

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 2 JUNE 2010

Present:

Members of the Group:

Councillors: Michael Doody
Clive Rickhards
John Ross
Chris Saint
Dave Shilton
June Tandy

Councillors Jeff Clarke (Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council)
Claire Edwards (Rugby Borough Council)
Sue Main (Stratford-on-Avon District Council)
Janet Smith (NHS Warwickshire)

Officers: David Carter, Strategic Director Customers, Workforce and
Governance
Jean Hardwick, Principal Committee Administrator
Michelle McHugh, Overview and Scrutiny Manager
Jane Pollard, Democratic Services Manager
Simon Robson, Head of County Partnerships

1. General

(1) Election of the Chair

Councillor Dave Shilton, seconded by Councillor Michael Doody, proposed that Councillor Chris Saint be appointed Chair of the Committee.

Resolved that Councillor Chris Saint be appointed Chair of the Committee.

(2) Election of Vice Chair

Councillor Michael Doody, seconded by Councillor Dave Shilton, proposed that Councillor John Ross be appointed Vice Chair of the Committee.

Resolved that Councillor John Ross be appointed Vice Chair of the Committee.

Welcome

The Chair welcomed Councillor Sue Main (Stratford-on-Avon District Council) and Councillor Claire Edwards (Rugby Borough Council) to their first meeting of the Board.

(3) Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Les Caborn, Councillor Martin Davis (North Warwickshire Borough Council), Councillor Bill Gifford (Warwick District Council), Clive Parsons (Warwickshire Police Authority) and Jim Graham (Chief Executive)

(4) Members' Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

None

(5) (a) Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 3rd March 2010 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

(b) Matters Arising – Minute 3 Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)

Councillor Dave Shilton said he heard that the CAA no longer existed and asked for a report to be brought to the Board at the earliest opportunity with an update of the situation. David Carter said he also understood that the CAA had ended but that the Audit Commission would continue as usual. He undertook to bring a report to the next meeting setting out the current position.

2. Warwickshire Public Service Board: Peer Review Report Findings and Recommendations

The Board considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided the findings and recommendations of the IDeA Peer Review of the Warwickshire Public Service Board

Simon Robson reported that feedback on the Peer Review findings had been presented to PSB members the previous week by an external facilitator with a view to taking forward a development plan to improve leadership and the PSB's performance.

During discussion the following comments were noted–

- (1) That whilst leadership was one of the main themes recommended for improvement, there were other underlying issues that were of equal concern. These issues included the need for better communication, improved partnership working, the inability of partner representatives to make decisions, clarity around funding streams, the need to dedicate more time to improving relationships and lack of progress on Narrowing the Gap;
- (2) That the venue for most PSB meetings (Committee Room 2, Shire Hall) was not adequate for the number of people attending;

- (3) That the PSB as it stood was not working and needed to be replaced with something better and a simpler structure;
- (4) That the political make up of the PSB did not allow alternative views to be put forward;
- (5) That the recommendation for a further report should be supported and include a reporting timetable;

In response Simon Robson advised that the improvement and development session the previous week enabled a frank change of views by PSB members, not only about leadership, but about developing partnership working, improving relationships, aligning resources and becoming more effective.

Resolved that the Board -

- (1) Notes the report, findings and recommendations of the IDeA Peer Review conducted in March 2010;
- (2) Requests that the comments recorded above be fed back to the PSB with a clear message that this Board would like to scrutinise the Action Plan before it is signed off
- (3) Recommends that all partner organisations are invited to comment on the Action Plan before it is brought back to the Board.

3. LAA Quarter 4 Performance Report 09/10

The Board considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive which presented an analysis of the LAA performance as at Quarter 4 for 09/10.

During discussion the following comments were noted –

- (1) That there were particular areas of concern about which further information would be helpful in assessing performance
- (2) That overall statistics did not provide an accurate picture;
- (3) That a breakdown of figures for each district or borough should be provided showing differences in performance.

Simon Robson referred to the action being taken to address under and over performance, detailed in the Appendix to the report, and said he was willing to provide briefing notes on areas of specific concern.

Resolved that an interim report be provided before the end of March 2011 showing the differential in performance across the county for the following indicators –

Housing Provision (including affordable housing)
 Teenage pregnancy
 Employment issues and economic development
 Bullying
 Health Issues

4. Full Year Performance Report for the Overview and Scrutiny Function 2009/10

The Board considered the report of the Strategic Director for Customers, Workforce and Governance outlining information about the performance of the Overview and Scrutiny function during 2009/10.

During discussion the following comments were noted -

- (1) That the future of the Overview and Scrutiny function would be considered by Council in June;
- (2) That the success of Overview and Scrutiny function had been impeded by a reduction in the number of meetings and support staff;
- (3) Reservations were expressed about the proposal to replace the current structure with an overarching Overview and Scrutiny Board supported by task and finish groups;
- (4) That some Members were visiting Northamptonshire County Council to see how the Overview and Scrutiny function worked in that authority, which was similar to that being proposed;
- (5) That the Board should be consulted on any proposal to change the Overview and Scrutiny function to utilise the experienced gained by its Members on this issue;
- (6) That the good work achieved by the scrutiny reviews and the hard work of the Members and officers had not been appreciated
- (6) That Michelle McHugh and Paul Williams should be congratulated and thanked for their support.

The Chair summarised by commending the Scrutiny Team for its dedication and competence and said the reduction in meetings had not helped the scrutiny function. He said that there would be an opportunity at Council to contribute to the debate on the future of the Overview and Scrutiny function but suggested that it was the responsibility of Members to manage and make work any new structure that was put in place.

Resolved that the Board -:

- i) Welcomes the report outlining the performance of the Overview and Scrutiny function during 2009/10 and commends the Scrutiny Officers on their dedication, competence and support;
- ii) Asks that the comments recorded above should be raised during the Council debate when the future of the Overview and Scrutiny function is being considered.

7. Any Other Items

None

8. Date of Next Meeting

The Board noted that their next meeting would be held on 8 September 2010 at 2.00 p.m.

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Chair

The Board rose at 4.05 p.m.