

VALUE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday 28 February 2012

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Brown (Chair), Seamons (Vice-Chair), Abbasi, Fooks, Gotch, Humberstone, Keen, Malik, Rowley, Royce, Van Nooijen and Williams.

35. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor McCready with Councillor Fooks attending as substitute.

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

37. STANDING ITEM: WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended) updating the Committee on the work programme for the current year.

The Principal Scrutiny Officer provided a brief overview of the work completed by the Committee and its panels. Members noted the work that was still outstanding and that the next and final meeting would be taking place at the end of March.

Resolved to note the report.

38. STANDING ITEM: REPORT BACK ON THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD AND ON MATTERS OF INTEREST TO THE COMMITTEE

The Committee noted recommendations to the City Executive Board as well as responses received on the following items:

- Benefits Fundamental Service Review
- Asset Management Framework
- Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
- Corporate Plan Performance
- Budget and Performance.

Councillor Seamons provided members with a brief overview of the work of the Finance and Performance Panel.

Resolved to note the report.

39. HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION - UPDATE

The Head of Environmental Development submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) updating the Committee on progress made with the introduction of a scheme to license all Houses in Multiple Occupation in the City.

Members briefly discussed the report and the following points were made:-

- There had been a rush of applications since Christmas and the scheme was performing in “cash term”
- As Oxford was the first authority to introduce such a licensing system there was no data or trends to compare the performance of the scheme.
- It was important that accurate information is provided to landlords on how the scheme works and that the correct properties are targeted as potential HMOs
- The Committee was given information on the steps being taken by officers to enforce the scheme and told that a non-compliance officer had been appointed to deal with reports of non-licensed properties.

The Committee requested an additional report be submitted to the next meeting which addressed in greater detail the Committee’s lines of inquiry. It was felt that the report before the Committee did not address the points in detail.

Resolved to:-

(1) Note the report

(2) Request that an additional report be submitted to the next meeting that addressed in full:

- The financing and resourcing arrangements for the scheme
- The detailed processes and aims of the scheme
- The robustness of the processes to handle evasion

40. DRAFT ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Head of Corporate Assets submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) presenting the draft version of the Council’s Asset Management Plan.

The Head of Corporate Assets introduced and summarised the document saying that the Plan would be released for public consultation following agreement by the Board Member. Following the introduction the following points were made:

- It was felt that further more measurable targets should be included in the document.
- A brief discussion on “community assets” versus “investment properties” took place. It was explained that the Council careful classified its assets so that maximum community use could be exploited.

- The Committee felt that the plan would benefit from having more explicit links to the overall corporate aims and objectives of the Council particularly on pages 7 and 8 where achievements to date were recorded.
- Members felt that targets, even if just aspirational, were required for the number of operational assets the council wanted to classify as good, satisfactory, poor or bad.
- Councillor Fooks and Van Nooijen agreed to form a panel to examine the draft plan in detail outside of the Committee. Their conclusions would be reported directly to the Board Member.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Recommend that further targets are included in the plan, with particular focus on the overall corporate aims and objectives of the Council; and
- (2) To appoint a Panel consisting of Councillors Van Nooijen and Fooks to examine the detail in the plan and report any recommendations/comment to the Board Member and Head Corporate Assets in advance of the public consultation period.

41. MINUTES

Resolved to approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2011 and the special meeting held on 5 January 2012.

42. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

26 March 2012.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.42 pm

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