and Crime Commissioner, Thames Valley

Officers:

Bill Cotton, Corporate Director for Environment and Place;
Richard Doney, Scrutiny Officer;
Rachel Burns, Waste Strategy Manager
Caroline Coyne, Principal Officer (Service Improvement)

The Council considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda and reports, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

1/23 ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THE 2023-24 COUNCIL YEAR

(Agenda Item 1)

The Scrutiny Officer invited the Committee to nominate candidates for the post of Chair for the 2023-24 Council Year. After a nomination from Cllr Fenton which was seconded by Cllr Fatemian, it was **AGREED** that Cllr Kieron Mallon be elected as the Chair for the 2023-24 Council Year.

2/23 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE 2023-24 COUNCIL YEAR

(Agenda Item 2)

The Chair, Cllr Mallon, invited the Committee to elect the Deputy Chair for the 2023-24 Council Year. Nominated by Cllr Mallon, and seconded by Cllr Coles, it was **AGREED** that Cllr Charlie Hicks be elected as the Deputy Chair for the 2023-24 Council Year.

3/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS
(Agenda Item 3)

Apologies were received from Cllr van Mierlo (substitute: Cllr David Rouane) and from Cllr Hicks.

Cllr Fatemian and Cllr Fenton apologised that they needed to leave the meeting before it closed.

4/23 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE ON THE BACK PAGE
(Agenda Item 4)

Cllr Fenton declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 7 in that he was a personal friend of the Police & Crime Commissioner.

5/23 MINUTES
(Agenda Item 5)

The Committee resolved to **AGREE** the minutes as an accurate record without amendment.

6/23 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS
(Agenda Item 6)

Robin Tucker of CoHSAT, the Coalition for Healthy Street and Active Travel in Oxfordshire, addressed the Committee on the impacts of road crime. He highlighted that the Police and Criminal Justice Plan did not include a section on road crime. Mr Tucker called for a plan between Oxfordshire County Council and Thames Valley Police on enforcement action in Low Traffic Neighbourhood. He called for the Committee to assure itself that there was sufficient control relating to numberplate fraud given the increasing use of ANPR. He also called for third party reporting to be embraced as it had been by other forces.

Danny Yee addressed the Committee on item 8. He noted that there was a large number of other policies, guidelines, and procedures which needed to be taken account of when considering the revision of the Street Design Guide. He called for a broad Street Design Guide which was applied across the organisation which incorporated County Council policy and current best practice and for a cultural change too. He commended Lambeth Borough Council's Kerbside Strategy to the Committee.

Graham Smith addressed the Committee on item 8. He explained that he was an urban designer who was supported by the Oxford Civic Society, Cyclox, and the Oxford Pedestrians Association in making his address. He expressed concern that the concept of the hierarchy of roads was damaging and had caused severe problems for active travel and for public transport. Mr Smith was concerned that the current Street Design Guide ignored connectivity to local places, active travel, and public transport. He

commended to the Committee the Northamptonshire Place and Movement Guide and Surrey County Council's Healthy Streets for Surrey.

The Police & Crime Commissioner was asked why the evidence from dashcams and head cameras was not accepted by Thames Valley Police in all cases. The Commissioner explained that it was dependent on the type of offence but agreed that there was more TVP could do to accept such evidence.

7/23 PROGRESS AGAINST POLICE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE PLAN FOR OXFORDSHIRE

(Agenda Item 7)

The Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Matthew Barber, attended to speak to the progress report. He began by apologising to the Committee for his inability to join the previous meeting owing to technical difficulties but highlighted that a benefit was that, since then, he had submitted his annual report to the Police and Crime Panel which was also shared with the Committee.

There had been road safety summits around the Thames Valley which had been well attended and there was a document being drafted around road crime. This would go out to public consultation.

Community Speedwatch was to move into the Citizens in Policing team. In Dorset, a police officer participated in Community Speedwatch and that seemed to contribute to their success there. The PCC noted that he was interested in that approach.

Number plate fraud was becoming more sophisticated but there was a new ANPR network which was more powerful and would reduce the success of such fraud.

Thames Valley Police (TVP) could make it easier to submit third party reporting. The PCC made no further commitment but was considering how this could best be submitted.

In discussion with the PCC, the Committee noted the following:

- Safe Drive Stay Alive was a course organised by TVP which worked with schools across the Thames Valley to emphasise the risks of dangerous driving.
- The majority of those involved in collisions on the A420 between Swindon and Oxford were not a result of excess speed.
- There was a review in place of stationary speed cameras because analogue cameras cannot be calibrated to recognise 20mph limits.
- Speed awareness courses were now expected to be attended in person.
- Whilst it was not the case in some other police forces, the policy at TVP had always been to attend all burglaries. Publicity that had

championed forces now committing to this had given an impression that no forces were doing so previously.

- Neighbourhood policing had become regarded as unfashionable overtime but it remained a core part of policing.
- TVP was not immune from conduct issues and, in any large organisation, there was likely to be some misconduct. Misconduct, including lower-level, should be identified and disciplined. An audit was to be undertaken regarding vetting.
- The PCC recognised that officers referred to unauthorised encampments rather than as being illegal but would continue to do so. Given that they were against the law, he considered illegal encampments a justified expression. The PCC recognised that there were particular difficulties in Oxfordshire given the lack of transit sites despite the obligation to have them. Reference was made to crime in the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller community specifically because it was in the context of crime from those encampments.
- The Police and Crime Panel did a very good job but, given the Crime & Disorder powers of Local Authorities to scrutinise, there was a lack of clarity regarding their purpose and the interrelationship with Local Authority scrutiny. The Thames Valley region was made up of three counties and 14 councils; there was considerable overlap.
- CCTV was no one authority's statutory obligation with a great variety of funding models across the Thames Valley TVP was seeking to move towards a model whereby TVP would own, operate, and maintain CCTV cameras with local authorities being asked to contribute. This would aid efficiency and reliability.
- Data sharing with Oxfordshire County Council is very strong. That is not the case in all places. Mobile telephone data would be useful to build evidence regarding danger spots on roads.
- Whilst two streams in the progress report related to digitisation, with benefits such as instantaneous translation for typed submissions to the crime room and also digital updates provided. It was intended to reduce call volumes which would enable more people to be able to speak to a human rather than to deter them. 20% of calls to 101 were from victims requesting updates. Were they available digitally, that would free up capacity.
- Stop and Search panels provided a valuable service reviewing Stop and Search incidents. The PCC considered Stop and Search an extremely valuable tool which saved lives.

Members noted that the fire service communicated directly with local members when there were accidents. That was not the case with TVP with road fatalities and members would be grateful for such communication.

The Committee resolved to **NOTE** the report and made the following observations:

1. That there was a discrepancy with regard to language between the Police and Crime Commissioner and both the Council and TVP;

2. That greater consideration could be given to the interplay between the Police and Crime Panel and local Councils;
3. That liaison between the Council and TVP would be welcomed to ensure that local members are informed of fatalities and serious accidents within their divisions;
4. That the Committee would be grateful to receive data relating to road traffic incidents particularly involving young people.

8/23 STREET DESIGN GUIDE AND WALKING AND CYCLING DESIGN STANDARDS

(Agenda Item 8)

The Committee had the written advice of Thames Valley Police's Crime Prevention Design Advisor which emphasised the importance of developers engaging with the police at the earliest, pre-application stage for all new developments. The advice provided specific recommendations relating to the current edition of the Street Design Guide. Thanks were expressed by the Cabinet Member for Travel and Development Strategy and by the Corporate Director for Environment and Place for the comments which would be reviewed.

The Committee noted that a 'one size fits all' approach was not appropriate in a county as diverse as Oxfordshire. It was confirmed that the Street Design Guide was primarily for developers and that, along with documents such as Local Plans and Local Transport Plans, it was a part of the advice provided and, as guidance, was context-specific.

Members recognised the importance of engaging all stakeholders in the development of such guidance but emphasised that it was important to recognise that their democratic mandate meant that they should be involved from the outset.

The Committee established that the Street Design Guide was due for review in March 2024. The Committee agreed that a small working group should review the current guide, with officer support, so that recommendations could be made regarding its revision. The Committee also agreed with the Cabinet Member's suggestion that an all-member briefing on the Street Design Guide would be useful and that one should be arranged to feed into the work of the working group.

9/23 HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING STRATEGY

(Agenda Item 9)

Cllr Pete Sudbury, Cabinet Member for Climate Change Delivery and Environment, introduced the report on the draft Household Waste Recycling Strategy which was to be considered by Cabinet in October 2023 and the public consultation which had run between March 2023 and May 2023. Cllr Sudbury commended the work of the waste team for their enthusiasm, knowledge, and ability.

Bill Cotton, Corporate Director for Environment and Place, Rachel Burns, Waste Strategy Manager, and Caroline Coyne, Principal Officer (Service Improvement), attended to answer the Committee's questions. Officers drew attention to the very positive feedback received during the consultation.

Members raised questions about the level of engagement reached with 391 responses received against approximately 1 million visits. It was established that there had been some targeted advertising and wide publicity. The consultations team had suggested it was a positive response.

The issue of how the Council was working with neighbouring authorities to ensure residents were able to use the most convenient waste recycling centres was raised. The Council was open to discussions with other authorities but, whilst Oxfordshire did not restrict access to non-residents, others did. The Committee provided examples of other authorities' arrangements for permitting non-residents to access their sites and requested that officers investigate options for reciprocal arrangements. It was also suggested that ANPR technology could be used to determine where visitors to Waste Recycling Centres (WRCs) lived.

The importance of re-use to the strategy was emphasised but the Committee was advised of how much space was required and its expansion was a key part of the strategy. The Waste Wizard, found at <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/waste-and-recycling/household-waste/recycle-repair-reuse>, was recommended as very useful for advice.

The Committee resolved to **NOTE** the report and requested that officers explored the following:

1. That the Council should explore how ANPR could be used to monitor usage at Waste Recycling Centres;
2. That the Council should investigate how reciprocal arrangements could be introduced with neighbouring authorities for the ease of residents;
3. That the Council should raise awareness of the Waste Wizard and take advice from the Communications team about how to achieve greater engagement with residents;
4. That the Council should encourage greater advice to be provided at Waste Recycling Centres to residents surrounding re-use.

10/23 ACTION AND RECOMMENDATION TRACKER

(Agenda Item 10)

The Committee resolved to **NOTE** the action and recommendation tracker.

11/23 CABINET RESPONSES TO PLACE OSC RECOMMENDATIONS

(Agenda Item 11)

The Committee resolved to **NOTE** that no responses had been received.

12/23 COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME

(Agenda Item 12)

The Committee resolved to **AGREE** its work programme.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing

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