

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT PANEL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Scrutiny Management Panel held on 26 July 2012 at 5.30pm in Conference Room A, Civic Offices, Portsmouth.

(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 Michael Andrewes (Chair)
Councillor Darron Phillips
Councillor Caroline Scott
Councillor Sandra Stockdale
Councillor Matthew Winnington
Councillor Robert New
Councillor Mike Park
Councillor Jim Patey

Officers

Louise Wilders, Head of Customer Community &
Democratic Services

1 Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Peter Eddis.

2 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (AI 2)

No declarations of interest were made.

3 Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 February 2012 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2012 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4 Work Programme 2012/13 (AI 4)

Councillor Caroline Scott put forward the topics that had been selected by the **Traffic Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel**. These were air quality in Portsmouth and domestic noise nuisance.

It was suggested that a previous scrutiny topic chaired by Councillor Lee Hunt concerning domestic nuisance could inform the panel when it comes to consider domestic noise nuisance.

Councillor Matthew Winnington, Chair of the **Economic Development Culture and Leisure Scrutiny Panel** put forward three topics that had been agreed for consideration by the Scrutiny Management Panel which were:

- (1) community ownership – Councillor Winnington explained that the panel hoped to ensure that there was a procedure to follow where there were community aspirations to run public and private assets so that these would be run for the good of the city. During discussion the following points were made:
- the Head of Customer Community and Democratic Services explained that as this service was closely involved with Customer Engagement and Neighbourhood Forums work, she would be more than happy if her service was involved with work for this review.
 - members felt that it was important that scrutiny helps shape matters relating to community ownership from the beginning so that it could be well co-ordinated.

Councillor Winnington said that the second review topic put forward by the Economic Development Culture and Leisure Scrutiny Panel was youth employment. He explained that this would seek to build on the previous review on whether the resident work force in Portsmouth has the requisite skills to satisfy the current and future needs of the city, its residents and local employers. The youth unemployment review would concentrate particularly on helping young people to find work experience opportunities. He explained that the long-term unemployment figures are growing and the review would look at what the council could do with its partners for example Job Centres, training bodies etc to improve the situation. Councillor Winnington explained that care would be taken not to repeat the same work already undertaken as part of the skills review.

Councillor Winnington said that the third topic that EDCL had put forward to this panel for review was in relation to neighbourhood planning. Local planning forums were very new and the panel felt that it was important to learn from the experience of others in setting up neighbourhood plans so that they worked effectively.

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

Councillor Darron Phillips, Chair of **the Education, Children and Young Persons scrutiny panel** explained that the review on targeted support was still in progress. He explained that the panel's membership had changed so that it was intended that Councillor Phillips and Councillor Wemyss would progress this review and would bring the report to the new committee for sign-off. Councillor Phillips went on to explain that three subjects had been put forward by the ECYP scrutiny panel for consideration at this meeting. These were:

- (1) how well do we care for looked after children and how can we improve stability and outcomes in their lives;
- (2) how can the city council best help governing bodies to improve;
- (3) review of school admissions policies having regard to future demand for school places taking into account recent demographic changes and the location, condition and capacity of school buildings in the city.

Councillor Phillips said that a further topic for consideration had been taken from recommendation 15 of the recently completed skills review - how schools and FE colleges can better prepare young people for the world of work by teaching them life or employability skills - and that this should also be considered at today's meeting. It was agreed that the topics put forward by ECYP should be considered in the following order:

- (1) how well do we care for looked after children and how can we improve stability and outcomes in their lives
- (2) how schools and FE colleges can better prepare young people for the world of work by teaching them life or employability skills
- (3) how can the city council best help governing bodies to improve
- (4) review of school admissions policies having regard to future demand for school places taking into account recent demographic changes and the location, condition and capacity of school buildings in the city.

During discussion about the review into looked after children, it was suggested by the panel that it would be important to go out into the community to talk to foster parents, previously looked after children, parents who found it difficult to cope and the role of grandparents generally and perhaps looking at the process of adoption by grandparents.

Councillor Sandra Stockdale, Chair of **Housing and Social Care scrutiny panel** (H&SC) advised that the topics for consideration by the Scrutiny Management Panel were:

- (1) advancing the use of technology in Adult Social Care. Councillor Stockdale explained that this was a suggested new topic which would include Tele-care, Tele-health and community alarms for housing and social care and Registered Social Landlords (RSL) in the city. This would link with independent living and the practices undertaken by other local authorities.
- (2) affordable housing provision in the city. Councillor Stockdale explained that the H&SC scrutiny panel intended to look at the future supply of affordable housing in the city to include the financing of new provision, the current and future planning regime and obligations as well as looking at where the new supply of housing would come from. The review could also link in with the city council's plans for their own housing stock and waiting lists.

Following discussion members of the Scrutiny Management Panel suggested an extra topic for review on housing allocations policy.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the TECS scrutiny panel reviews the following topics in the following order:**
 - (i) air quality in Portsmouth**
 - (ii) domestic noise nuisance**

- (2) the ECDL scrutiny panel review the following topics in the following order:**
 - (i) community ownership**
 - (ii) youth unemployment**
 - (iii) neighbourhood planning**

- (3) the ECYP scrutiny panel consider the following topics in the following order:**
 - (i) how well do we care for looked after children and how can we improve stability and outcomes in their lives?**

 - (ii) how schools and FE colleges can better prepare young people for the world of work by teaching them life or employability skills**

 - (iii) how can the city council best help governing bodies to improve?**

 - (iv) review of school admissions policies having regard to future demand for school places taking into account recent demographic changes and the location, condition and capacity of school buildings in the city.**

- (4) the H&SC scrutiny panel review the following topics in the following order:**
 - (i) advancing the use of technology in Adult Social Care**
 - (ii) affordable housing provision in the city.**

5 Verbal updates on all Scrutiny Panels (AI 5)

The Chair of the **TECS scrutiny panel** advised that the review into “How the Council responds to the issues of surface water flooding in the city – to include a plan that outlines the actions it would take in the event of extreme flooding from surface water in the city” had been completed.

Councillor Scott explained that the panel had brought a different perspective to the issues and had made recommendations that will make a positive contribution to the city without imposing financial burdens on the council. She explained that the report had been welcomed at the cabinet meeting on 2 July 2012 and all the recommendations had been accepted. In addition Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson had asked that the city council support Southern Water's bid to OFWAT for funding for the flood defence works in Portsmouth.

Councillor Scott also advised the Scrutiny Management Panel that TECS had received an update on the COLAS review which had been welcomed by the panel.

Health Overview & Scrutiny Panel. A list of items that had been considered at HOSP meetings was circulated to the panel and included matters such as male life expectancy in Portsmouth, discharge procedures at Queen Alexandra Hospital and vascular surgery. Councillor Andrewes explained that over the last 12 months the panel had received regular updates on a variety of issues from local NHS organisations and Portsmouth City Council.

The Chair of the **Housing and Social Care scrutiny panel**, Councillor Andrewes said that the panel undertook its review to consider the impact on the rented housing market of welfare reform proposals from October 2011 to May 2012 and that this had been well received at Cabinet on 2 July 2012. He explained that the recommendations had been supported (other than those which had been overtaken by events since parliament approved the Welfare Reform Bill and also subject to recommendation 13 being supported in kind rather than in cash). He said that Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson had asked the Strategic Director for Adult Services to bring a report back to the H&SC scrutiny panel regarding the progress made with the implementation of the recommendations.

EDCL Scrutiny Panel – the previous Chair of EDCL Scrutiny Panel, Councillor David Fuller, explained that the review into whether the resident workforce in Portsmouth has the requisite skills to satisfy the current and future needs of the city, its residents and local employers” had been well received at the cabinet meeting on 2 July 2012 and that the cabinet had supported the recommendations in the report.

Councillor Fuller said that he was particularly pleased that Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson had given an undertaking that he would investigate whether the £3,000 to fund the volunteering fair (recommendation 13 of the review) might be funded from the Leader's Portfolio. Councillor Fuller also explained that one of the recommendations in the review was that the Scrutiny Management Panel monitors the outcomes and recommendations contained within this review.

Education, Children and Young Persons Scrutiny Panel - The Chair of the panel, Councillor Darron Phillips, explained that the panel was hoping to complete the review on targeted support for children and young people who demonstrate behaviours that may put them at risk within a short period of time and this would go to Cabinet as soon as it had been signed off.

The scrutiny panel had a general discussion about the later start time of two of the scrutiny panels and the Chair of the Scrutiny Management Panel, Councillor Andrewes asked that officers let him know if there are difficulties with accommodating meetings at this time so that he could then consider what action to take. He particularly thanked Democratic Services staff for their flexibility in this respect.

It was agreed that a method of monitoring, recommendations and outcomes from previous reviews be discussed outside the meeting for consideration at the next meeting of Scrutiny Management Panel.

6 Date of Next Meeting (AI 6)

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for 13 September but at a start time of 4.30pm.

The meeting ended at 6.50pm

VJP/CB
31 July 2012
smp20120726m.doc