

Minutes of a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 30th May 2012

Present

Members: Councillor John Appleton (Chair)
Councillor Jeff Clarke (Vice Chair)
Councillor Les Caborn
Councillor Tim Naylor
Councillor Carolyn Robbins (replacing Cllr Dave Shilton)
Councillor Jerry Roodhouse
Councillor June Tandy
Councillor John Whitehouse
Councillor Sonja Wilson

Co-opted members: Councillor Bill Gifford (Warwick District Council)
Councillor Stephen Gray (Stratford District Council)

Other Councillors: Councillor Cockburn, Portfolio Holder, Sustainable Communities
Councillor Colin Hayfield, Portfolio Holder, Customers, Access and Property
Councillor Martin Heatley, Portfolio Holder Workforce and Governance
Councillor Bob Stevens, Deputy Leader

Councillor Barry Lobbett (observing)

Officers: Georgina Atkinson, Democratic Services Team Leader
Kushal Birla, Head of Customer Service
David Carter, Strategic Director, Resources
Tonino Ciuffini, Head of Information Assets
Phil Evans, Head of Service Improvement and Change Management
Monica Fogarty, Strategic Director,
Jim Graham, Chief Executive
David Hill, Economic Strategy Adviser
Dr John Linnane, Director of Public Health
Janet Purcell, Democratic Services Manager
Virginia Rennie, Group Accountant

1. General

(1) Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Alan Farnell, Bernard Kirton, Dave Shilton and David Wright and Councillor John Haynes (Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council).

(2) Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Councillor John Appleton was duly elected as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board for the 2012/13 municipal year.

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Councillor Jeff Clarke was duly elected as Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board for the 2012/13 municipal year.

(3) Members' Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Councillor Gray and Councillor Naylor both declared a personal interest with regard to Item 3, 'Questions to Cabinet and Portfolio Holders', the nature of the interest being that they were both Chairs of School Governors.

(4) Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 5th April 2012

The Board agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 5th April 2012 be signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

2. Public Question Time

None.

3. Questions to the Portfolio Holder/Portfolio Holders Update

The Chair welcomed Councillor Cockburn to the meeting and invited him to provide an update on the Growing Places Fund. It was reported that the main objective of the scheme was to generate economic activity. The Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) had been granted an allocation of £12.8 million, which would be managed and administered by the County Council. Of that funding, the County Council had been granted two per cent as revenue funding, to cover the administration and management costs associated with delivering the scheme.

Councillor Cockburn explained that it was essential for the process to be transparent and diligent; in light of this the consultant Thomas Lister had been appointed to advise on an appropriate appraisal and competitive procurement process.

In response to a query raised, members were advised that all applications had been subject to an eligibility check (by the County Council as accountable body), a technical scoring exercise, and an appraisal panel, which would subsequently makes recommendations to the full CWLEP Board for approval. A further Cabinet decision would be required to ratify the decision taken by the CWLEP Board.

Administrative note: Both Cabinet (26th January 2012) and Council (27th March 2012) approved that delegated authority be granted to the Strategic Director for Communities to enter into relevant loan and other agreements for providing financial assistance under the Growing Places Fund on terms and conditions acceptable to the Strategic Director for Resources. Therefore, there would not be a further Cabinet decision required to ratify funding decisions in respect of the Growing Places Fund.

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Councillor Whitehouse advised that scrutiny of the CWLEP and the Fund would be undertaken by the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and that at its meeting scheduled for 13th June 2012, the Chief Executive of the CWLEP would be in attendance.

The item continued with discussion regarding the 'Going for Growth' policy document, which had been approved by Council on 15th May 2012. Councillor Stevens advised that the document outlined the Council's aspiration to promote growth across the County by 2020. It was reported that a number of services had already started to amend their Business Unit Plans to incorporate the vision included in the 'Going for Growth' document. A report would also be presented to Cabinet on 14th June 2012 to provide a number of high level measures and targets which would highlight how the Council would seek to deliver on the Going for Growth agenda.

In response to a query raised, the Board was advised that the policy would seek to deliver a long-term vision for the County Council, which would be incorporated into the Corporate Business Plan to achieve a year-by-year delivery framework. The Medium Term Financial Plan was an integral part of this process; therefore, it was important to consider all three documents together. It was anticipated that a single document would be produced in future.

A question was raised with regard to the significant length of time for the improvements to Portobello Bridge to be approved by Cabinet. In response, Councillor Cockburn advised that due to the budget restrictions, a number of improvement works had been delayed.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed to request that a briefing note on the Cabinet decision, 'Common Lane Kenilworth' be provided.

4. Review of Overview and Scrutiny

Janet Purcell, Democratic Services Manager, reminded members that a review of Democratic and Corporate Governance was ongoing, which was being overseen by Leaders Liaison Group. The first phase of the review had been considered by the Group at its meeting on 19th April 2012, which was subsequently reported to Council on 15th May 2012. As Overview and Scrutiny was an integral part of the decision-making process, the interim findings from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) had been fed into the review. The CfPS interim report, which identified both strengths and weaknesses in respect of the existing scrutiny arrangements, had made a number of improvement recommendations and those which had been supported by Leaders Liaison Group were outlined to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Members were advised that the majority of those recommendations could be delivered easily by the Overview and Scrutiny Board via existing working arrangements. With regard to Recommendation 4, Janet Purcell advised that as there had been positive feedback from members in respect of the recent Portfolio Briefings that had been delivered by Councillor Hayfield, the Overview and Scrutiny Board might wish to consider the value of a schedule of briefings for all Portfolio Holders. This would provide an opportunity for all

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members to have an informal discussion with the Portfolio Holder regarding proposed decisions and offer feedback.

With regard to Recommendation 5, members were advised that the aim was to improve communication between the Portfolio Holders and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. This would enable Work Programmes to be co-ordinated more effectively and better aligned to the priorities of the organisation, thereby increasing the value of the scrutiny work. Janet Purcell referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Member Survey which had been undertaken in April 2012. The results of the survey largely reflected the views of members raised previously and the findings of the CfPS review; however, the survey did identify an issue regarding engagement with the District and Borough Councillors. It was considered that the issue could be attributed to the selection of topics that were scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Board, which were predominately internally-focused.

It was reported that Leaders Liaison Group did not support the 'commissioning' model of scrutiny, which had been recommended by the Centre for Public Scrutiny. Furthermore, there had been concerns regarding the 'layered' approach to scrutiny.

With regard to the 'layered' approach to health scrutiny, Janet Purcell advised that Cabinet had supported the development of joint working with the Districts and Boroughs Councils. This would enable them to be actively involved and engaged with the scrutiny of health-related issues, without necessarily delegating specific health scrutiny powers to them.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:

- 1) The Portfolio Holder briefings were considered extremely valuable and welcomed a move to a more consistent approach, with the caveat that this did not unnecessarily burden members. It was suggested that methods to hold a number of briefings at the same time be explored and that alternative methods of sharing information also be considered for those members who may be unable to attend the briefings.
- 2) The Members' Weekly Diary alert could be used to incorporate the schedule of Portfolio Holder briefings.
- 3) Councillor Hayfield encouraged members to be proactive in their approach to the scrutiny of Cabinet and Portfolio Holder decisions. He welcomed feedback on his proposed decisions and was committed to holding briefings as early as possible to enable members to feed into the decision-making process.
- 4) There needed to be greater clarity around the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Board. One member questioned whether its purpose was to manage and oversee the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees, or just to scrutinise its own area of remit.
- 5) It was important that Cabinet Members regularly attended the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees, in order to be held to account and respond to questions raised by members.

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- 6) An increase in joint working with the District and Borough Councils would require careful consideration in respect of the potential resource implications that joint working could have on those Councils.
- 7) It was essential that recommendations arising from Task and Finish Groups that had been approved by Cabinet were reported back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, to ensure that members could track progress.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed to submit the following recommendations to Cabinet:

- 1) That an annual programme of Portfolio Holder briefings covering all areas of activity be scheduled, ensuring that these provide members with an opportunity to feed back to the Portfolio Holders; and
- 2) That Portfolio Holders positively respond to any invitations to attend informal meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Spokespersons to discuss the Work Programme and potential topics for scrutiny.

5. Transformation through Strategic Commissioning

Phil Evans, Head of Service Improvement and Change Management, provided members with a progress update on developments regarding the Transformation through Strategic Commissioning Programme.

It was reported that since the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, the review scope of the Fire and Rescue service had been subject to engagement with the relevant members of the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The review of the Strategic Commissioning service, which had focused on the delivery of the Council's strategic commissioning objectives, was now at the stage of Options Appraisal, which would be presented to the next meeting of Corporate Board for consideration.

With regard to the review of Adult Social Care, Phil Evans advised that a meeting had been scheduled for 1st June 2012 with the relevant members of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review the scoping document. The Programme Office was also undertaking a number of scoping exercises with other services that would be reviewed in the near future.

Members were provided with an update on the three recommendations which had submitted at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 5th April 2012. Phil Evans advised that both Recommendations 1 and 2 had been fully resolved. Progress was being achieved with regard to Recommendation 3 and the Strategic Commissioning section of the Intranet would be refreshed with current information, to ensure members could be regularly updated. Members were also encouraged to contact the Programme Office if they had any queries.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board considered that communication with elected members throughout the delivery of the Programme was essential and queried whether there were alternative methods to informing members, in

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addition to the Strategic Commissioning section on the Intranet. Furthermore, it was important the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were kept regularly informed, to allow sufficient time to schedule Programme updates when necessary.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed to note the update report.

6. Warwickshire County Council's approach to Performance Management Reporting

Phil Evans, Head of Service Improvement and Change Management, provided the Overview and Scrutiny Board with an outline of the existing reporting mechanisms to members in respect of performance, financial and risk information. He reported that in late 2011, he had attended the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to gather members' views in respect of the existing mechanisms and the format of performance reporting.

To resolve a number of the issues that had been raised, it was proposed that a dedicated Member Working Group be appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Board to undertake a detailed review of each quarterly finance, performance and risk report. It was considered that undertaking performance monitoring outside of the Committee setting would be a more valuable exercise. It would provide members with greater time to understand and interrogate the data, thereby leading to a more informed process of review and scrutiny.

Upon approval, the first meeting of the Working Group would coincide with the 2011/12 Year End information which would be presented to Cabinet on 14th June 2012. It was proposed that at its first meeting, the Working Group would explore the future requirements in respect of the look, style and content of information received.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed:

- 1) To appoint a dedicated Member Working Group to undertake a detailed review of each quarterly finance, performance and risk report;
- 2) That membership of the Member Working Group would initially include the Chair and Vice-Chair of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee and that other members could be co-opted on to the Group; and
- 3) That the member of the Working Group would have the opportunity to relinquish their place to another member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, if they did not wish to participate.

7. Health and Wellbeing and the Role of Scrutiny

Dr John Linnane, Director of Public Health, provided members with an update on the latest developments in respect of the Health and Wellbeing Board (H&WB) and Public Health. He advised that at present, the health landscape was in a stage of transition. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 had received Royal Assent in March 2012; however, the provisions and regulations surrounding the Act were yet to be published.

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With regard to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), members were advised that an annual review had been undertaken in March 2012, which had been considered by the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In respect of the potential links between Public Health and Overview and Scrutiny, Dr John Linnane explained that the Public Health Outcomes Framework included four main domains of Public Health. These domains did cut across a range of Overview and Scrutiny responsibilities, primarily the Children and Young People and the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committees. This was in addition to the role of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

It was reported that the Government was due to publish up to 67 outcome measures, which would be included as part of the Public Health Outcomes Framework. It was anticipated that the document, which would include statutory guidance, would be published in Autumn 2012.

With regard to the Health and Well-Being Board, Dr John Linnane advised that it was currently operating in shadow form and would be endorsed as an Executive Committee in April 2013. Hitherto, the Board had made positive progress and at its meeting on 22nd May 2012, it had agreed the draft Health and Well-Being Strategy. Two further strategic products of the Board were the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the Director of Public Health Annual Report.

Dr John Linnane welcomed a discussion on how the Overview and Scrutiny Committees could have an active role in the scrutiny of health-related activity and issues. He acknowledged the value of the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny and referred to the recent 16 per cent reduction in the County's teenage pregnancy rates, some of which he considered had been achieved as a result of the work of a Task and Finish Group.

To conclude, members were advised that it was the role of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to monitor the delivery of the Health and Well-Being Board's targets and measures.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed to establish a meeting between Dr John Linnane and the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to identify key areas of health-related activity and issues that would benefit from monitoring and review by scrutiny members. This would be scheduled once the Outcomes Framework had been published.

8. Pilot of Mobile Devices

Tonino Ciuffini, Head of Information Assets, provided members with a report on the use of mobile devices by members and officers within the County Council. It was reported that recent developments in ICT had meant that the technology that employees owned was likely to be more advanced than that which was provided by their employers. Therefore, it was anticipated that employees would increasingly prefer to use one device, and their own device, to access work information. This was referred to as 'Bring Your Own Device' (BYOD).

