

## **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 17 June 2014 at 6.30 pm

- Present: Councillor Ann Bonner (Chairman)  
Councillor David Hughes (Vice-Chairman)
- Councillor Claire Bell  
Councillor Dan Sames  
Councillor Lawrie Stratford  
Councillor Bryn Williams
- Substitute Members: Councillor Andrew Beere (In place of Councillor Sean Woodcock)
- Also Present: Councillor Nicholas Turner, Lead Member for Joint Working and IT  
Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council
- Apologies for absence: Councillor Maurice Billington  
Councillor Diana Edwards  
Councillor Jon O'Neill  
Councillor Lynn Pratt  
Councillor Neil Prestidge  
Councillor Sean Woodcock
- Officers: Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections  
Louise Tustian, Senior Performance & Improvement Officer  
Dave Parry, Democratic and Elections Officer

#### **3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **4 Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

#### **5 Minutes**

The Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 18 February and 16 June, 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## 6 **Chairman's Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed Members to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and particularly those serving on the Committee for the first time.

The Chairman advised Members of the key functions of the Committee: Policy development and review, External Scrutiny, Performance Management and Review and Holding the Executive to account.

All Committee Members could suggest topics for review, and that the key consideration for undertaking any review was always on what outcomes could be achieved for the benefit of Cherwell residents. It was important that potential reviews were scoped to ensure that the remit and outcomes of the review were clearly identified. She was confident the Committee would enjoy another busy, interesting and successful year.

## 7 **Annual Performance Report 2013/2014**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Nicholas Turner, Lead Member for Joint Working and IT (formerly Lead Member for Performance and Customers), and the Senior Performance and Improvement Officer to the meeting

The Lead Member for Lead Member for Joint Working and IT and the Senior Performance and Improvement Officer presented the report of the Head of Transformation which detailed the Annual Performance Report for 2013 – 2014, as measured through the Performance Management Framework.

The Committee welcomed the report, noting the positive overall performance of the Council in meeting challenging performance targets. Particular consideration was given to a number of service areas:

**Planning Appeals** (CBP1 3.5c) – Although showing as below target, the Committee acknowledged the volatility of this area and the particular reasons the target being missed.

**Delivering 500 new homes** (CBP1 2.1) – Although still below target, the Committee welcomed the improvement and direction of travel, and it was acknowledged that, whilst the Council might grant sufficient planning consents to achieve the target, problems occurred when developers did not subsequently commence construction. The Committee was particularly pleased to note the Council had exceeded its target with respect to the percentage of houses developed on previously developed (brown field) land (CBP1 3.5f).

**Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill** (CBP2 1.2) and **Number of Flytips** (CBP2 2.3) – Acknowledging the negative impact of a change in the Regulations regarding street sweepings, the Committee nevertheless identified recycling as an area that might be the subject of a scrutiny review. Regarding flytipping, the Senior Performance and Improvement Officer advised that further information was being sought with a view to identifying trends, and additional commentary would be included in future reports. Noting

this, the Committee emphasised the need to ensure prosecutions received media attention.

**Car Parking Revenue (CBP4 3.3I)** – The Committee noted the reduction in income and that the budget had not been adjusted to take into account the impact of free parking with the new Sainsbury's store in Bicester. The Bicester tariffs had also remained at the reduced rate, originally implemented for the duration of the towns' redevelopment. The Committee suggested that where future developments included the provision of free parking facilities, the potential impact on income to the Council should be identified earlier and budgets adjusted accordingly.

The Leader of the Council reminded the Committee that Performance Management had only been introduced to the Council relatively recently, but had already reached the point where improvements and efficiencies were generating further performance improvements. There was, however, always room for further improvement, and the Councils approach meant that even areas currently rated as green were scrutinised for improvements.

Noting that Councillor Turner was attending his last meeting in his former Lead Member for Performance and Customers role (Councillor Mallon henceforth taking the role), the Chairman thanked him for always attending meetings of the Committee when discussing performance reports, and giving valuable background information.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That it be noted that, despite tough performance targets, a challenging economic environment, and on-going policy and organisational change, Cherwell District Council has met or made satisfactory progress on 95% of all the performance targets outlined in its performance management framework.
- (2) That Recycling be added to the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme as a potential item for a future scrutiny review.

8

### **Equalities Self-Assessment and Action Plan for 2013/14**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council and the Senior Performance and Improvement Officer to the meeting.

The Leader of the Council and the Senior Performance and Improvement Officer presented the report of Head of Transformation reviewing the completion of the annual Self-Assessment undertaken by the Council against the Achieving Standard under the Equality Framework for Local Government.

Welcoming the report, the Committee identified youth engagement as an area for potential scrutiny review, whilst recognising the work already being done through the 'Connecting Communities' events.

## **Resolved**

- (1) That the evidence and information submitted in the Council's Self-Assessment against the 'Achieving Standard' under the Equality Framework for Local Government be noted.
- (2) That the equalities action plan for 2014/15 be agreed, and the areas of good practice upon which it builds and the areas for development that it addresses be noted.

## 9 **Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2013/14**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Law and Governance which presented the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2013/14.

Noting the report, it was suggested that former members of the Committee be asked for their comments and the report reformatted to list the activities under the corporate priority headings.

## **Resolved**

- (1) That, subject to the inclusion of a schedule listing the activities against the corporate priorities, the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2013/14 be noted.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Head of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to complete the foreword and to make any minor amendments to the annual report before submission to Council.

## 10 **Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Law and Governance, which presented the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15.

### **Executive Work Programme**

The Committee agreed that there were no additional items in the Executive Work Programme for July to October, 2014 that they wished to include on their Work Programme in 2014/15.

### **Committee Work Programme**

The Committee gave consideration to its current Work Programme, and agreed the following:

New items for inclusion: Recycling and Youth Engagement. Councillors Hughes and Bell to complete a scoping document with respect to recycling, and Councillors Sames and Williams to complete a scoping document with respect to Youth Engagement.

Items for removal: Electronic Document and Records Management project; Wind Turbines and their locations (to be included in Review of Local Plan

Process item); CDC Employment Initiatives; Contract Scrutiny: Landscape Maintenance Contract; Application of Fracturing ('Fracking') mining technique (to be included in Review of Local Plan process item); Commission and introduce a new Asset Management Strategy; Five Year Business Strategy item – Develop the role of the Cherwell Investment Partnership to provide a hub for inward investment.

Amendments to current items: Commissioning of Services to Banbury CAB; including Community Transport and Dial-a-Ride – reschedule to September meeting;

### **Resolved**

- (1) That, subject to the amendments detailed in resolutions (2) and (4), the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2014/15 be noted.
- (2) That recycling and youth engagement be added to the Work Programme as potential scrutiny review topics.
- (3) That Councillors Hughes and Bell be nominated to work with Democratic and Elections Officers to complete a scoping document for the potential scrutiny review of recycling for consideration by the Committee at a future meeting.
- (4) That Councillors Sames and Williams be nominated to work with Democratic and Elections Officers to complete a scoping document for the potential scrutiny review of youth engagement for consideration by the Committee at a future meeting.
- (5) That the following items be removed from the Work Programme: Electronic Document and Records Management project; Wind Turbines and their locations (to be included in Review of Local Plan Process item); CDC Employment Initiatives; Contract Scrutiny: Landscape Maintenance Contract; Application of Fracturing ('Fracking') mining technique (to be included in Review of Local Plan process item); Commission and introduce a new Asset Management Strategy; Five Year Business Strategy item – Develop the role of the Cherwell Investment Partnership to provide a hub for inward investment.
- (6) That no items in the current version of the Executive Work Programme (July to October 2014) be included on the Work Programme for 2014/15.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm

Chairman:

Date:

