

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday 5 June 2024

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Committee members present:

Councillor Miles (Chair)	Councillor Altaf-Khan
Councillor Fry (<i>substitute for Councillor Corais</i>)	Councillor Henwood (<i>substitute for Councillor Stares</i>)
Councillor Jarvis	Councillor Latif
Councillor Malik	Councillor Mundy
Councillor Ottino	Councillor Qayyum
Councillor Regisford	Councillor Rowley

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Alice Courtney, Scrutiny Officer
Celeste Reyeslao, Committee and Member Services Officer

Apologies:

Councillor(s) Corais and Stares sent apologies.
Substitutes are shown above.

1. Election of Chair for the Council Year 2024/25

The Committee resolved to elect Councillor Katherine Miles as Chair for 2024/25.

2. Election of Vice Chair for the Council Year 2024/25

The Committee resolved to elect Councillor Tiago Corais as Vice-Chair for 2024/25.

3. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

4. Chair's Announcements

There were no announcements.

5. Minutes

The Committee resolved to **approve** the minutes of the informal remote meeting held on 11 April 2024 as a true and accurate record.

The Committee requested that the Scrutiny Officer schedule the following items into the Work Plan for 2024/25:

- Adult Exploitation and Modern Slavery
- Tourism

6. Scrutiny Operating Principles 2024/25

Alice Courtney, Scrutiny Officer introduced the report which asked the Committee to approve the Scrutiny Operating Principles for the 2024/25 Council year, which were broadly similar to previous years.

It was recommended that the standing panels from the previous year be re-established, namely Finance and Performance Panel, Housing and Homelessness Panel, and Climate and Environment Panel. It was also recommended that the scrutiny of executive decisions made in relation to any companies wholly or partly owned by the Council be included within the remit of the Finance and Performance Panel, effectively replacing the previous Companies Scrutiny Panel.

The Committee was recommended to re-establish the Budget Review Group; comprising the membership of the Finance and Performance Panel, including Chair.

The Scrutiny Officer informed the Committee that political groups had made nominations to panels as per the revised cross-party principle guide to political balance on panels and review groups. The Committee was asked to agree the membership of the panels and appoint respective Chairs.

The Committee was advised that a preliminary work plan up to September 2024 had been included in the report. The Scrutiny Officer indicated that the Forward Plan had been updated since the publication of the Forward Plan summary included in the agenda; it was therefore recommended that the following additional items be included on the Work Plan for the Committee's July meeting:

- Leisure Investment Programme
- Citizen Experience Strategy Progress Report

The Committee was reminded to send any ideas for Scrutiny-commissioned reports by e-mail to the Scrutiny Officer for consideration at its meeting on 02 July 2024.

In response to questions, the Scrutiny Officer confirmed:

- That, in relation to companies scrutiny arrangements, she would seek clarification as to whether 'scrutiny' would continue to be a standing item on Shareholder and Joint Venture Group meetings and whether Finance and Performance Panel members would still be permitted to attend those meetings (as Companies Scrutiny Panel members had been previously), and report back to the Committee in due course.
- That Panel Chairs could be from any political group.
- That, in consultation with the Chair, permission had been granted for a substitute to attend the additional Finance and Performance Panel meeting required in July

2024, due to exceptional circumstances related to Member availability and the requirement to hold a meeting in July.

In addition to the nomination set out in the report of Cllr Hunt as Chair of the Climate and Environment Panel for 2024/25, Cllr Jarvis proposed, seconded by Cllr Altaf-Khan, the nomination of Cllr Kerr for Chair of the panel. On being put to the vote and by 6 votes to 5, the Committee resolved to appoint Cllr Kerr as Chair of the Climate and Environment Panel for 2024/25.

Cllr Latif joined the meeting.

The Scrutiny Committee resolved to:

1. **Agree** the proposed Committee Operating Principles for the 2024/25 municipal year, as set out at Appendix A to the report.
2. **Agree** to establish the following standing panels for the 2024/25 municipal year with the following remits:
 - i) Finance and Performance Panel – finance and budgetary issues and decisions, annual review of the Council’s budget, quarterly monitoring of finance and performance (including performance of the Council’s companies), executive decisions made in relation to any companies wholly or partly owned by the Council.
 - ii) Housing and Homelessness Panel – strategic housing and landlord issues and decisions, homelessness, housing services performance and interaction with the Tenant’s Forum.
 - iii) Climate and Environment Panel – climate and environmental issues and decisions, progress and performance monitoring, monitoring delivery of existing strategies, policies and projects.
3. **Agree** the allocation of seats on standing panels to political groups for 2024/25 (Finance and Performance Panel: 4, Housing and Homelessness Panel: 6, Climate and Environment Panel: 4).
4. **Agree** to appoint members and chairs of the Finance and Performance, Housing and Homelessness and Climate and Environment Panels:

Finance and Performance Panel: Cllr James Fry (Chair), Cllr Chris Jarvis, Cllr Christopher Smowton, Cllr Ian Yeatman

Housing and Homelessness Panel: Cllr Lizzy Diggins (Chair), Cllr Theo Jupp, Cllr Edward Mundy, Cllr Asima Qayyum, Cllr Rosie Rawle, Cllr Anne Stares

Climate and Environment Panel: Cllr Emily Kerr (Chair), Cllr Judith Harley, Cllr Jemima Hunt, Cllr Katherine Miles
5. **Agree** to establish a Budget Review Group, comprising the membership of the Finance and Performance Panel, noting that the proposed scope will be agreed at a future Scrutiny Committee meeting.
6. **Agree** that the Chair of the Finance and Performance Panel will Chair the Budget Review Group.

7. **Agree** the schedule of meetings as presented within the report.

8. **Agree:**

- i) The preliminary Work Plan covering the period to September 2024 as detailed at Appendix B to the report, including the addition of the Leisure Investment Programme and Citizen Experience Strategy Progress Report for the Committee's July meeting; and
- ii) That Committee members will send additional ideas for topics for Scrutiny commissioned reports to the Scrutiny Officer by e-mail for consideration at the Committee's 02 July meeting.

9. **Note** the Scrutiny Guide for Councillors at Appendix D.

7. Report back on recommendations and from Scrutiny Panel meetings

The Committee noted that on 17 April 2024, Cabinet considered recommendations related to the following reports, responses to which were set out in the agenda pack:

- Oxford City Council Annual Business Plan 2024-25 and Progress of the 2023/24 Priorities

The Scrutiny Officer advised that Cabinet deferred consideration of a number of reports to its meeting on 12 June 2024 and responses to those recommendations would be reported to the Committee at a future meeting.

The Committee noted that no Panel meetings had been held since the Committee's previous informal remote meeting on 11 April 2024.

8. Dates of future meetings

The Committee noted that the Finance and Performance Panel meeting on 06 June 2024 was cancelled due to no business.

The Committee noted that its next meeting on 02 July 2024 would be held as an informal remote meeting due to the unavailability of a suitable room as a result of preparations for the upcoming General Election.

The Committee noted the dates of future meetings.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 6.22 pm

Chair

Date: Tuesday 2 July 2024

When decisions take effect:

Cabinet: after the call-in and review period has expired

Planning Committees: after the call-in and review period has expired and the formal decision notice is issued

All other committees: immediately.

Details are in the Council's Constitution.