

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10 September 2013 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Blacklock (Chairman); Councillors Boad, Brookes, Dean, Dhillon, Edwards, Mrs Falp, Gifford, Gill, Guest, Mrs Higgins, and Mrs Knight.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Doody, Mrs Grainger and Mobbs.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Gallagher and Kinson.

38. **SUBSTITUTES**

There were no substitutes.

39. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

40. **MINUTES**

The Committee requested that all references to anything said by an individual Councillor under minute number 26 of the minutes dated 9 July 2013 were removed and that the minutes would then be re-presented to the Committee for approval in October 2013. The Committee accepted that whilst the minutes were an accurate reflection of what transpired at the meeting, it was not normal practice to record individual Councillor's remarks in the Overview and Scrutiny Committee minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 August 2013 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Councillor Dhillon gave a formal apology to both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Monitoring Officer for his conduct at the Committee's meeting on 9 July 2013.

The Chairman informed the Committee that she would be altering the order in which the agenda was discussed to allow reporting officers and Councillors to present their reports and leave the meeting as soon as possible.

The Committee noted the concern that the meeting previously scheduled for Children's Champions had been cancelled with no further date having been set. It was accepted that this was due to a genuine mistake when the responsible officer had been double-booked but the Committee felt that a re-scheduled meeting should be given priority and not delayed again.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

41. OAKLEY WOOD CREMATORIUM PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report from the Head of Health and Community Protection. The report gave an update on the current status of the project to improve facilities at Oakley Wood Crematorium.

The Head of Health and Community Protection explained that parking facilities had required more background work to be undertaken, and finally vacant possession of the Lodge House had been obtained so plans to use this as an office could continue. Planning permission had been granted so it was anticipated that work on the car park should start in 2013. He pointed out that improvements to the cremating room had been carried out a while back so the current improvement scheme had no impact on this.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Service and the Bereavement Services Manager for attending the meeting and answering questions.

42. EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2013

The Committee considered the following non-confidential items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 11 September 2013.

Item 4 – Warwick District Council’s Response to Stratford-on-Avon District Council’s Core Strategy Consultation Process

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report from the Head of Development Services and the Planning Policy and Conservation Manager. The purpose of the report was to:

- update Members on the content of the new proposals for Stratford’s Core Strategy;
- identify/examine possible implications on Warwick District Council’s Local Plan/development strategy; and
- to agree and formally submit this Council’s consultation response to the Stratford Core Strategy process.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report. It recognised the importance of the discussions but had concerns about the potential traffic impact in Warwick District; therefore it welcomed discussions with Warwickshire County Council and hoped that these would focus particularly on infrastructure.

(Councillor Mobbs arrived during discussion of this item.)

Item 6 – Call-In of Executive Decision – St Mary’s Lands Business Strategy

On 19 June 2013, the Executive made decisions in respect of a report “St Mary’s Lands Business Strategy”. Following those decisions, Councillors called-in the report, and this was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9 July 2013. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided that no further action should be taken with regard to St Mary’s Land Business Strategy. Under Council procedure 23(h), three

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

Councillors then called in St Mary's Lands Business Strategy for consideration by Council giving their reasons. The Council met on 21 August 2013 and referred the matter back to the Executive for further consideration. This discussion would take place on 11 September 2013.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee broadly welcomed the report but was very concerned that members of the Steering Group should be chosen very carefully so that they were widely representative. The Committee suggested that the Steering Group itself should canvass opinions, especially of local residents. The Committee was pleased that the Executive had already committed to a consultation at the next stage.

Item 5 – Call-In of Executive Decision – Potential of Recreation of Kenilworth Mere

On 19 June 2013, the Executive made decisions in respect of a report "Potential recreation of the Mere at Kenilworth Castle". Following those decisions, Councillors called-in the report, and this was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9 July 2013. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided that the report should be referred to Council for consideration because the Committee was extremely disappointed with the decision of the Executive due to the significant concerns raised by both itself and the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee. The Council met on 21 August 2013 and referred the matter back to the Executive for further consideration. This would take place on 11 September 2013.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee thanked and gave full credit to the Executive for listening and was looking forward to seeing ideas that residents could support for tourism development for the whole District. The Committee looked forward to taking part in tourism strategy.

(Councillor Mobbs left the meeting.)

Item 11 – Recruitment of Major Sites Monitoring Officer

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a report from the Head of Development Services which requested the appointment of a Major Sites Monitoring Officer who would provide support to the Policy and Development Management Service. The post-holder would take forward strategic development sites ensuring that the planning and negotiating of infrastructure improvements and implementation of Section 106/CIL requirements took place in a timely and effective way.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee understood the need for this post and it was concerned that the person appointed should look at infrastructure issues.

43. SUMMARY OF COMMENTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE

The Committee considered a report from Civic and Committee Services which detailed the responses the Executive gave to the comments the Overview and Scrutiny Committee made regarding the reports submitted to the Executive in August.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

The Committee discussed how it could encourage the Executive to make comments that allowed easy identification of whether comments made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were accepted or rejected. Members accepted that to encourage this, the Committee must make more positive statements to the Executive in the form of formal recommendations.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

44. FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the Forward Plan which had been published for October 2013 to January 2014.

Members agreed not to ask for a preliminary view of what would be coming out in respect of the Local Plan in November and leave this until the report was ready. However, it was agreed that the Portfolio Holder should give periodic progress statements. The Deputy Chief Executive (AJ) agreed to speak to Councillor Caborn about this request.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

45. REVIEW OF THE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a report from Civic and Committee Services on the Committee's work programme.

Task and Finish Group SEVs – verbal progress report from Councillors Brookes and Mrs Knight

The Committee was disappointed that there had been no progress to-date. It pointed out that there had been a huge delay and questioned why this should be the case. It was reported that some of the delay had been caused by the wait for legal advice.

(Councillors Brookes and Mrs Knight left the meeting.)

Meeting with Warwickshire County Council T & F Group re parking enforcement – verbal report from the Chairman

It was reported that Councillors Barrott, Mrs Blacklock, and Mobbs all attended a meeting with the Task and Finish Group at Warwickshire County Council to seek a way forward in respect of the County Council's review of parking enforcement that would be fair and equitable across the County. Representatives from other councils affected were also present and the Chairman reported that it was satisfying to note that all the main councils affected by this were saying roughly the same things. It was expected that a report would be forthcoming in November.

(Councillor Guest left the meeting.)

Health Scrutiny Working Party – verbal progress report from Councillor Mrs Falp

The Committee was informed that the Working Group had just held its second meeting. The Group was still evaluating what was required and was

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

inviting speakers to attend meetings so that the members of the Working Group could get a fuller understanding of what was required for Health Scrutiny at District Council level. Members would be attending a meeting on 23 September at the County Council where they would have the opportunity to listen to speakers from various organisations involved with health issues.

Councillor Mrs Falp stressed how much information there was to collect and stated that it could be 12 months before the Working Group was ready to make any recommendations.

Feedback on Outside Appointments

In 2011, there was a review of outside appointments. As part of this review it was agreed that each year all Councillors on outside bodies would be required to produce an annual statement on the work undertaken by the body. This would be made available to all Councillors electronically and could be requested to be presented to a Scrutiny Committee for consideration if a member had concerns.

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered how the Committee could review these annual statements. It was agreed that a short written report could be requested in the first instance, and then if necessary, the Councillor could be asked to attend a Committee meeting. Where an organisation had two or more representatives, the representatives themselves would decide which one of them would write the report and attend the meeting if invited.

There was a suggestion that the Group Leaders should rank the outside bodies appointments in order of importance and then the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would give more focus to the more important ones.

Group Leaders should ensure that the list held by Committee Services was kept up-to-date.

To agree the draft report from the Chairman with proposals for Portfolio Holder reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Committee considered a draft report from the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny that outlined proposals for Portfolio Holder reports to Overview and Scrutiny. It was agreed that Portfolio Holders should submit reports ahead of the meeting and then attend the meeting to answer any questions. There would be no requirement for a presentation or speech. It was agreed that the Chairman would make any necessary amendments to her report and then this would be sent to the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services who would be the first Portfolio Holder requested to attend the Committee in October.

The Deputy Chief Executive (AJ) agreed to speak to Councillor Shilton about what was expected at the October meeting.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

To agree a timetable for Portfolio Holder reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

It was agreed that Committee Services officers would liaise with Portfolio Holders to agree the timetable for their reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Update on the Task and Finish Group, Dog Control Order Report

The Chairman informed the Committee that the Dog Control Order Report had originally been scheduled to be considered by the Executive in September, but on the request of the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Coker, who would be unable to attend that meeting; it had been delayed until October.

A covering report had been prepared to accompany the Task and Finish Group's report and the two reports were both going through the approvals procedures before any report could be submitted to the Executive. The covering report was the document that officers were allowed to comment upon if anything needed to be brought to the attention of the Executive in its deliberations. The report prepared by the Task and Finish Group would remain unchanged in this approvals process to a large extent.

The Committee thanked the Committee Services Officer, Lesley Dury, for her work helping the Task and Finish Group to undertake this project.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme Report be noted.

46. **EXECUTIVE AGENDA (NON CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS AND REPORTS) – WEDNESDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2013**

The Committee considered the following non-confidential items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Wednesday 11 September 2013.

Item 4 – Budget Review to 30 June 2013

The Committee considered a report from Finance which gave Members an update on the latest position for the current financial year and the financial outlook.

The Labour Group Members had requested that this item be discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee because of the implications on services due to the financial issues raised in the report.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee registered concerns about the future viability of some parts of the Council, and were interested to find out what details would be forthcoming in October 2013.

Item 6 – Proposal for the delivery of on-street Enforcement across Warwickshire

The Committee considered a report from Neighbourhood Services which gave details of a presentation by officers on 1 July to the Warwickshire County Council Task and Finish Group on the future delivery of on-street

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

parking enforcement. The report gave an update on progress and set out a proposal made by officers from across the various Districts and Boroughs involved in delivering on and off-street enforcement which Members were asked to support and which it was hoped the Task and Finish Group at Warwickshire County Council would present to Full Council at Warwickshire County Council in November 2013.

Labour Group Members requested that this item was discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee because of the importance particularly to town centres of well-run parking services and to discuss possible future steps. Liberal Democrat Members requested the items as a follow-up to the last report.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee made a formal recommendation to the Executive that the staff who had worked on the report should be complimented. The Committee accepted the report in its entirety and gave full support to the delegation.

(The meeting finished at 8.40 pm)