

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT PANEL

Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Panel held on Friday, 8 July 2016 at 3.00 pm at the Civic Offices, Portsmouth

Present

Councillor Simon Boshier (in the Chair)

Councillors Ian Lyon
Alicia Denny
Steve Hastings
Stephen Morgan
Darren Sanders

5. Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Apologies for absence were given on behalf of Councillor Scott Harris, Councillor Tom Wood and Councillor Ben Dowling. Councillor Stephen Morgan apologised for having to leave at around 4.30 pm should the meeting not be over by that time.

6. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)

Councillor Rob Wood declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in that his step-grandson works for the council in the north of the city.

7. Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 February 2016 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2016 be confirmed and signed by the chair as a correct record.

Members asked the chair of the panel to contact Mr Chris Ward to request that the budget papers be circulated to all members of the Scrutiny Management Panel at the earliest possible stage to enable them to properly consider the proposals and put forward any comments to the Cabinet meeting before the budget went to full council. This was agreed as an action arising from the minutes.

8. Update report on Scrutiny (AI 4)

(TAKE IN INFORMATION ONLY REPORT)

The Senior Local Democracy Officer introduced the report advising that the constitution requires information to be provided to the Scrutiny Management Panel and subsequently full council on the work undertaken by the themed scrutiny panels. Reference was made to the various different ways in which scrutiny reviews could be carried out and particular mention was made of the review into student opportunities undertaken by the Economic Development, Culture & Leisure Scrutiny Panel which had invited all witnesses to attend a

one-off evening event to gather evidence rather than the more usual format of carrying a scrutiny review over several meetings. During discussion the following matters were clarified:

- The chair explained that once a themed panel had completed its review, the report including conclusions and recommendations went to Cabinet for them to decide which to approve.
- The chair explained that any of the recommendations from previous scrutiny reviews could be brought to Scrutiny Management Panel to look again at the recommendations that were approved and how these had been taken forward.
- The panel agreed it would be useful to consider recommendations from some previous reviews as appropriate provided that enough notice was given to the officers concerned. Officers could then attend the Scrutiny Management Panel to provide an update on what had happened since the review had concluded.
- Members requested a list of reviews over the last few years be emailed to the panel after the meeting to enable them to suggest which reviews should come to future meetings.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report be noted and the work done by the panels be acknowledged;**
- (2) thanks be formally recorded to all those members of the public, witnesses and officers who contributed to the reviews.**

9. Work Programme 2016/17 for the themed scrutiny panels (AI 5)

(TAKE IN ATTACHED SCHEDULE SHOWING SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR REVIEW 2016/2017)

The chair introduced the item explaining that part of the remit of Scrutiny Management Panel is to consider and prioritise topics put forward for review to determine the work programme for the themed scrutiny panels. The chair explained that the Health Overview & Scrutiny Panel topics were outside the remit of the Scrutiny Management Panel. He also explained that future agendas of Scrutiny Management Panel could include any new topics put forward for review by themed scrutiny panels as appropriate.

The panel first considered the topic put forward by the Traffic, Environment & Community Safety panel which was a review of parking and transportation.

During discussion the following matters were raised:

- Members of the panel were concerned that this was a very far reaching topic and was unlikely to be concluded in the timeframe of one year.
- Members felt that the title of the review was vague and asked the chair of the TECS Scrutiny Panel to clarify what would be looked at.

- Members were happy with the review topic put forward but suggested that a back-up topic should also be chosen.
- Members said that if the review was planned to take two years this was a long time for residents to wait but this depended on the terms of reference for the review and exactly what was going to be looked at.
- Members of Scrutiny Management Panel who were also members of TECS advised that the Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation had expressed his intention of attending as many of the TECS Scrutiny Panel meetings as possible in an advisory capacity and to answer any questions the panel may have.
- Members were concerned that expectations of residents on hearing a review of traffic and transportation would be undertaken by the scrutiny panel should be managed.
- The vice-chair of Scrutiny Management Panel who was also a member of the TECS Scrutiny Panel explained that the work of the review panel would not stop the Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation from implementing changes as these would happen alongside the work of the TECS panel.

Members were content with the topic that had been put forward but asked that clarification be obtained via emails outside the meeting.

The panel next considered topics put forward by the Health & Social Care Scrutiny Panel.

Councillor Darren Sanders as chair of H&SC explained that the panel had met on Monday 4 July and put forward the following topics:

- Housing Need and Empty Properties in Portsmouth and the impact of Government Policy
- Housing Allocations
- Independent Living - how we support individuals in their independent living, who can live independently and should they live independently

Councillor Sanders explained that there was a high level of misunderstanding and misinformation concerning the allocation of housing. He said that there was a need to consult with Councillor Paul Godier who was chairing an officer review into homelessness to check how these topics would interrelate.

Councillor Sanders also said that he felt that the topic on housing allocations would lend itself particularly well to a conference style review similar to the one that had been carried out by EDCL when reviewing student opportunities.

The panel was supportive of the topics that had been put forward for review by H&SC panel. Councillor Sanders suggested that there should be an all councillor briefing on the allocations policy as this was an important matter and members would benefit from more information on this subject.

The panel next discussed the topics put forward by EDCL. The panel was pleased with the descriptions provided on what each suggested topic would cover as this made it easier for them to understand the intentions of what

would be covered by each review. The topics that had been put forward were Smart City Agenda followed by Creative Industries in the City. During discussion the following matters were raised:

- Members felt that the topic on Smart City Agenda would need to be tightly scoped as it could be very far reaching. The panel felt that care would be needed to prevent this from becoming too unwieldy to review effectively.
- Members said that there has been a lot of work already done on this topic in various parts of the country and there was plenty of "off the shelf" Smart City initiatives that could be brought in. Members were anxious that the panel did not use its resources to re-invent the wheel.
- One member commented that there was a deficit of broadband across the city and that superfast broadband was needed as a matter of urgency particularly in the Southsea area.

The panel was happy to support the topics put forward by EDCL subject to the comments summarised above.

Members next considered the topics put forward by Education, Children & Young People's Scrutiny Panel. These were included on the attached sheet. During discussion the following matters were raised:

- Members were advised that the Safer routes to school topic differed from the review into home to school transport in that the first topic was looking at encouraging children to cycle or walk in safe groups to school as opposed to policies on bus routes, or which children get subsidised fares etc.

There followed general discussion about scrutiny during which the following points were made:

- Panel members felt that chairs of individual panels should be reminded about best practice laid down in the code before carrying out scrutiny
- Members were reminded that the ECYP Scrutiny Panel looked at topic areas suggested by Ofsted in the reviews carried out last year.

Members agreed that although they had requested clarity around some of the topics put forward for review they were content to agree the work programmes as put forward by the individual scrutiny panels.

Members said that the narrative included with the EDCL Scrutiny Panel's review topics had been very helpful and that in future, they would like similar narratives to be provided to Scrutiny Management Panel when they consider suggested topics for review.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Management Panel determined the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year for each themed scrutiny panel as follows:

- (1) That the Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel carry out a review of parking and transportation.**
- (2) That the Economic Development, Culture & Leisure Scrutiny Panel carry out reviews into**
 - (i) Smart City Agenda**
 - (ii) Creative Industries in the City**
- (3) That the Education, Children & Young People's Scrutiny Panel review the following topics:**
 - (i) Continuation of the review into child sexual exploitation**
 - (ii) Widening access to extra-curricular activities in schools**
 - (iii) Bullying in schools with a particular focus on how to combat online bullying**
 - (iv) Safer routes to school**
- (4) Housing & Social Care Scrutiny Panel**
 - (i) Housing need and empty properties in Portsmouth and the impact of government policy**
 - (ii) Housing allocations**
 - (iii) Independent Living - how we support individuals in their independent living, who can live independently and should they live independently.**

10. Date of Next Meeting (AI 6)

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday 15 July at 2.30 pm to consider a call-in.

The meeting concluded at 3.50 pm.

Councillor Simon Boshier
Chair