

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 2 June 2015 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor David Hughes (Chairman, for agenda item 8 only as apologies given for late arrival)
Councillor Lynn Pratt (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair for agenda items 1 - 7)
Councillor Claire Bell
Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE
Councillor Matt Johnstone
Councillor Alastair Milne Home
Councillor Sandra Rhodes
Councillor Lawrie Stratford
Councillor Bryn Williams

Also Present: Councillor Barry Wood, Leader of the Council
Alexandra Bailey, Oxfordshire County Council

Apologies for absence: Councillor Chris Heath
Councillor James Porter
Councillor Neil Prestidge

Officers: Jo Pitman, Head of Transformation
Kevin Larnar, Countryside and Communities Manager
Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer

3 Declarations of Interest

8. Draft Work Programme 2015/16.
Councillor Lawrie Stratford, Declaration, as a Member of the County Council, and would not be taking part in the debate on the supported transport/Dial-a-Ride item.

8. Draft Work Programme 2015/16.
Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE, Declaration, as a member of the County Council.

4 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

5 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 24 February and 19 May 2015 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

6 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

7 **Performance Report 2014-15 Quarter 4 / End of Year**

The Head of Transformation submitted a report which detailed the Quarter 4/end of year performance details for 2014-2015.

With regard to social media indicators CBP4 2.1a and CBP4 2.1b, Facebook 'likes' and Twitter followers, updated figures were circulated to the Committee.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Head of Transformation explained that social media was a high value resource, and it was an excellent way of getting important messages out to a high volume of people quickly, and therefore it was important for the Council to establish a presence.

With regard to indicator CBP3 5.1a, number of visits to District leisure centres, the Head of Transformation agreed to follow up with officers to try and find out the number of individuals that the visits referred to, to see if it was an overall increase in people or the same people making more visits.

Resolved

(1) That the report be noted.

8 **Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2014/15**

The Committee considered the draft Annual Report for the Committee for the 2014-2015 year.

The Committee paid tribute to former Chairman, Councillor Ann Bonner and thanked her for her hard work in the role.

In response to a request from the Committee, officers agreed that future annual reports would be submitted to the last meeting of the Municipal Year, in order to allow the current committee to sign off the details.

Resolved

(1) That the draft Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2014/15 be noted.

- (2) That authority be delegated to the Head of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, to complete the foreword before submission to Council.

9

Draft Work Programme 2015/16

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Law and Governance which presented the draft Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for information.

Supported Transport and Dial-a-Ride

Kevin Lerner, Countryside and Communities Manger for Cherwell District Council, and Alexandra Bailey, Service Manager for Supported Transport at Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), attended to update the Committee on the County Council's position regarding funding for Supported Transport and Dial-a-Ride.

A report had been submitted to the 26 May 2015 OCC Cabinet meeting which set out how the county council was intending to realise the total targeted savings of £6.25m in supported transport by 2017/8. OCC were proposing to withdraw funding for Dial-a-Ride, and instead help community transport groups set up an equivalent service with OCC provided 'pump-prime' funding, a one-off payment to help establish or extend existing services.

The OCC Service Manager for Supported Transport explained that the proposals were subject to consultation, which would start in June.

Council Website

Councillor Lawrie Stratford advised the Committee that he and the Chairman of the Committee had met with Balvinder Heran, Head of Joint ICT Business Service, to discuss the current Council website. A review of the existing website would be taking place in the next 12 months, and Councillor Stratford had requested that the Committee be involved in the review at the relevant time.

Councillor Johnstone agreed to replace former councillor and committee member Diana Edwards and former committee member Councillor Dan Sames on the website panel.

Youth Engagement

Councillor Bryn Williams provided an update to the Committee and members noted that former committee member Cllr Dan Sames and former councillor and committee member Alaric Rose would no longer sit on the Youth Engagement Panel.

Recycling Review

Councillor Claire Bell reported that she had met with the Head of Environmental Services to discuss the Council's performance in terms of

recycling. The highest achieving Councils were achieving a 66% recycling rate, and Cherwell was not far off that figure. To achieve any further significant increase in performance would require financial input.

At the request of the Committee Councillor Bell agreed to produce a short report summarising her findings so far, for the Committee to consider at a future meeting.

With regard to other items on the work programme, the Committee decided to remove the following items:

Report and proposed actions from LGA Growth Study into Business Growth; Oxfordshire Growth Board; Combating Female Genital Mutilation in the Thames Valley area; and Council car parking charges.

With regard to the proposed item on Joint three-way scrutiny, the Committee agreed to amend it to a general update on joint working, as three-way working would not be progressing at the moment.

The Democratic and Elections Team Leader advised the Committee that at their 1 June meeting, the Executive had considered a report on revisions to the Housing Allocation Scheme. The Executive had resolved to recommend to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that it undertake a review of rural exception sites to consider any disconnect between planning policy and the Allocations Policy. The Committee agreed to add the item to its work programme as a potential scrutiny review and requested that relevant officers be invited to a future meeting to brief the Committee on the current position.

In considering other potential topics for Scrutiny review, the Committee noted that the Cherwell Communities Safer Partnership would be reviewing the Safer Communities Strategy and agreed that this should be added to the work programme for consideration at the appropriate time.

Resolved

- (1) That the work programme updates be noted
- (2) That the following items be removed from the work programme: report and proposed actions from LGA Growth Study into Business Growth; Oxfordshire Growth Board; Combating Female Genital Mutilation in the Thames Valley area; and Council parking charges
- (3) That the following items be added to the work programme for consideration at the appropriate time: Safer Communities Strategy; and Rural Exception Sites and Allocations Policy

The meeting ended at 8.20 pm

Chairman:

Date: