

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 3 June 2021 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 12.00 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Eddie Reeves – in the Chair

Councillor Michael O'Connor (Deputy Chair)

Councillor Brad Baines

Councillor Andrew Gant

Councillor Dan Levy

Councillor Sally Povolotsky

Councillor Liam Walker

Councillor Ted Fenton (In place of Councillor Juliette Ash)

Councillor Andy Graham (In place of Councillor Ian Middleton)

Councillor Ian Corkin (In place of Councillor Kieron Mallon)

Officers:

Whole of meeting Claire Taylor, Corporate Director, Customers and Organisational Development; Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes; Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Committee Officer

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 are attached to the signed Minutes.

21/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS (Agenda No. 2)

Apologies had been received as follows:

Councillor Juliette Ash (substituted by Councillor Ted Fenton)

Councillor Kieron Mallon (substituted by Councillor Ian Corkin)

Councillor Ian Middleton (substituted by Councillor Andy Graham)

22/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - GUIDANCE NOTE ON BACK PAGE OF THE AGENDA (Agenda No. 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

23/21 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 4)

The minutes of the meetings held on 11 March 2021 and 18 May 2021 were approved.

24/21 DAY AND TIME FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

(Agenda No. 6)

The Chair asked Members for feedback as to whether the meetings of the Committee should be moved to 2pm on Thursdays or 10am on Fridays.

Members asked if an earlier time than 2pm could be considered to avoid possible overrun of meetings past 5pm. They were also keen to ensure that the Committee meetings, if moved, would not clash with other council meetings.

Members also suggested that the heavy Work Programme required extra meetings in the calendar. It was clarified that the Council Constitution sets a minimum number of meetings but not a maximum.

The Chair asked for any further comments to be emailed to the Committee Secretary.

25/21 OVERVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S BUSINESS PLAN

(Agenda No. 7)

Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes, gave the new Committee a presentation on the Council's current Corporate Plan which included an outline of the budget setting process, engagement with the public, the background to the priorities, the Climate Action Plan and working with partners.

Louise Tustian then outlined how the monthly Business Management and Monitoring Reports measure performance against the priorities.

Claire Taylor, Corporate Director, Customers and Organisational Development, responded to a number of points raised by Members:

- The Corporate Plan was reviewed annually in line with the budget proposals.
- There was a statutory requirement to consult on the budget and it was done in a variety of ways depending on the nature of the proposals including the use of social media.
- Some of the metrics to monitor performance originated from public feedback.
- The Committee will get an opportunity to discuss new proposals as part of the annual review. A timetable for this will be presented at the next meeting.

Members made a number of suggestions:

- Reports and presentations must be circulated in advance with the agenda in order for them to be able to properly address the issues at the meeting.

- It can be difficult to reach young people for feedback but a move to more digital democracy could improve engagement.
- It was important to listen to the feedback and act on it. This Committee needed to hold Cabinet to account in a non-party-political way.
- There were many youth groups and Community Action Groups that could provide the Council with a lot of feedback.

26/21 OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

(Agenda No. 8)

Louise Tustian gave a presentation the Outcomes Framework. Most measures were updated monthly but some were quarterly or annual. The key performance indicators were RAG rated: Red if more than 10% away from the target, Amber if less than 10%, and Green if on target. A commentary was included on each service area and, if a rating was red or amber, the report would outline when improvement was expected.

The monthly reports were made available publicly in Cabinet agendas. The Outcomes Framework will be going to Cabinet in July and will be similarly available to all.

Claire Taylor responded to a question on social outcomes, emphasising that the Corporate Plan was not the only source of measures. For example, the Annual Report of the Director for Public Health included data on health inequalities. The Committee may wish to discuss the measures and consider if they were transparent enough and ask for inclusions in future iterations of the Corporate Plan. The measures could be altered in-year through a democratic process. The Corporate Plan was underpinned by individual service plans.

The Chair asked that the democratic process for making changes be outlined at the next meeting.

27/21 SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

(Agenda No. 9)

The Committee had been asked to consider and comment on the Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/21 which summarised the activities of the Council's scrutiny committees. The report will be taken by the July meeting of Full Council.

Claire Taylor, Corporate Director, Customers and Organisational Development, introduced the report and advised that it was a good place to start in terms of considering the Committee's Work Programme going forward. She thanked Democratic Services and Policy staff for their work in compiling the report.

Members commented as follows:

- It would be helpful to outline how the Committees' feedback influences future decisions and include a summary of improvements resulting from scrutiny at the end of the report.
- This Committee's remit was probably too wide to effectively scrutinise the 80% of issues that do not fall under Health or Education Scrutiny.
- 'Deep dives', involving a small group of Members, were very useful ways of looking more closely at specific issues.
- Papers should be circulated well in advance so there is no need for a lengthy introduction at the meeting and more time can be used for questions.
- Items should come back to the Committee if it has not had enough time to deal with them at the first meeting.
- There was a huge workload which would require extra meetings to those scheduled and the use of working groups.
- The Committee could set up its own subcommittees rather than waiting for a review of the number of scrutiny committees which could take a long time.
- A 2017 Governance Review Group report included some useful analysis and proposals that did not produce consensus at the time but could be looked at again.

Councillor Sally Povolotsky stated that she would research other councils' practice and email her findings to colleagues.

The Chair asked officers to report at the next meeting on the flow of information into and out of the Committee and how the Committee tracks outcomes afterwards.

The Chair also noted that the Chief Executive had already identified the need for a review of scrutiny and will come forward with proposals for the leaders of the political groups to consider. The number of scrutiny committees was a matter for Council to determine in the Constitution. He added that Cabinet Advisory Groups were also quite helpful and could engage in deep dives.

28/21 WORK PROGRAMME

(Agenda No. 10)

A Work Programme that had been agreed by the outgoing Committee was before the new Committee for consideration.

The Chair noted that one item for the 15 July 2021 meeting "Draft Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Reg 18 (Stage 2)" had been withdrawn as it was more appropriately scrutinised by district and city councils.

Members suggested that the following items be prioritised:

- Children Placed for Care Out-of-County
- Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Skanska contract

- Transport and Travel – specifically the implementation of Active Travel funding Tranche 2.
- Parking contract issues
- Climate action progress and environmental issues
- Transparency and public engagement
- OCC and the Growth Board and Oxford-Cambridge Arc

It was questioned whether Apprenticeships and the Minerals & Waste Development Strategy were sufficiently urgent to be taken in July.

Many Members stressed the need for extra meetings to deal with the workload.

It was agreed that it should be noted in the Work Programme what aspect of an issue is to be examined and why. The responsible Cabinet Member and Director should also be noted.

The Chair invited Members to send suggestions to the Committee Secretary for review at a meeting of the Chair and Deputy Chair the following week. He added that they could email suggestions in that way at any time.

The revised Work Programme will be brought to the next meeting and updated at each meeting.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 20