

Minutes of a meeting of the SCRUTINY COMMITTEE on Tuesday 6 February 2018

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Committee members:

Councillor Gant (Chair)	Councillor Chapman (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Altaf-Khan	Councillor Curran
Councillor Henwood	Councillor Ladbrooke
Councillor Lloyd-Shogbesan	Councillor Lygo
Councillor Thomas	Councillor Upton (for Councillor Fry)
Councillor Cook (for Councillor Azad)	Councillor Humberstone (for Councillor Paule)

Officers:

Tim Sadler, Executive Director Sustainable City

Anita Bradley, Monitoring Officer

Ian Brooke, Head of Community Services

Richard Adams, Community Safety Service Manager

Julia Tomkins, Grants & External Funding Officer

Mish Tullar, Corporate Policy, Partnership and Communications Manager

Andrew Brown, Committee Services Manager

Catherine Phythian, Committee Services Officer

Also present:

Councillor Susan Brown, Leader of the Council, Leader of the Labour Group, Board Member for Customer and Corporate Services

Councillor Tom Hayes, Board Member for Community Safety

Councillor Bob Price, Board Member for Corporate Strategy and Economic Development

Councillor Marie Tidball, Board Member for Young People, Schools and Public Health

Councillor Elizabeth Wade, Liberal Democrat Deputy Group Leader

Apologies:

Councillor(s) Azad, Fry and Paule sent apologies.

Councillor Sinclair (Board Member for Culture and Communities) sent apologies for item 78

71. Declarations of interest

The following declarations were noted in relation to Agenda item 8: Grant Allocations to Community and Voluntary Organisations 2018/19

- Councillor Gant – as a trustee of the Ark T Centre
- Councillor Cook – as a member of the Oxford International Link
- Councillor Curran – as the Council’s representative on Pegasus Theatre Trust and as a member of Fusion Arts and the Donnington Doorstep Family Centre
- Councillor Ladbroke – as the Council’s representative on the Barton Community Association

72. Minutes

The Committee resolved to **approve** the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2018 as a true and accurate record subject to the following minor corrections:

Minute 68: Air Quality Annual Status Report for 2016

6th paragraph

*The particularly poor outcomes for St Clements were a matter of concern and a strategic group (with County Council representation) would meet **presently soon** to address those concerns. The County Council had conducted a traffic survey of the area and one possibility being explored was the re-phasing of traffic lights (to keep traffic flowing). Interestingly two monitoring sites in the area, just 10 – 15 metres apart produced markedly different results.*

10th paragraph

*The Council had not ~~benefitted from~~ **bid for funding from** the recently announced government funding pot of £4.5m to be put towards electric car charging points.*

Final paragraph

*The Scrutiny Officer noted the following key points **has as**...*

73. Report back on recommendations

The Scrutiny Officer presented the report on recommendations made to the City Executive Board.

The Scrutiny Committee had considered a report by the Head of Community Services on preventing elderly isolation at its meeting on 5 December 2017 and the recommendations had been submitted to the City Executive Board on 23 January 2018. The City Executive Board response had now been circulated (appended to these minutes); four of the five recommendations had been agreed and one would be accepted in part.

The Committee noted that all of its recommendations to the Trading Companies Shareholder meeting in relation to the Trading Companies Business Plan had been accepted.

74. Work Plan and Forward Plan

The Scrutiny Officer alerted the Committee to revised report scheduling in the Forward Plan and suggested some changes to the Committee's work plan.

The Committee agreed the following amendments to the work plan:

6 March agenda to include:

- ICT restructure – this was a referral from the Finance Panel in view of the significant investment proposal set out in the 2018/19 Budget
- Equality and Diversity tracking – this item could draw on the data collected to support Cllr Azad's involvement with the National Association of Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority Councillors (UK) and on the latest Annual Workplace Equalities report. Effective and professional analysis of the data was essential to an informed discussion and the Scrutiny Officer was tasked with inviting a suitable candidate. The Committee requested that a senior officer (e.g. Chief Executive / Assistant Chief Executive) should be present for the discussion.

2018/19 Work Plan

- The Finance Panel had identified issues around business rates for Air BnB properties as a potential topic for review in 2018/19.
- The Local Plan 2016 – 2036 would be submitted to Council in July 2018. This would be the last chance for the Committee to influence the process. The Chair and the Scrutiny Officer would discuss the options for a timely and effective scrutiny contribution and bring proposals to the next meeting.

75. Reports for approval

The Scrutiny Committee had considered the Air Quality Annual Status Report 2016 at its meeting on 15 January 2018 and agreed that recommendations should be made to the City Executive Board as a result. The Scrutiny Officer introduced the report which proposed those recommendations. The Committee agreed that the report should be put to the City Executive Board at its meeting on 13 February.

The Scrutiny Officer explained that the Finance Panel report setting out recommendations on the Budget 2018/19 was still in draft; the final version of the report would be circulated to the Committee in advance of the City Executive Board meeting.

76. Children & Young Person Strategy 2018-2023

The Chair took this item first.

Councillor Tidball, Board Member for Young People, Schools and Public Health presented the pre-consultation draft of the Children & Young Persons Strategy (2018 – 2023). She highlighted the following key points:

- That the draft strategy was underpinned by three principles
 - a. Preventative-led provision (early intervention)
 - b. Equality, inclusion and engagement of young people
 - c. Facilitating effective partnership working
- That the Council would use the “ Ready by 21 Framework” to share and review data about young people to look at the root causes of the societal problems facing young people
- The trial use of a zoning methodology to focus on specific localities across the city in order to support those communities who need it most and to deliver solutions which respond to specific needs
- That the City Council was working closely with the County Council to identify areas where the City Council’s services could complement and add value to the County Council’s regulatory role

The Committee explored these points in more detail during an extensive discussion. The Committee also reflected on the challenges facing the Council and its partners in seeking to create “cultural enrichment in primary school education” against the backdrop of a restricting curriculum. The Council was actively seeking to identify ways in which it could work with schools and partners to access the cultural benefits that the city of Oxford could offer.

The Committee noted and welcomed the report.

77. Update of the Corporate Plan 2018

The Scrutiny Committee considered the Annual Update Report on the Corporate Plan 2016-20. The Board Member for Corporate Strategy and Economic Development, the Executive Director for Sustainable City, and the Corporate Policy, Partnership and Communications Manager presented the report and answered questions.

The Committee noted the two new proposed success measures for 2018-19 around measuring ‘channel shift’ (i.e. increases in the proportion of self-service customer interactions), and the change of focus from targeting overall increases in leisure centre usage to increasing usage amongst target groups while stabilising usage amongst non-target groups. The Committee asked for further context around current leisure usage and heard that leisure centre attendances were projected to total 1.2m in the current year against a target of 1.45m. The Committee explored the reasons for this and identified key factors as being lower growth in demand for local authority provision, increased competition from budget providers, and the availability and popularity of alternative ways of keeping fit (e.g. ‘green gyms’, pitch sports, dance, martial arts, etc.).

The Committee concluded that the Council should adopt a new measure to reflect this changing picture and recognise the Council’s wider role in enabling people to lead fit and healthy lives in the city. Consideration should be given to any suitable national measures that could be adopted, such as Sport England’s new Active Lives Survey, which replaces the Active People Survey. It was also noted that sports facilities and community centres in the city could be asked to provide data to support a local measure, if required.

The Committee commented that the addition of a corporate performance measure linked to the promotion of the Oxford Living Wage would be very welcome in light of the Council's longstanding policy commitment and the recent scrutiny review (which is due to conclude in March 2018).

The Board Member for Corporate Strategy and Economic Development said that this was a useful suggestion and that £5k had been allocated to the Economic Development Team for the promotion of the Oxford Living Wage. The Committee agreed to bring forward the recommendation of the Oxford Living Wage Review Group on setting living wage targets.

The Committee identified the following key points as having emerged from the discussion that could be presented to the City Executive Board as recommendations:

1. That the Council sets an additional corporate target for wider engagement in sport, exercise and leisure activities in the city.
2. That the Council sets additional targets for the promotion of the 'living wage', with at least one such target monitored at the corporate level:
 - a. The number of accredited living wage employers based in the city (e.g. doubling the current number of 69 within 2 years).
 - b. The number of local employers paying the Oxford Living Wage.

78. Grant Allocations to Community and Voluntary Organisations 2018/19

The Committee noted that the Board Member for Culture and Communities had sent apologies as she had a prior engagement.

The Board Member for Customer and Corporate Services reminded the Committee on the key points that emerged from the review of the community grants programme in 2017. She said that the underlying principles were to provide a degree of consistency and stability necessary for forward planning by those organisations in the grant programme; to maintain a close alignment with Council priorities; and to make the grant application process open to new organisations. She highlighted the new 2018 Development Fund, which allowed advice services to make partnership bids, as an example of the Council's continued commitment to investment in a sector which had experienced significant cuts in funding from other organisations.

The Head of Community Services explained the reasoning behind the proposed officer delegation to approve applications to the Annual Open Bidding programme. He said that the main objective was to minimise the delay in issuing grants to organisations.

The Grants & External Funding Officer reported back on the work done to address the scrutiny recommendations on the Review of Community Grants Programme decision in November 2017, which included a focus on promoting BAME engagement with the grants programme. She said that four workshops had been held to explain the grants process and these had been promoted within the BAME community. In total 8 out of

the 17 workshop attendees and 10 out of the 22 small grants programme applications were from the BAME community.

The Committee noted that the Council required all organisations in the grants programme to be fully inclusive although it was recognised that some organisations were dedicated to a particular BAME issue.

The Committee noted the report and acknowledged the valuable contribution made by volunteers.

79. Review of use of Community Protection Notices (CPN Review)

Councillor Wade addressed the Committee and asked for the report to be re-drafted before being presented to the City Executive Board. She said that the findings and recommendations of the cross-party panel meeting described in the report did not reflect the views expressed by herself and Councillors Gant and Thomas at the meeting they attended on 29 January 2018.

Councillors Gant and Thomas re-iterated the points made by Councillor Wade.

In conclusion Councillor Wade asked the Committee and the Board Member for Community Safety to consider the following points which she, Councillor Gant and Councillor Thomas believed should be in place before CPN proceedings were started:

- a. There should be documented evidence of attempts to engage the individual and an assessment of his/her vulnerability to legal process.
- b. There should be a formal Protocol agreed by Legal setting out the process to be followed in each case under the Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014.
- c. There should always be a written legal advice on file.
- d. The process should be authorised in each case by the Head of Service and the Head of Law and Governance – and there should be no time limit on this requirement.

In response the Board Member for Community Safety said that he could agree point a) as it reflected current practice; that point b) was agreeable in relation to complex cases; but that he had reservations about accepting points c) and d) due to practical and operational considerations.

The Board Member for Community Safety and the Executive Director for Sustainable City said that the content of the report was based on the conclusions of an earlier cross-party meeting attended by members from the controlling political group and the independent member. The minutes of that meeting could be made available. They acknowledged that the report did not take account of the views expressed by Councillors Wade, Gant and Thomas at the meeting held on 29 January 2018.

The Board Member for Community Safety, the Executive Director for Sustainable City and the Community Safety & Resilience Manager then presented the report and answered questions from members of the Committee.

The Community Safety & Resilience Manager explained that legal advice was sought for all complex cases but that the volume of enforcement activity meant that it would not be practical or necessary to provide written legal advice for all cases.

In discussion the Committee considered the nature of the needs and problems in the city that CPNs could be used to address and the extent of checks and balances in the process for issuing CPNs.

The Committee also noted that a legal opinion had been obtained by Councillor Thomas which, while it could not have been based on the full facts of any specific case the Council had dealt with, would be considered as part of the subsequent review of the Anti-social Behaviour Policy and the Anti-social Behaviours Procedures.

Members of the Committee suggested that any future informal meetings involving members from beyond any one political group should be fully documented.

On being put to the vote the Committee endorsed the City Executive Board report.

On being put to the vote a majority of the Committee supported a proposal that the following points should be presented to the City Executive Board as scrutiny recommendations:

- 1. That a written procedure is produced which requires that legal advice is sought and documented in all complex cases that could result in the issuing of a Community Protection Notice or other legal sanction.
- 2. That in future any informal cross-party meetings, such as those convened for this subject, should be fully documented (i.e. agenda and minutes) with appropriate provision made for members to consider confidential or exempt material at such meetings.

The one member who voted against including point 1) above as a scrutiny recommendation did so because they believed that the current procedure already covered this requirement.

80. Dates of future meetings

The Committee noted the dates of the meetings to be held in March 2018.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.30 pm

Chair

Date: Tuesday 6 March 2018

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