

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on Thursday, 17th June, 2021 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr M.D. Smith (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr S.J. Masterson (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr Gaynor Austin
Cllr Jib Belbase
Cllr M.S. Choudhary
Cllr R.M. Cooper
Cllr K. Dibble
Cllr L. Jeffers
Cllr Mara Makunura
Cllr Nem Thapa

1. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMEN

A discussion took place regarding the Vice-Chairman and the roles they had undertaken during the previous Municipal Year. It was noted that information on roles and responsibilities were set out in the Constitution and this would be circulated to Members.

RESOLVED: That Cllrs. Mrs D.B. Bedford and S.J. Masterson be appointed as Vice-Chairmen of the Committee for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th March, 2021 were **AGREED** as a correct record.

3. INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

The Committee welcomed Mr. Andrew Colver, Head of Democracy and Community, who gave an introduction to the Committee.

The Committee held a key role within the Council's decision making structure, by working with the executive to a common aim. It was a politically balanced committee with no executive/decision making powers, but had the ability to carry out detailed examination and scrutiny of issues, to provide outcomes/recommendations to help inform the decision making process.

There were few restrictions on work areas, which could include executive and non-executive functions and other services, especially those outside the Council. It was

important to consider the work of the Policy and Project Advisory Board when determining agenda for meetings, to ensure no duplication of work. This would be monitored by way of a joint meeting between the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of both the Committee and the Board.

The Committee agenda had a number of regular items, such as performance monitoring reports and scrutiny of registered providers. Other items could include, call ins, pre-decision scrutiny and scrutiny of outside organisations. Task and Finish Groups could also be established to work on a particular project in more detail should the Committee feel that necessary. Members were encouraged to raise any items they would like considered for inclusion on the agenda, these could be reported to the Committee Administrator or Mr. Colver.

It was noted that a date would be circulated for a scrutiny training session to be held, in person, over the summer. This would aim to guide Members in their role and highlight the principles of scrutiny, which included:

- Holding decision makers to account – e.g. projects led by individual Cabinet Members
- Assessment of processes/systems – to propose improvements and ensure effectiveness
- Effective challenge and assuming nothing
- Outcome driven with a clear purpose

The Chairman thanked Mr. Colver for his presentation.

4. REGISTERED PROVIDERS TASK AND FINISH GROUP - ANNUAL REPORT

Cllr Mrs D.B. Bedford, Chairman of the Registered Providers Task and Finish Group and Mrs Sue Thornett, Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer introduced Report No. EPSH2017 on the work of the Group during 2020/21.

Cllr Bedford, advised that it had been a difficult year with the impacts of the pandemic. No physical meetings with the providers had been held but a number of interesting online meetings had raised different issues. The “Everyone In” scheme, aimed at ensuring all homeless people where in accommodation at the beginning of the pandemic, had raised a number of issues for the housing team, but these had been overcome and the scheme had worked well.

It was noted that the Group had a work plan and generally scrutinised three registered providers per Municipal Year. VIVID Housing, as the Borough’s largest provider, was included in the work plan annually. However, during 2020/21, issues with a fourth provider had been raised and a number of meetings had taken place to address these concerns. It was noted that the work with this provider was progressing and an additional meeting was expected to be held in March, 2022 to track progress.

It was advised that Ward Councillors had the opportunity to have an input prior to meetings with the providers, this allowed for councillors to pass on data/information from residents directly to inform the scrutiny process.

Mrs Thornett advised that, through the Group, the relationship between the providers and the Council had grown stronger. The working arrangements of the Group had developed over time and was no longer about a presentation from the provider, but a chance for questions to be asked and action plans to be created to resolve issues. This approach would continue to be developed into the new Municipal Year.

The Committee **ENDORSED** the work of the Registered Providers Task and Finish Group during 2020/21 and **APPROVED** the preparation of a programme of reviews on the 2021/22 Municipal Year. However, it was **NOTED** that the Portfolio Holder should to be made aware of the work of the Group and a meeting would be arranged.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Bedford and Mrs Thornett for their report.

5. **PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2020/21**

The Committee welcomed Ms Rachel Barker, Assistant Chief Executive, who was in attendance to give a presentation on Performance Management and Monitoring 2020/21.

At its meeting in February, 2021, the Committee had considered some review work which had been undertaken on the way the Council's performance had been monitored and reported on. This work had been endorsed and continued to be developed and embedded in the structure of the Council's Business Plan.

Performance management allowed the Council to monitor its achievements and ensure the work being undertaken was effective and sustainable. This was done through a number of performance measures and indicators to assess if actions/plans were being achieved. Successful performance management and monitoring resulted from a number of good practices, including, a clear vision and purpose, good planning, priorities, allocation of resources, development of action plans and ensuring the data met the need of its audience, at the right time, to inform good decision making.

Ms Barker, reported on the summary of 2020/21:

- Business Plan Projects – a number of strategies and action plans had been agreed, these included the Climate Change, Supporting Communities and Rough Sleepers Strategies and Action Plans, the Procurement Strategy 2020-24 and a revised plan for the Council's Waste and Recycling Service and Food Waste Collection Service 2021/22. Other projects included the Places Leisure contract, the Moor Road Park development, a review of polling places and districts and an action to agree the future of the CCTV service.
- Regeneration Projects – a number of projects had been completed as part of the Council's regeneration work, these included renovations to the Digital Hub, Aldershot, Voyager House, Farnborough – now operating as the Farnborough Centre for Health, Elles Hall, Farnborough demolition completed

and Union Street, Aldershot – funding agreement with Enterprise M3 in place and enabling works completed.

- ICE Programme – a number of projects had been completed or were underway, these included, rollout of Windows 10 laptops to all staff, People Strategy and a new e-billing service in council tax and an online service to “apply for a postal vote” had both been launched.

A summary was also provided on the COVID-19 response, success stories had included:

- COVID testing sites
- Vaccine Centres
- Payment of £23,000 in business grants
- 54 online council meetings
- COVID advice page on the Council’s website accessed 53,000 times
- Provision of the ORCA – which had dealt with referrals/requests for coronavirus support services

It was reported that, at the end of Q4, the majority of activities in the business plan were considered to be on track, however COVID continued to impact projects but the number of projects affected were steadily reducing.

Moving forward, a new streamlined Council Business Plan with 18 priorities would be measured each quarter, this new approach would help to ensure that there were no delays in performance data being shared.

The Committee discussed the report and agreed that the new streamline reporting would benefit the scrutiny process. It was also important however, to monitor what wasn’t performing well and why, and it was agreed that this would be discussed at a future Progress Group meeting. It was noted that the performance of the new food hub was of interest to the Committee, this issue would also be raised at the Progress Group.

The Committee **ENDORSED** the work around performance management and monitoring and thanked Ms Barker for her presentation.

6. **APPOINTMENTS 2021/22**

RESOLVED: That the following Members be appointed to serve on the following Groups for the 2021/22 Municipal Year:

Overview and Scrutiny Progress Group

Chairman	Cllr M.D. Smith
Vice-Chairmen	Cllr Mrs D.B. Bedford Cllr S.J. Masterson
Labour Group	Cllr Gaynor Austin

Council Tax Support Task and Finish Group

Chairman	Cllr M.D. Smith
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Mrs D.B. Bedford
Conservative Group	Cllr J.B. Canty Cllr L. Jeffers
Labour Group	Cllr Christine Guinness Cllr M.J. Roberts

Educational Improvement Task and Finish Group

Chairman	Cllr M.D. Smith
Vice-Chairmen	Cllr Mrs D.B. Bedford Cllr S.J. Masterson
Conservative Group	Cllr M.S. Choudhary
Labour Group	Cllr Gaynor Austin Cllr Nadia Martin

Highways Agency Task and Finish Group

Vice-Chairman	Cllr S.J. Masterson
Conservative Group	Cllr Jib Belbase Cllr P.J. Cullum Cllr L. Jeffers
Labour Group	Cllr Gaynor Austin Cllr K.Dibble

Review of Registered Providers Task and Finish Group

Chairman	Cllr M.D. Smith
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Mrs D.B. Bedford
Conservative Group	Cllr R.M. Cooper Cllr Nem Thapa
Labour Group	Cllr T.D. Bridgeman Cllr K. Dibble

7. WORK PLAN

The Committee noted the current work plan and **AGREED** that further consideration would be given to future items at the Progress Group meeting.

Members were asked to advise the Lead Officer or Committee Administrator of any items they wished to be considered prior to the Progress Group meeting scheduled for 23rd June, 2021.

The Food Waste Service was raised as an item for consideration, in particular around the education and communication programme with residents. Further consideration would be given to this item at the Progress Group.

The meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

CLLR M.D. SMITH (CHAIRMAN)
