



# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Monday, 3rd February, 2025

## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer (Chair), Councillor Craig Warhurst (Vice-Chair) and Councillors William Boyd, Andrew Fry, Joanna Kane, Sachin Mathur, David Munro and Rita Rogers

### Officers:

Sue Hanley

### Democratic Services Officers:

M Sliwinski

### 71. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Wren.

### 72. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest nor of party whip.

### 73. MINUTES

It was requested that a typographical error identified in the minutes record (Minute No. 64, third paragraph down) be corrected, replacing the incorrect word 'affray' with 'avoid'.

It was agreed by the Committee that, subject to this correction, the minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025 be approved as a correct record.

### RESOLVED that

**the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair, subject to the correction as stated in the preamble above.**

Chair

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## 74. PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no public speakers who have registered to speak at this meeting.

## 75. DRAFT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

The draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report was presented for Members' consideration. During discussion, it was requested that a section should be added to the Annual Report providing current progress updates in respect of key items that had been discussed by the Performance Scrutiny Working Group and at meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committee throughout the year. This included topics such as the PowerBI Performance Dashboard and progress on Town Hall Hub.

Subject to the addition of the section above, the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report was approved for presentation to Council.

### **RESOLVED that**

**the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2024-25 be approved.**

## 76. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME - SELECTING ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY

The following items from the latest Executive Work Programme (1<sup>st</sup> March to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025) were added to the Overview and Scrutiny work programme (as pre-scrutiny items):

- Future Cemetery Provision (17<sup>th</sup> March)
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2025/26 (17<sup>th</sup> March)
- Housing Regulator Tenant Satisfaction Measures (9<sup>th</sup> June)
- Housing Regulator Self-assessment Complaint Handling Code (9<sup>th</sup> June)
- Voluntary Sector Grants Scheme 2026/27 to 2029/30 (9<sup>th</sup> June)
- Redevelopment of the Anchorage, Smallwood (1<sup>st</sup> September)

It was noted that the Shareholders' Committee Annual Report was already included as an item for Overview and Scrutiny to consider.

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A correction was requested in relation to an item currently listed on Executive Work Programme as 'Redditch Strategic Plan'. It was clarified that this should be referred to as 'Redditch Council Plan' and the lead officer should be the Chief Executive. The Committee Officer undertook to correct this.

It was agreed that as there were no items selected for scrutiny for the meeting of Overview and Scrutiny on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2025, that meeting would be cancelled.

A written update on the meeting of Budget Scrutiny Working Group, to be held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025, would be provided to Members of Overview and Scrutiny via email, and Overview and Scrutiny Members would have the chance to comment prior to full Council meeting.

## **RESOLVED that**

**The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be updated with items from the Executive Committee's Work Programme as per the pre-amble above.**

## **77. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was submitted for Members' consideration. Members discussed the items that were marked as 'to be confirmed' on the work programme. It was explained that in respect of the item on 'Decarbonisation of the Council's Capital Programme' there would be a written update circulated to Members, and in respect of 'Report on WMCA Constituent Membership Process', the report would no longer be applicable to Redditch due to significant changes in national policy as a result of the Government's devolution 'white paper'.

In respect of the item on 'Parking Enforcement – Management of Contract', Members expressed significant concerns with respect to parking enforcement in Redditch. It was commented by Members that the current enforcement provided was felt to be ineffective. It was noted that Worcestershire County Council (WCC) currently had no plans to allocate additional income into parking enforcement. During discussion, it was suggested that Overview and Scrutiny set up a task group investigation to look at this topic.

Stakeholders that could be invited to meetings of such task group into parking enforcement were suggested. The Committee Officer stated that a task group into this matter could be launched once one

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of the currently ongoing task group investigations had been finalised. It was noted that Fly Tipping and Bulky Waste Task Group was due to be concluded at its next meeting in February and there would then be capacity to launch a task group into parking enforcement. It was agreed by Members that subject to a terms of reference and membership being approved at the next meeting of Overview and Scrutiny, the Parking Enforcement Task Group should be launched.

## **RESOLVED that**

- 1) The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be updated with items from the latest Executive Work Programme, as agreed (and detailed at Minute No. 76).**
- 2) The Parking Enforcement Task Group be set up, subject to submission of a terms of reference (scoping document) and selection of membership at a future meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

## **78. TASK GROUPS, SHORT SHARP REVIEWS AND WORKING GROUPS - UPDATE REPORTS**

Updates on the ongoing Task Groups and Working Groups were provided as follows:

- a) Budget Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Warhurst

Apologies were submitted by the Chair, Councillor Warhurst, to the last meeting of Budget Scrutiny on 31<sup>st</sup> January, and the update was provided by Councillor Dormer who chaired the meeting in Councillor Warhurst's absence.

Councillor Dormer reported that on 31<sup>st</sup> January the Tranche 2 Medium Term Financial Plan (following consultation) report was discussed in detail. It was reported that during detailed discussion, Members of Budget Scrutiny requested clarification and further detail in respect of a number of budget lines, and there would be a follow-up meeting of Budget Scrutiny for Members to consider the report again.

- b) Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Warhurst

Councillor Warhurst reported that the last meeting took place on 8<sup>th</sup> January. The areas looked at by the Working Group over the

current municipal year to date were summarised, with topics such as PowerBI performance dashboard, and the work of the Council's Place Teams in road cleansing, upkeep of verges, and tree maintenance having been scrutinised.

Councillor Warhurst further reported that Members were awaiting updates in respect of when the performance dashboard would be launched. It was underlined that during the Working Groups, updates were provided in respect of improved systems and workstreams such as the embedding of the Abavus software into operations across Environmental Services and improved communications with residents on tree maintenance, including through direct communications (leaflets and direct conversations) when tree works were taking place in an area.

- c) Fly Tipping and Bulky Waste Task Group – Chair, Councillor Dormer

It was reported that the next meeting would take place on Wednesday (5<sup>th</sup> February). The Task Group was close to finalising its investigation.

- d) Post-16 Education Task Group – Chair, Councillor Warhurst

Councillor Warhurst stated that the Task Group had met with a lot of relevant stakeholders to date, including the Chamber of Commerce, the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Heart of Worcestershire College, and West Midlands Combined Authority, in respect of discussions around skills and post-16 education and vocational training provision. It was reported that the Task Group required a further two to three meetings before concluding its investigation.

## **RESOLVED that**

**the Task Groups, Short Sharp Reviews and Working Groups Update Reports be noted.**

## **79. EXTERNAL SCRUTINY BODIES - UPDATE REPORTS**

Updates on the meetings of External Scrutiny Bodies were provided by the representatives as follows:

- a) West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Council Representative, Councillor Kane

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Councillor Kane provided a written report summarising the matters discussed at the meeting of 20 January 2025. Councillor Kane reported that during the meeting it was felt that devolution proposed in the white paper would provide the WMCA Overview and Scrutiny, and oversight committees more generally, with more power in the future, however, the WMCA Overview and Scrutiny wanted more detail on how this would be taken forward. It was added that English Devolution White Paper would be a standing item at meetings of this external body.

It was reported that no matters of direct relevance to Redditch were discussed at the last meeting.

- b) West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny – Council representative, Councillor Munro

Councillor Munro reported that no matters of relevance to Redditch were discussed at the last meeting of Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny.

- c) Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) – Council representative, Councillor Munro

Councillor Munro reported that the last meeting took place on 8<sup>th</sup> January where access to dental services in the county was the main topic on the agenda. In respect of delivering dental services, there were two main challenges in Worcestershire: the national NHS contract for dentistry and shortage of dentists.

Councillor Munro reported that the national dental contracting framework set by the NHS had not been reviewed since 2006 and most dentists now regarded basic fees in that framework as inadequate to cover their costs. Across Worcestershire, it was reported that over 40,000 dental units were voluntarily handed back to Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB) as dentists were unable to cope with the financial costs of providing NHS dentistry, with by far the most contracts handed back in Evesham. It was reported that at the time of the report there were no reported contract handbags in Redditch but that situation could have changed by now.

Councillor Munro reported in terms of data that Redditch had a fairly high incidence of dental decay in under five-year-olds. Under the NHS dental recovery plan, Redditch was one of the priority areas,

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and premium rate was paid to dentists for each unit of dental activity in Redditch. It was further reported that £5m was being reinvested in dental services across Worcestershire and Herefordshire as part of the recovery plan.

**RESOLVED that**

**the External Scrutiny Bodies be noted.**

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm  
and closed at 7.15 pm

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