

Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA, on 19 September 2023 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor John Broad (Chairman)
Councillor Isabel Creed (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Patrick Clarke
Councillor Ian Harwood
Councillor Simon Holland
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Rob Pattenden
Councillor Dorothy Walker
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Bryn Williams

Substitute Members:

Councillor Besmira Brasha (In place of Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke)

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Dr Chukwudi Okeke

Also Present Virtually:

Councillor Sandy Dallimore
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Adam Nell

Officers:

Ian Boll, Corporate Director Communities
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager
Matt Swinford, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers Attending Virtually:

Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Michael Furness, Assistant Director Finance & S151 Officer

Tim Hughes, Interim Assistant Director Regulatory Services & Community Safety

Liam Didcock, Leisure Contracts and Sports Hubs Manager

Tom Gubbins, Sport & Recreation Physical Activities Manager

Richard Smith, Head of Housing

Celia Prado-Teeling, Performance & Insight Team Leader

26 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

27 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 1 August 2023 and 16 August 2023 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

28 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

29 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

30 **August 2023 Performance Monitoring Report**

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Director – Customer Focus that detailed the Council's performance against its performance indicators for August 2023

The Performance and Insight Team Leader introduced the report and advised the Committee that the council had achieved 86% of its August 2023 key performance indicators (KPIs). Indicator BP1.2.06, average time taken to process Housing Benefit New Claims and council tax reduction (Days), was reporting amber. This was due to a few days with high volumes of claims however the year-to-date performance is ahead of target.

In response to queries from the Committee in relation to this indicator, the Assistant Director of Finance advised that the targets that the council had to report on were based on national statistics that had to be reported quarterly to the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP).

The Assistant Director of Finance explained he regularly met with the team to review performance and was confident that the year-end target would be met. Quarterly meetings take place with the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) which is happy with the council's performance.

In response to a question on indicator BP4.1.02, support community safety and anti-social behaviour prevention activities, the Corporate Director of Communities advised that the team's work was both preventative and reactive and involved working closely with partners. The Community Safety Team would be presenting an overview of the work and activities undertaken by the regulatory and community safety service to the Committee in due course.

In response to questions regarding facilities in new developments and activities for 14 – 18 year olds, the Leisure Contracts and Sports Hubs Manager and Sport and Recreation Physical Activities Manager agreed to provide an update on the facilities and activities they were moving forward. The Performance and Insight Team Leader also referred to the brighter futures work which included many initiatives such as art and music as well as sport. The Committee endorsed the Chief Executive's suggestion that an update be provided to the Committee alongside the Community Safety Team presentation.

In response to a question from the Committee on indicator BP1.2.01, Number of Homeless Households living in Temporary Accommodation, and how the target of 40 households was determined, the Head of Housing advised that there was no requirement to report this, rather the council had chosen to measure and it was therefore a locally set target. The Portfolio Holder for Housing added that the target of 40 households is a figure that the Council believed to be achievable.

Resolved

- (1) That having given due consideration, the Council's August 2023 performance be noted and no recommendations be submitted for Executive consideration.

31 **Working Groups Update**

The Committee noted the working group updates that had been published with the agenda.

Resolved

- (1) That the working group updates be noted.

32 **Work Programme 2023-24**

The Governance and Elections Manager provided the Committee with an update to the indicative committee work programme.

The Governance and Elections Manager advised the Committee that Sanctuary Housing Officers would be attending their next meeting on 24 October 2023 to give a presentation. Committee members were asked to

submit any areas they wished the presentation to cover or to Sanctuary Housing by 6 October 2023.

The Chairman advised that he was liaising with officers about including updates from the council's representatives (himself, Councillor Woodcock and Councillor Pratt) on the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) Scrutiny Panel to this Committee following meetings of the Panel.

Resolved

- (1) That the indicative work programme be approved.

The meeting ended at 7.21 pm

Chairman:

Date: