

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 1st June, 2017

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Tom Baker-Price (Chair), Councillor Jane Potter (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Gay Hopkins, Paul Swansborough, David Thain, Jennifer Wheeler and Nina Wood-Ford

Officers:

Helen Broughton, Kevin Dicks and Deb Poole

Democratic Services Officers:

J Bayley and Amanda Scarce

1. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Councillor Baker-Price welcomed Members to the first meeting of the new municipal year and explained that he was trying a new seating plan and room layout in line with best practice.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Matthew Dormer, Andrew Fry and Paul Swansborough, with Councillor David Thain in attendance as a substitute for Councillor Dormer.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest nor of any party whip.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 28TH MARCH 2018

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting held on 28th March 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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Chair

4. REDDITCH LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP - MONITORING UPDATE REPORT

The Redditch Partnership Manager provided Members with a brief overview of the Partnership and its various theme groups, together with details of how these groups fed into the Redditch Partnership Executive Group (RPEG). Details of the Partnership's four current priorities were also provided. At its most recent meeting, following an away day which had aimed to refocus the Partnership, it had been agreed that RPEG should concentrate on one particular area per meeting. There was also a recently established sub group, the Suicide Prevention Task Group, which had been created following discussions between Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and Redditch Borough Council amid concerns being raised about the number of suicides from a particular site, and this would be added to the structure. An electronic Directory of Services was also being worked on, together with the Bromsgrove Partnership Manager, and it was hoped that this would be launched by September 2017.

Following presentation of the report Members raised a number of points, which were discussed in detail:

- Whether the directory would include information about different mental health organisations and it was confirmed that Primary Care had put together a directory and these would be incorporated within the new one.
- Whether the directory would give clear information about the work each group carried out and the age range that it catered for. It was confirmed that there might be some signposting within the directory as to where more detailed information could be found.
- Concerns were raised in respect of the directory only being available online, as it was acknowledged that there were still a number of residents who did not have access to the internet. The Redditch Partnership Manager provided Members with information about a recent initiative from one of the partners which was aimed at assisting those people through various means, whether it be by providing training or signposting to the library for example where help could be given in accessing the internet.
- Representatives from the Council, Redditch and Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Worcestershire Health and Care Trust, the Police and Fire Authorities, Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (BARN), Worcestershire County Council, Public Health, Children's Services and Connecting Families all sat on the partnership.

- However, it had proved harder to engage with representatives from the Education and the Private Sectors, though it was confirmed that representatives from local businesses sat on the Economic Development Theme Group.
- It was confirmed that there was an action plan in place in respect of the four priorities of the Economic Development Theme Group. Members discussed how the actions would be monitored in order to ensure that the work was focused within the right areas. It was acknowledged that this was difficult to quantify in many cases and needed to be looked at as a whole, although there were a number of measures in place within the action plan. This work was ongoing and cost benefit analyses for some areas were being carried out.
- Members discussed the need for joined-up working to ensure that work was not being duplicated, but equally the right areas were being focused on.

The Chief Executive explained to Members that the West Midlands Combined Authority was carrying out a large piece of work in respect of mental health issues, but the concern was that it would still remain an issue for the Council.

RESOLVED that

the Redditch Local Strategic Partnership – Monitoring Update Report be noted.

5. ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY - PRE-SCRUTINY

The Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development presented the Community Engagement Strategy and explained to Members that it addressed the legal standards surrounding consultation and was designed to help the Council ensure that services met the needs of its residents. The strategy had been created following consultation with a number of residents and community organisations in order to ensure that it worked for everyone. It clearly stated what the Council meant by engagement and the principles that it would work to. It was explained that an action plan would now be formulated to ensure the strategy was put in place. Members requested sight of that plan to understand better its purpose and to ensure that the strategy was implemented appropriately and in a timely manner.

Following presentation of the strategy Members discussed a number of areas including:

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- The use of a Citizens' Jury and how this had been successful in the past. Officers confirmed that something similar had been used previously and currently a group of tenants were being consulted for feedback. Although they did not necessarily meet in person, they were asked for their views on a variety of subjects on a regular basis.
- Members questioned how consultation would work across the Council. Officers confirmed that different approaches were used by different departments and some subjects were easier to engage residents in than others. This ranged from online surveys to people going out and about in the community with a clipboard.
- The use of social media and text messaging in order to get feedback quickly on a particular subject.
- The strategy was not designed as an operational tool and officers would be expected to speak to the Policy Team and work with them to determine how best to engage with residents on a particular issue.
- Consultations which had been undertaken in respect of the Council's Leisure facilities were also discussed and whether the principles had been followed sufficiently.
- The Chief Executive reiterated that the Council needed to consult and engage more with its residents moving forward in light of the challenges it faced and advised that the Overview and Scrutiny function had a role to play in that process.
- Members discussed ways in which measureable outcomes could be demonstrated in order to ensure that the appropriate groups of people had been consulted.
- Officers confirmed there were national benchmarking percentages for the return of surveys which were normally between 25 and 28 per cent. Some subject matters would always be of more interest to people than others, although the Council was keen to get as many responses as possible. It was anticipated that key benchmarks would be included within the action plan.
- Various types of electronic surveys were discussed and officers advised that a piece of software had recently been purchased which allowed the Council to create its own online surveys and also provided a detailed analysis of the responses received.
- The difficulty in engaging with younger age groups and ways in which this could be undertaken, for example Facebook and Twitter.

After further general discussion it was

RESOLVED that

the Community Engagement Strategy be noted, subject to consideration of the Action Plan at a future meeting.

**6. PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY - RESPONSE FROM
BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Officers provided background information and reminded Members that this item had been discussed at the Committee's previous meeting in relation to recommendations from the Performance Scrutiny Working Group, who had proposed joint working with the Measures Dashboard Working Group which had been established at Bromsgrove District Council.

The proposals had been considered at the Bromsgrove Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 24th April 2017 when it had been agreed that the Measures Dashboard Working Group would, in the first instance, be interested in informal meetings being arranged biannually with the Performance Scrutiny Working Group. However, Bromsgrove Members did not feel at this stage that it would be appropriate for joint performance scrutiny meetings to be held as they were at a different stage with reviewing the measures dashboard.

**7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS -
MONITORING UPDATE REPORT**

Officers introduced the report and in so doing highlighted that a separate sheet had been tabled which included the dates when each of the recommendations listed in the monitoring update had been made by this Committee.

There remained two outstanding items which had been made prior to 2016. In respect of the recommendation from the Voluntary and Community Sector Task Group it was noted that a Grants Officer had now been appointed and that work was in progress to recruit an apprentice, however as this had been outstanding for a number of years, Members requested that a definitive date be given as to when this would be completed.

Members also discussed the following:

- The recommendation from the Budget Scrutiny Working Group in respect of consideration being given to ways to manage the Town Hall and other property assets. Within the response reference was made to the "One Public Estate" exercise currently being undertaken and Members asked for

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further information in respect of this exercise. The Chief Executive undertook to ensure that this was put on the Executive Work Programme in order for the Committee to have the opportunity to pre-scrutinise it at a later date if it so wished.

- There were a number of responses which Members agreed needed further detail in order to establish whether the recommendations had been completed and the Chief Executive supported the need for further detail, particularly in respect of the re-charging process recommendation from the Budget Scrutiny Working Group.
- Reference was also made to the marketing of the Lifeline service, which was from a recommendation by the Performance Scrutiny Working Group and Members discussed the proposed introduction of a Business Development post which would be included in the overall review of the service. It was acknowledged that a large amount of business would need to be generated to justify such a post being created.
- The general use of apprenticeships throughout the Council was discussed and Officers explained that full details could be made available to Members outside of the meeting if required.
- Attention was brought to the recommendations from the Mental Health Services for Young People Task Group and whilst it was accepted that these had only recently been approved, it was understood that in respect of recommendation 4 “the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Education” a detailed response had been received. However, as this made greater reference to Sex and Relations Education (SRE) than to Personal, Health, Social and Economic Education (PSHE) lessons, which had been the subject of the group’s recommendation, Members requested a written update to the next meeting of the Committee in respect of this matter.

RESOLVED that

subject to the actions detailed in the pre-amble above, the report be noted.

8. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME

Officers highlighted to Members that reference was made to the recommendations from the Mental Health Services for Young People Task Group final report. Two recommendations had been

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endorsed by the Executive Committee and one, in respect of the addition of a new theme to the Grants Programme had been rejected. The remaining recommendations had been noted as they were for the consideration of organisations outside of the Council's jurisdiction.

In respect of the Executive Committee Leader's Work Programme an updated version was tabled at the meeting and was considered by the Committee. Officers confirmed that the Leisure Intervention Work and Option for a Leisure Trust was already scheduled in to the Committee's Work Programme for pre-scrutiny.

RESOLVED that

the Executive Committee Minutes of 4th April and the latest edition of the Executive Committee Leader's Work Programme be noted.

9. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Officers confirmed that a presentation on the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Sustainability and Transformation Plan update would be received at the next meeting from representatives of the Worcestershire Health and Care Trust and Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust. It was agreed that, as previously, all Members would be invited to attend this meeting.

Members discussed the potential to include a presentation in respect of the work of the Lifeline Team. However the Chair highlighted that the Performance Working Group had recently considered this area as part of its work and it was therefore agreed that this should not be considered until that work had been completed.

RESOLVED that

the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be noted.

10. WORKING GROUPS - UPDATE REPORTS

Budget Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Jane Potter

It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group would take place at 4.00 p.m. on 27th June 2017 and that Councillor Potter would again be Chair of this group.

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Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Tom Baker-Price

It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Working Group, which would be chaired by Councillor Baker-Price, would be held on 21st June 2017 commencing at 6.30 p.m.

It was confirmed that the membership for both groups remained the same as in the previous year.

11. TASK GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

a) Homelessness Short, Sharp Review

It was confirmed that this Short sharp Review would be chaired by Councillor Nina Wood-Ford supported by Councillors Natalie Brookes, Anita Clayton, Pattie Hill and Antonia Pulsford. Its first meeting would take place at 10.30 a.m. on 14th June 2017.

b) Staff Survey Joint Scrutiny Task Group

The membership remained the same for this Joint Task Group and it was confirmed that a meeting had not been held since the last update was received by the Committee.

12. HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - VERBAL UPDATE (COUNCILLOR WOOD-FORD)

Councillor Wood-Ford, as the Council's representative on the HOSC (Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee), highlighted a number of areas which had been discussed at its most recent meeting. This included:

- Access to Primary Care - a presentation had been received which outlined the current context, local and national developments and what the future might hold for access to Primary Care, including GPs and the importance of their inclusion within any future plans. The role of pharmacists within any future plans was also discussed, together with the potential to upskill nursing staff, a volunteer programme and the availability of apprenticeships.
- Changes to commissioning policies affecting hip and knee replacement surgery – it had been reported that a review of this was required as part of the need to make savings from the combined Worcestershire CCGs' budget for 2017/18. During a budget consultation in 2016, the general public had not been supportive of restricting joint replacement surgery. However,

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the three Worcestershire CCGs had different clinical activities, resulting in unexplained variations in this type of surgery, with Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG having a higher level when benchmarked nationally. Discussions had covered how treatment varied between the north and south of the County.

The Chair thanked Councillor Wood-Ford for her comprehensive update.

13. WEST MIDLANDS COMBINED AUTHORITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - VERBAL UPDATE

It was confirmed that whilst there had not been a meeting of the West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee since the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Nina Wood-Ford had been appointed as the Council's representative on the Committee for the municipal year and Councillor Jennifer Wheeler would act as the substitute. However, the next meeting was due to take place on 4th July 2017 and unfortunately Councillor Wood-Ford was unable to attend and so Councillor Wheeler would attend in her place.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.25 pm