

Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 27 March 2018 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor Neil Prestidge (Chairman)

Councillor David Anderson
Councillor Claire Bell
Councillor Mike Bishop
Councillor Mark Cherry
Councillor Chris Heath
Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE
Councillor David Hughes
Councillor Andrew McHugh

Apologies for absence: Councillor Jolanta Lis
Councillor Sean Gaul
Councillor Jason Slaymaker

Officers: Lesley Farrell, Democratic and Elections Officer
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer

51 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

52 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

53 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 January 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

54 Chairman's Announcements

There were no Chairman's announcements.

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Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18

The Committee considered the draft Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual report for 2017/18.

The Democratic and Elections Officer explained that there were areas of the report still to be finalised, and this would be done in consultation with the Chairman prior to its submission to Council.

Resolved

- (1) That the draft Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual report 2017/18 be noted
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director – Law and Governance, in consultation with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to finalise the areas highlighted in the report prior to its submission to Council

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Work Programme 2017-18

The Committee considered the draft work programme for the remainder of the 2017-18 Municipal Year.

Mobile Phone Signal Working Group

The survey which had been agreed by the Committee had been agreed by the Committee had been available for the public to complete from 12 January to 23 February.

224 responses had been received. The Strategic Intelligence and Insight team had analysed the results and produced a short report, including some recommendations for the Committee to consider.

The Committee were pleased that some responses had been received, but had hoped the level of completion would be higher.

Discussing the recommendations made by the Strategic Intelligence and Insight team, the Committee agreed that the survey should be run again with the aim of getting a higher return rate, and this time everyone should be encouraged to respond, even those in areas with a positive level of signal. This would give a better picture of signal across the district, although it was possible that the same people would respond to the second survey and could therefore distort the results.

The Committee thanked the Strategic Intelligence and Insight team for the analysis and comprehensive report. Members queried if it would be possible for mapping information to be provided regarding mobile phone masts near and just over the district boundaries, Democratic and Elections officers agreed to pass on the request to Strategic Intelligence and Insight.

Topics suggested by Parishes

The Committee discussed proposed topics that had been submitted by parish councils.

All parish councils in the district had been contacted, and asked to send in details of potential subjects for the Committee to consider in the new Municipal Year.

The Committee discussed the suggested topics, and agreed approaches for each one as follows:

Adderbury

Suggested topic - To identify whether current planning policies and guidance are producing homes fit to live in with specific reference to the adequacy of storage space for personal possessions and of vehicular transport off of the road.

Approach – It was agreed that the subject should be broken down into two aspects; (i) whether new houses are ‘fit to live in’, and (ii) the air quality aspect of additional vehicles. Relevant officers to be invited to discuss with Committee, with a view to possibly including information in the Local Plan Part 2 process.

Kidlington

Suggested topic (1) – Decriminalised parking across the district, in particular for Cherwell District Council to consider a request to Oxfordshire County Council for a local warden.

Approach – A report to be requested from officers on the current situation with wardens and parking across Oxfordshire

Suggested topic (2) – Masterplans, specifically progress made in achieving requirements and improvements detailed in the plans.

Approach – Updates to be requested from relevant officers.

Piddington

Suggested topic - Social exclusion of rural communities, following publication of a community profile by Community First Oxfordshire.

Approach – Research to be carried out by officers to see if similar community profiles have been published for other rural communities in the district, with the possibility of carrying out a full review covering areas identified..

Shenington with Alkerton

Suggested topic - Inconsistencies in planning applications, following a number of recent applications with perceived inconsistencies in how officers have dealt with them.

Approach – More information required from planning officers, regarding the planning process and how consultation responses are dealt with.

The Committee also requested an update from relevant officers regarding The Hill Community Centre.

Resolved

- (1) That the results of the Mobile Phone Signal Survey be noted
- (2) That a further survey be conducting regarding Mobile Phone Signal Strength across the district, this time requesting responses from areas of good signal as well as areas of poor signal
- (3) That officers be requested to provide information/further research regarding the topics suggested by parish councils.

The meeting ended at 8.25 pm

Chairman:

Date: