

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT PANEL

Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Panel held on Wednesday, 26 July 2023 at 11.00 am in the Council Chamber, Portsmouth Guildhall

Present

Councillor Cal Corkery (in the Chair)

Councillors Simon Boshier
Leo Madden
Graham Heaney
Emily Strudwick
Mary Vallely

10. Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Matthew Atkins, Councillor Lewis Gosling and Councillor Abdul Kadir.

Councillor Simon Boshier was in attendance as a Standing Deputy for Councillor Matthew Atkins.

11. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

12. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2023 (AI 3)

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2023 were confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

13. Scrutiny Work Programme (AI 4)

Prior to considering the report, the Chair explained the role and remit of the Scrutiny Management Panel and its relationship with the four themed scrutiny panels.

The panel considered the report of the Senior Local Democracy Officer, which updated on the work of the four themed scrutiny panels and detailed their suggested topics for inclusion into the council's scrutiny work programme.

As updates to the published report, the panel was advised that the Traffic, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel (TECS) would continue with their previously agreed topic of 'Reducing the use of pesticides on Council Land', which had a target completion date of December 2023. Following this the TECS Scrutiny Panel would put forward another topic for the Scrutiny Management Panel to approve.

Following its meeting held the previous week, the Chair advised that Economic Development, Culture and Leisure (EDCL) Scrutiny Panel had put forward the topic of 'How to improve town centres and high streets'. Cllr Madden spoke to this topic as a member of the EDCL Scrutiny Panel.

The Chair also introduced the item put forward by the Housing and Social Care (HSC) Scrutiny Panel 'Review into the response of the local authority and landlords in the city to the issue of damp and mould in social housing and private rented housing'. As a member of the HSC Scrutiny Panel, Cllr Heaney also spoke in support of this item.

Cllr Brian Madgwick was present as Chair of the Education, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel to introduce and explain the rationale for the panel's suggested topic of 'Review into education, employment and training for our care experienced young adults'.

The Scrutiny Management Panel agreed the topics put forward by the themed scrutiny panels.

The following cross portfolio and cross directorate topics were put forward for the Scrutiny Management Panel to investigate:

The use of 'Systems Thinking' within Portsmouth City Council. It was understood that systems thinking had realised a positive effect on service delivery within a number of services and the purpose of the scrutiny was to explore whether this success could be replicated more widely across the council.

'Peer Review - Progress update against the council's action plan'. In 2021 the council underwent a peer review from the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Team to provide the council with an objective view of its strengths and clarify any areas for improvements. The resulted in a number of recommendations and the council producing an action plan to address them. The purpose of the scrutiny would be to receive an update on how these actions have progressed.

The panel received a short overview of the Systems Thinking resource which was available for use across the council and its partners. This comprised a small team of interventionists who examined a service/process, suggested improvements where appropriate and then supported the service through redesign, testing and implementation. The goal of such intervention work was to identify and remove any barriers to service delivery.

The panel agreed to look into these two topic areas, with a meeting to be held in September to agree a scope and methodology to progress the Systems Thinking topic and receive an update on the council's Progress against the Peer Review Action Plan.

During the discussion the panel discussed scrutiny within the council more generally and in particular the different ways in which scrutiny operated nationally and whether the current structure was the most effective.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the panel NOTED the updates received from the themed scrutiny panel chairs; and
- (ii) the council's scrutiny work programme for the themed scrutiny panels be populated and updated as follows:

Economic Development, Culture and Leisure Scrutiny Panel

- Review into how to improve town centres and high streets.

Housing & Social Care Scrutiny Panel

- Review into the response of the Local Authority and Landlords in the city to the issue of damp and mould in social housing and private rented housing.

Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel

- Review into education, employment and training opportunities for our care experienced young adults.

Scrutiny Management Panel

- The use of 'Systems Thinking' within Portsmouth City Council.
- Peer Review - Progress update against the council's action plan.

The meeting concluded at 12.04 pm.

.....
Councillor Cal Corkery
Chair