

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 19 June 2012 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Ann Bonner (Chairman)
Councillor Daniel Sames (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Tim Emptage
Councillor Chris Heath
Councillor Melanie Magee
Councillor Alastair Milne Home
Councillor Jon O'Neill
Councillor Nigel Randall
Councillor Leslie F Sibley
Councillor Lawrie Stratford

Substitute Members: Councillor Rose Stratford (In place of Councillor Colin Clarke)

Apologies for absence: Councillor Colin Clarke
Councillor Kieron Mallon

Officers: Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections
Dave Parry, Interim Democratic and Elections Officer

3 Declarations of Interest

Members declared interests in the following agenda items.

5. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2012/13.

Councillor Nigel Randall, Personal, as a trustee of Cherwell Community & Voluntary Services Ltd.

4 Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

5 Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 13 March 2012 and 6 May 2012 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2012/13

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Law and Governance which presented the draft Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2012/13.

Members discussed the existing and possible new items for inclusion on the Work Programme, with several service areas / topics being suggested:

- **Banbury Brighter Futures**
The Chairman had suggested this as a possible work programme item for the Committee to consider if they could contribute to the project. The Lead Member for Banbury Brighter Futures and Director of Community and Environment would be attending the September Committee meeting to brief Members on the project.
- **Commissioning of Services to Banbury CAB**
The Committee noted that in November 2011 a Contract for the Provision of the following Voluntary Services to Cherwell District Council: 1) Debt and Money Advice; 2) Services to Increase Volunteering; 3) Voluntary Driving Service, had been awarded to Banbury CAB for a period of 3 years from 1 April.

Members agreed that a review of this arrangement should be added to their work programme for the Committee to monitor performance, how that transition has taken place and the effect on residents in the district.

- **Crime and Disorder Partnership**
The Committee commented that they were keen to know what CDC was doing to reduce crime, how measurable this was and to receive information on the Council's role in the Crime and Disorder Partnership.
- **New Health Partnership Arrangements**
Members requested that the Lead Member and officer be invited to a future meeting to provide an overview of the new health partnership arrangements to enable Members to have an understanding of the structure and the role CDC plays.
- **RAF Bicester**
Members noted that this had previously been on the Committee work programme but there had been no developments.

The Chairman advised the Committee at their June meeting, the Executive had approved the establishment of a strategic partnership (Cherwell District Council, Bomber Command Heritage and other key agencies and interested parties) to investigate the potential of securing the site for heritage purposes, to enable the provision of an education centre and museum.

The Committee agreed that it was important they monitor the involvement of CDC to ensure value for money and that the project was being managed properly. It was requested that key officers and the Lead

Member be invited to a meeting to brief the Committee on the current position with regards to RAF Bicester.

It was also requested that the planning background and a briefing document be circulated to all Members.

- **Eco Bicester: A Garden City of the Future.**
The Chairman reported that at their May meeting the Executive had resolved to contact DCLG to explore the identification of Eco Bicester as a next generation garden city. The Committee agreed it would be useful to receive a briefing on the proposal to enable consideration of any areas the Committee could add value.
- **Housing Strategy**
The Chairman reported that at their April meeting the Executive had approved the Housing Strategy 2012-2017. An annual delivery plan for each year of the strategy that will prioritise actions in line with resources and opportunities. An annual delivery plan for each year of the strategy that will prioritise actions in line with resources and opportunities.

The Committee agreed it would like the opportunity to review the annual delivery plan at the appropriate time.
- **Empty Homes Policy**
During 2011/12 the Committee had received briefings on the work to date and determined that it should be retained on the work programme to monitor the implementation of the Empty Homes Policy.
- **Concessionary Fares**
The Committee requested that a briefing on the effectiveness of the transition of responsibility for concessionary fares to Oxfordshire County Council be submitted to the Committee for consideration.
- **Air Quality across the District.**
Members queried if the Council had an air quality supplementary planning document and requested that they be advised
- **Community Transport and Dial-a-Ride**
The Committee requested that a briefing note be submitted to advise Members on the outcomes the district's residents attained as a result of the additional funding the CDC paid to the County Council.
- **Welfare Reforms and National Benefit Change**
The Committee noted that the Head of Finance and Procurement would be attending their July meeting to present a briefing a benefit changes, what they will mean for CDC service delivery and the impact upon CDC residents.

Members requested that Housing Officers also be invited to attend to advise on the potential impact of the reforms on tenants and homelessness.

- **Draft Local Plan**
During 2011/12 the Committee had received briefings on the development and the draft Local Plan. And retained the item on their work programme to receive an update following the public consultation.

In discussing the potential work programme items, it was acknowledged that some might fall within the remit of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board and requested that officers liaise with the Chairmen of the scrutiny committees to ensure these were added to the work programme of the appropriate committee.

The Committee then gave consideration to the Forward Plan and, noting the scheduled September decision date in respect of the Banbury Museum Trust proposals, suggested this might be slipped to October to allow an opportunity for the Committee to be briefed. The Democratic and Elections Team Leader undertook to investigate whether this would be possible.

The Committee then suggested that, in the future, in addition to appropriate officers, the Lead Member in respect of any topic under consideration should be invited to attend and advise the Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That the draft Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2012/13 be noted.
- (2) That the following items be included in the 2012/13 Overview and Scrutiny work programme: Banbury Brighter Futures, Commissioning of Services to Banbury CAB, Crime and Disorder Partnership, New Health Partnership Arrangements, RAF Bicester, Eco Bicester: A Garden City of the Future., Housing Strategy, Empty Homes Policy, Concessionary Fares, Air Quality across the District, Community Transport and Dial-a-Ride, Welfare Reforms and National Benefit Change, Draft Local Plan.

The meeting ended at 7.45 pm

Chairman:

Date: