

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT PANEL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Scrutiny Management Panel held on Friday 4 July 2014 at 3.00 pm in Conference Room A, Second Floor, Civic Offices.

(NB These minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting which can be viewed at www.portsmouth.gov.uk.)

Present

Councillor Alistair Thompson (Chair)
Councillor Michael Andrewes
Councillor Alicia Denny
Councillor John Ferrett
Councillor Terry Hall (deputising for Cllr Sanders)
Councillor Phil Smith
Councillor Matthew Winnington

Officers

Stewart Agland, Local Democracy Manager
Vicki Plytas, Senior Local Democracy Officer

NB Councillor Julie Swan attended in the public gallery as an observer.

9 Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Darren Sanders.
Councillor Terry Hall attended the meeting today as his standing deputy.

10 Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)

Councillor Terry Hall declared a non- prejudicial interest in agenda item 5
(i) as one of the scrutiny topics being put forward was on parking around schools in Portsmouth and she lived close to two schools and
(ii) on the topic on discharge from hospital as one of her sons works with people who have just been discharged from St James' Hospital
Councillor Thompson declared a non-prejudicial interest on agenda item 5 in that as a parent he walks his child to school..

11 Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 February 2014 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2014 be confirmed and signed by the chair as a correct record.

12 Scrutiny Report (AI 4)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

The Senior Local Democracy Officer introduced the report and explained that it had been produced because the City Council's Constitution requires information reports to be provided to the Scrutiny Management Panel and subsequently full Council on the work undertaken by the scrutiny panels.

Members discussed the contents of the report.

With regard to the Notice of Motion referral on Transparency and Openness (Filming of meetings), members were aware that a report had been to the 27 June 2014 meeting of Governance and Audit and Standards on this matter and that recommendations had been made from that committee for consideration at full council on 15 July 2014.

The Local Democracy Manager advised that the Council had to comply with the new legislative requirements under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, which (once the necessary secondary legislation is in place) requires Councils to allow the filming, photographing and recording of all meetings of the Council to which the public are admitted.

On 18 March 2014, Full Council considered and agreed the Scrutiny Management Panel's recommendation that a working group be set up to prepare a report on how the practicalities of this impending requirement can be implemented as soon as possible, including how the Council's Standing Orders should be amended. However, the timescale involved over the pre and post-election period had not allowed a working group to undertake this task prior to the Governance and Audit and Standards Committee meeting. That Committee was in turn required to report to the Full Council in July, so the requisite changes could be approved before the relevant Regulations requiring compliance are in place. He explained that the recommendations from the Governance and Audit and Standards Committee seek to help ensure the necessary information is before Full Council for determination before compliance is imposed by Regulation. He acknowledged that some revisions to the proposals going to Council may be necessary when more information becomes available. He confirmed that the setting up of a working group of councillors was still likely to be required pursuant to the Committee's recommendations (although this would be once the secondary legislation was in place and if further revisions were consequently necessary).

With regard to the Economic Development Culture and Leisure Scrutiny Panel (EDCL panel), the Chair of the panel, Councillor Winnington said the report had been signed off on 1 April and had been scheduled to go to the first available Cabinet meeting of the new Municipal Year with the officer response report. He had since been advised that the item had been deferred.

He said he had spoken with other panel members, Councillors Phil Smith and John Ferrett and they agreed with him that the delay seemed to indicate that scrutiny was not being given the priority it deserved. He asked that the Scrutiny Management Panel Chair uses his best endeavours to impress on officers that scrutiny is an important part of the Council's process and was often very time sensitive. Some of the recommendations in the panel's report were crucial to the new academic year and had been designed to dovetail with recommendations made by the Education, Children and Young People scrutiny panel that were going forward to the July cabinet meeting. Councillor Andrewes wished to reiterate the points made about timeliness of response reports.

Councillor Thompson suggested that the Local Democracy Manager be asked to report back to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Management Panel on 25 July with information from the officers concerned on their reasons why their response report had been delayed. This was agreed.

Members agreed the Scrutiny Report going on to Council, subject to the addition of an extra recommendation to thank members of the public, witnesses and officers for their contributions to the reviews and also to democratic services officers who supported the panels.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report be noted and the work done by the panels be acknowledged**
- (2) an extra recommendation be added to the report as follows -
"thanks be formally recorded to all those members of the public, witnesses and officers who contributed to the reviews and to democratic services officers who supported the panels"
and**
- (3) the panel receives at its next scheduled meeting on 25 July a report back on the reasons why the response report for the Economic Development, Culture and Leisure Scrutiny Panel had been delayed.**

13 Work Programme 2014/15 Traffic Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel and Economic Development, Culture & Leisure Scrutiny Panel (AI 5)

(TAKE IN HANDOUT)

The Senior Local Democracy Officer (SLDO) circulated a hand-out that included review topics put forward by the panels so far. She explained that the TECS panel and the EDCL panel had already met since the local elections but that ECYP had not so would be putting forward their topics for consideration at the next meeting of Scrutiny Management panel on 25 July. The SLDO explained that Housing and Social Care scrutiny panel membership had changed since the local elections and the new panel would be considering how to take the current review on Hospital Discharge forward. Once the review neared completion, their next suggested review topics would be brought to this panel for consideration.

Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel

The SLDO advised that the topics that had been selected by the Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel (TECS) were

1. Review into parking around schools in Portsmouth
2. Waste Management

Members were very supportive of the suggested review into parking around schools and hoped it would cover related aspects rather than be confined solely to parking issues - for example encouraging walking to school.

The Scrutiny Management Panel agreed the topics put forward for review by TECS in the order stated.

Economic Development, Culture & Leisure Scrutiny Panel (EDCL)

The SLDO advised that EDCL had put forward two topics for consideration by the Scrutiny Management Panel which were

1. Revitalising local high streets and secondary shopping areas in the city
2. Improving sport and physical activity participation in the city

Councillor Winnington, the Vice Chair of the EDCL scrutiny panel explained that there are areas locally where shops had been empty for some time. He said there had been several applications to convert shops into houses in a number of different shopping centres. He said that should this happen, there was a likelihood that such development would kill local shopping centres. He said that one of the aims of a review would be to seek ways to encourage local people who wished to retain local shopping centres to "self-help." The panel also hoped to look at ways in which local shopping areas could be encouraged to be as thriving as possible - for example looking at good practice in one locality with the aim of encouraging other less thriving areas to adopt similar good practice. Although it was recognised that PCC would not be able to support all the shopping areas itself, it could perhaps act as an enabler to encourage local centres to help themselves. He said the review aimed to look into what could be done to facilitate this and could research what had been done elsewhere.

He said that scrutiny panels could make a difference by making recommendations to Cabinet to enable a focus to be given to local groups.

The SLDO advised that with regard to the second topic, the EDCL panel had been advised at its recent meeting that two strategies were currently being worked on - the sports development strategy and a strategy on physical activity. The sports development strategy was expected to be completed by Autumn 2014 and a strategy on physical activity would follow at a later date. For this reason, the EDCL panel considered it better to review this topic second.

Members discussed the review topics and thought them to be very worthwhile. Scrutiny Management Panel agreed the topics put forward for review in the order stated.

RESOLVED that

(1) the TECS Scrutiny Panel reviews the following topics in the following order:

- (i) Parking around schools in Portsmouth**
- (ii) Waste Management**

(2) the EDCL Scrutiny Panel reviews the following topics in the following order:

- (i) Revitalising local high streets and secondary shopping areas in the city**
- (ii) Improving sport and physical activity participation in the city**

14 Verbal Updates from Chairs of Scrutiny Panels (if any) (AI 6)

There were no separate verbal updates from Scrutiny Chairs at this meeting.

15 Date of Next Meeting (AI 7)

The next meeting is scheduled for 25 July at 3.00pm.

Councillors Thompson and Smith tendered their apologies for the meeting on 25 July. Councillor Hall said she would be unable to deputise for anyone.

The meeting concluded at 3.30 pm.

Chair