

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 14 June 2011 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Kieron Mallon (Chairman)
Councillor Lynn Pratt (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ann Bonner
Councillor Tim Emptage
Councillor Neil Prestidge
Councillor Leslie F Sibley
Councillor Daniel Sames
Councillor Trevor Stevens
Councillor Lawrie Stratford
Councillor Rose Stratford

Substitute
Members:

Also Present: Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor Tony Ilott
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Patricia Tompson

Apologies
for
absence: Councillor Chris Heath
Councillor Alastair Milne Home

Officers: Chris Rothwell, Head of Safer Communities, Urban & Rural Services
Martyn Swann, Strategic Housing Manager
Helen Town, Strategic Housing Officer
James Doble, Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager

3 Declarations of Interest

Members declared interests in the following agenda items:

6. Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2011/2012.

Councillor Lawrie Stratford, Personal, as a member of Bicester Citizens Advice Bureau Management Committee.

Councillor Rose Stratford, Personal, as a Council appointed representative on Bicester Citizens Advice Bureau Management Committee.

4 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

5 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 8 March and 18 May 2011 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

In the course of considering the minutes Councillor L Stratford reported to the meeting that there had been positive media coverage of improved attainment levels in both primary and secondary schools in Bicester.

6 **Update on parking provision**

The Chairman outlined that parking provision was being considered in response to the request of the Executive that scrutiny provide further work on this issue following the referral back to the Executive as part of the Call-in held in January 2011.

The Chairman invited Ben Jackson (Bicester Chamber of Commerce) to address the meeting. It was reported that the Chamber had identified an 18-20% drop off in trading in recent months and whilst there was no evidence this was due to parking charges, it was believed this was a contributory factor. It was also noted that three businesses, including a long established business had ceased or were going to cease trading.

In the course of debate the following areas for future investigation were highlighted by members:

- The use of town centre rental income to replace lost parking fees if the charges were stopped
- Ticket machines, the availability of change and pay on exit
- Motorcycle parking
- Future of Shopmobility scheme
- Lessons learnt regarding advertising and signage for parking charge changes
- The suggestion of possible trial sites for different parking systems
- The issues of parking fines for low income families and repayment options
- The need to look at first quarter data
- The future of Multi-storey car park at Bolton Road, Banbury
- The consideration of escalating rates to prevent all day commuter parking

The Chairman advised following discussion with the Chairman of Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board it was felt that some elements of the review of parking should be brought forward for discussion at a special joint meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Resources and Performance

Scrutiny Board and therefore proposed an alternative form of words to recommendation 3 to reflect this.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (2) That Bicester Chamber of Commerce be thanked for providing the information obtained through the traffic survey.
- (3) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Resources and Performance Panel should engage on joint scrutiny on 12 July in relation to parking charges, to explore the issues discussed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

7

Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2011/2012

The Committee discussed the work programme and agreed that in a climate of scarce resources it was important that topics for scrutiny should deliver clear outcomes and made a difference to the community.

Resolved

That the following amendments and alterations be made to the Overview and Scrutiny work programme:

Equalities Policy – include on work programme, Chairman to progress issue with officers and to be scheduled for September 2011.

Commissioning of Advice, Volunteering and Voluntary Car Driving Schemes in Cherwell – include on work programme for July 2011. Members of Committee to feed in views and ideas to Chairman in advance of meeting to allow review approach to be planned. Agreed that advice, volunteering and voluntary car driving would need to be looked at separately in order to make manageable and as members feel there are likely to be different timescales involved.

Registered Social Landlords Relationship Policy – issue to be scoped and brought to committee at next meeting with benefit of CMT input.

Secondary School Education Attainment Levels – delete from work programme

Kidlington Pedestrianistaion – delete from work programme, members to receive update circulated outside of meeting when available.

Houses in Multiple Occupancy and Planning Policy - delete from work programme, members to receive update circulated outside of meeting when available.

Democratic Engagement with Young People - delete from work programme, members to receive update circulated outside of meeting when available.

Crime and Anti Social Behaviour – to be referred to RPSB to be considered in terms of effect of budget reductions on work area.

Private Sector Housing Strategy – July meeting then removed from work programme

Built Environment Conservation Area Policy - delete from work programme, members to receive update circulated outside of meeting when available.

Youth Services – Schedule for an update in last quarter 2011

Preparation for 2012 Olympics - delete from work programme

RAF Bicester - delete from work programme, members to receive update circulated outside of meeting when available.

Residents Parking Schemes - delete from work programme, include within general parking discussion on 12 July 2011.

8 **Review of public speaking at call-in**

The committee considered some concerns that had been raised in terms of the order of speaking at the recent Call-in of car parking. Concern had been raised that the public were not allowed to speak until after councillors had the opportunity to do so, which could mean that they were not able to speak for several hours, although in the event all those present at the meeting were able to speak.

It was noted that Call-in was essentially a process for councillors to call-in and review a decision of the Executive and that at many authorities the public were not allowed to speak. It was also noted that there was a balance to be struck between councillors exercising their scrutiny function and the involvement of the public. The committee considered the issues, but felt on balance that the existing order of speaking should be maintained as it reflected the importance of the role of councillors whilst allowing the public to speak after they had heard from all parties to the call-in and heard the questioning from members.

Resolved

That having reviewed the order of speaking during a Call-in, no amendments should be made.

The meeting ended at 8.11 pm

Chairman:

Date: