

Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Town Hall, Bridge Street, Banbury, OX16 5QB, on 20 July 2010 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Daniel Sames (Chairman)
Councillor Lynda Thirzie Smart (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Andrew Fulljames
Councillor Alastair Milne Home
Councillor Chris Smithson
Councillor Keith Strangwood

Substitute Members: Councillor Simon Holland (In place of Councillor Ann Bonner)

Also Present: Councillor Colin Clarke

Apologies for absence: Councillor Ann Bonner
Councillor John Donaldson
Councillor Lawrie Stratford

Officers: Catherine Phythian, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

10 **Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

11 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

12 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

13 **Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation**

Councillor Colin Clarke, Portfolio Holder for Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation, attended the meeting to brief the Committee on the Banbury Brighter Futures project. He explained that this was a complex multi-agency project focusing on three wards in Banbury and that the project had some very long lead times

before there would be tangible results. The project began in the spring of 2009 and the initial work had centred on information gathering and data analysis whereas the focus of activity in 2010 would be on practical action planning and public consultation and communication.

In discussion the Committee reflected on the importance of maintaining data protection standards, the important role that the voluntary sector would play in the success of the project and the need for strict enforcement of the powers available to the project partners.

The Committee thanked Councillor Clarke for his presentation and reaffirmed their offer of support should it be needed as the project progressed. They concluded that there were no issues for them to review at this stage and agreed that it would be appropriate to revisit the Banbury Brighter Futures project in early 2010 to note progress and developments.

Resolved

That the Portfolio Holder for Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation be invited to attend the January 2011 meeting of the Committee to brief them on the progress of the Banbury Brighter Futures project.

14 **Completed scrutiny reviews: Democratic Engagement with Young People and Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour**

The Chairman introduced the scrutiny reports on Democratic Engagement with Young People and Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour. He explained that these reports were now ready for submission to the Executive on 6 September 2010 and that this would be the last opportunity for the Committee to make any final observations. The Committee agreed that both reports had relevance to the Council's work on breaking the cycle of deprivation and that the work of the street wardens and the rest of the safer communities team should be recognised.

Resolved

That the scrutiny reports on Democratic Engagement with Young People and Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour be noted and referred to the Executive.

15 **Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010 - 2011**

The Committee considered the report on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/11.

Preparations for an Ageing Population

The Committee noted that this topic had been carried forward from the previous year. The Committee noted the conclusions of the county wide scrutiny review of this area and agreed that there was little merit in undertaking a similar review as it was unlikely to produce any different or tangible results. They agreed that the topic should be deleted from the work programme.

Forward Plan

The Committee noted that the Executive was due to consider a progress report on Civil Parking Enforcement and Banbury Residents' Parking in October 2010. They asked that the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Street Scene and Rural be invited to bring the report to the Committee for discussion prior to its submission to the Executive.

Kidlington Pedestrianisation Capital Bid

The Committee were pleased to note that the Executive had accepted the scrutiny recommendation to approve the release of funding for the Kidlington Pedestrianisation project. The Scrutiny Officer undertook to keep the Committee informed of progress on the implementation of the project.

Centre for Public Scrutiny Annual Conference

The Committee asked that the Committee member who had attended the Centre for Public Scrutiny Annual Conference in June 2010 bring a written report on the conference to their next meeting.

RAF Bicester

The Committee noted the recent sale of the Domestic Site at RAF Bicester and the Council's ongoing concerns about the condition of the structures and buildings on the Technical Site. They agreed that the Chairman should ask the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing to write to the new minister setting out the basis of the Council's concerns and asking him to intervene with the Ministry of Defence.

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The Committee noted that there were two main topics for discussion at the September meeting and agreed that the consideration of the project plan for the Built Environment Conservation Area Policy should be scheduled as planned. However, some members of the Committee remained concerned about the proposal to review secondary education attainment levels in Cherwell and questioned its relevance to the work of a District Council.

In conclusion the Committee agreed to proceed as proposed and invite the County Council Cabinet Member and lead officer to attend the September meeting to present the findings of their scrutiny review. The Committee agreed that the discussion should be broadened to include consideration of the work on NEETS (the acronym for the government classification for people currently "Not in Employment, Education or Training") and that local employers should be invited to attend the meeting so that their views on the local job and labour market could be considered.

Resolved

- (1) That the current Overview and Scrutiny Committee element of the work programme for 2010/11 be agreed.
- (2) That "Preparations for an Ageing Population" should be deleted from the work programme.

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- (3) That the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Street Scene and Rural be invited to bring the progress report on Civil Parking Enforcement and Banbury Residents' Parking to the Committee for discussion prior to its submission to the Executive (Forward Plan item ~ October 2010).
- (4) That the Executive approval of the Kidlington Pedestrianisation Capital Bid be noted.
- (5) That the Committee member who had attended the Centre for Public Scrutiny Annual Conference in June 2010 be asked to bring a report on the conference to the next meeting.
- (6) That the Chairman request the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing to write to the new minister asking him to intervene with the Ministry of Defence regarding the Council's concerns about RAF Bicester.
- (7) That the proposed agenda items for the 21 September 2010 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm

Chairman:

Date: