

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9 April 2024 at Shire Hall, Warwick at 6.00pm.

Present: Councillor Milton (Chair); Councillors Barton (late arrival), Browne, Day, Dray, D Harrison, Payne, Russell, C Wightman and Williams.

Also Present: Councillor Billiald – Portfolio Holder for Arts & Economy, Councillor Chilvers – Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Davison – Leader of the Council and Councillor P Wightman – Portfolio Holder for Housing & Assets.

86. **Apologies and Substitutes**

- (a) Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Luckhurst and Redford.
- (b) Councillor Williams substituted for Councillor Armstrong, Councillor Dray substituted for Councillor Collins and Councillor C Wightman substituted for Councillor Sullivan.

87. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

88. **End of Term Report**

The Committee considered its annual end of term report to Council on the work it had undertaken during the municipal year 2023/24. Article 6 in the Council's Constitution mandated that the Committee had to report annually to the Council on the work it had covered.

The report also contained a foreword written by the Committee's Chair.

Once approved by the Committee, it would be updated to include reports considered at the Committee's 9 April 2024 meeting and then submitted for noting at Annual Council.

Recommended to Council that the list of matters considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee during the municipal year 2023/24, as detailed in Appendices A and B to the report, be noted.

Resolved that prior to submission to Council, the report be updated to include the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee that took place in April 2024.

89. **Cabinet Agenda (Non-Confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 10 April 2024**

The Committee considered the following items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Cabinet on Wednesday 10 April 2024.

Item 4 – Park Exercise Permit

The Committee did not scrutinise this report at the meeting because a report on the subject shortly before the scheme was introduced had been considered by the Committee. Following consideration of that report, the Committee had requested a follow-on report after the scheme had been in operation for a while to check that the permits were operating in the way intended and then to discuss if the scheme should continue. The follow-on report was never forthcoming because various issues arose which stymied the operation of the scheme in the way intended to produce measurable results.

The recommendations in the report to Cabinet did not include an option on whether to proceed or not with the scheme but was purely to determine if the terms and conditions of the scheme should be changed.

The Committee requested that a report should be produced after the summer period on how the scheme was performing along with some data, including data on how much of officers' time was being spent with the implementation and governance of the scheme.

Item 5 – Revisions to fees for markets in 2024

The Committee did not scrutinise this report at the meeting but made comments to Cabinet.

The Committee requested that when in the future these same types of recommendations were made, more evidential data backing up the proposals being made should be provided; if fees were to be reduced then there should be options provided to mitigate or alternative plans that helped to overcome some of the challenges being faced.

The Committee raised a concern that footfall numbers were reducing but there were no plans to reduce the fees. Markets were an important part of communities and the economy in towns.

Members of the Committee wished to remind Cabinet that these assumptions were built into our budget for the year and therefore making changes after the budget had been set could be problematic.

Item 8 – Joint Waste Contract – Customer Services

The Committee did not scrutinise this report at the meeting because it had very recently considered a report on the subject under its own Work Programme, and it was one of the Council's contracts the Committee had chosen to scrutinise.

The Committee thanked officers for their work in bringing that report to it proactively. The Committee welcomed the recommendations in the report to Cabinet.

90. **Public and Press**

Resolved that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as set out below:

Minute Number	Paragraph Number	Reason
91	3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

91. **Cabinet Agenda (Confidential items and reports) – Wednesday 10 April 2024**

The Committee considered the following confidential items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Cabinet on Wednesday 10 April 2024.

Item 13 – Milverton Homes Ltd Business Plan Revision

The Committee held good discussions supported by officers and wished to further explore Milverton Homes. The Committee was intending to set up a specific meeting to coincide with the time when Milverton Homes would hold its AGM (November). This would allow Members to better understand the assumptions going into the business plan and the mechanisms for running the business over the next 12 months.

The Committee asked that more attention should be placed on the way words and language could be interpreted in reports. The use of “no liability” stated in the report at paragraph 10.1 should more accurately have made plain that the Council was taking measures to mitigate the liability, so the statement “no liability” was technically incorrect. The word “constrained” at paragraph 1.1.4 was also problematic because it did not explain why this was and that the arrangements being used were perfectly valid and used in other Authorities.

(Councillor Barton arrived at the meeting during discussion of this item and Councillor P Wightman left the meeting at the end of discussion on this item.)

Item 9 – Future High Streets Fund Update

The Committee discussed the confidential appendices to the report and comments made to Cabinet were recorded in the Committee’s confidential minutes 9 April 2024.

(The meeting resumed public session.)

92. **Work Programme, Forward Plan and Comments from Cabinet**

The Committee considered its Work Programme for 2024/25 as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report as well as a list of Corporate Projects as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

The Comments from Cabinet report was not included on the agenda because this had been considered at the meeting 26 March 2024.

The Committee requested that further information was provided on the Projects List (Appendix 2 to the report) to allow the Committee to prioritise which projects it would wish to scrutinise. The information requested was the budget for each project and the length/term of each project.

The Chair asked Members to inform the Chairs' Group if they thought any additional reports should be added to the Work Programme.

(The meeting ended at 7.23pm)

CHAIR
13 May 2024