In light of this, the County Council was currently undertaking a trial of the use of mobile devices across the organisation to test their functionality and the

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use of Google Mail and Cloud. Eight members, all senior officers and a number of other employees had been provided with either an iPad or the Android-based Samsung Galaxy Tablet for the purpose of the trial. Users had been asked to access email, Committee information, electronic documents and the wider Internet.

An outline of the benefits of the use of mobile devices was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Board. Primarily, this included ease of use, reduced costs and increased accessibility. Conversely, it was also essential that the potential implications of the use of mobile devices were considered, principally focusing on the importance of security. In addition to training for employees to ensure an understanding of security responsibilities, there would be greater trust that employees would comply with security requirements.

With regard to the next stage of the trial, Tonino Ciuffini advised that existing security policies would need to be updated, together with an evaluation of the Mobile Device Management facilities. It was anticipated that an evaluation of the pilot would be undertaken following the roll-out of Google Mail across the organisation. The roll-out of mobile devices for members would coincide with the Council's replacement policy following the County Council elections in June 2013. As part of the policy, members would be provided with a choice of equipment, based on their ICT needs and preference.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:

- 1) A Bring Your Own Device policy, or the provision of suitable ICT equipment, would ensure that all members would have easy access to emails and electronic documents. This would be delivered through Google Mail / Cloud which would enable the user to access their emails and documents from any device without logging into the Council's network.
- 2) A concern was raised with regard to length of time to deliver the Google Mail / Cloud and Bring Your Own Device projects. In response, Tonino Ciuffini advised that the County Council was at the forefront of technological advancements of this nature. He advised that the roll-out of Google Mail / Cloud would be delivered once accreditation had been received.
- 3) Some procurement activity was shared with the District and Borough Councils; however, none of those Councils were considering Google Mail / Cloud or Bring Your Own Device projects at present.
- 4) It was suggested that a user group be established for members to share learning experiences and issues regarding the two projects.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed to request that a briefing note be provided in December 2012 to provide an update on the Google Mail / Cloud and Bring Your Own Device projects.

9. Financial Review of the County Council

Virginia Rennie, Group Accountant, presented the Overview and Scrutiny Board with a financial overview of the Council. The purpose of the report was

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to ensure that members had consistent and accurate data in respect of the finances of the authority, from which further questioning and scrutiny could be derived. Members were asked to comment on the suitability of the Financial Briefing and whether regular updates in that format would be of value.

A summary of the Briefing was provided to members. It was reported that overall, Council spending had reduced in real terms, in line with a reduction in Government grant funding. Virginia Rennie clarified that the rationale for increased Council Tax was to alleviate the significant reduction in Government funding.

In response to a question raised regarding the Council Tax Freeze Grant, members were advised that the Financial Briefing demonstrated the removal of the grant in future years, lest it not be received.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed to request that the Finance Briefing be provided for all members on an annual basis.

10. Social Media

Kushal Birla, Head of Customer Service, explained that a number of case studies had been outlined in the report to provide a practical example of how social media had been developed and used by the County Council. It was reported that social media was an effective method of communication for members of the public; however, it was equally as important for the County Council to listen to comments received, use social media responsibly and ensure that the use of social media was in accordance with core business requirements.

It was reported that Councillor Hayfield had scheduled a Portfolio Holder briefing session on the use of social media for 25th June 2012.

In response to a query raised regarding the benefits of social media, Kushal Birla explained that a proportion of the public now preferred to communicate via email and social media, rather than via telephone or face-to-face. In light of this, it was important that the County Council could use modern methods to effectively communicate with those members of the public, in addition to the traditional methods. As contact via social media was in 'real-time', it was essential that the user acted responsibly at all times. In light of this, the Customer Care Standards were being reviewed to incorporate responsible use and communication etiquette via social media.

A discussion took place with regard to the social media network that had been developed for County Council employees, which was called Yammer. Members considered that the site provided an insight into some of the issues that were being raised and discussed by employees. It was also a positive way for members of staff to share information and knowledge regarding ongoing projects.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed to request that the Social Media Case Studies report included dates and a greater analysis of the data outlined for each of the case studies.

11. Work Programme and Scrutiny Review Progress Report

Georgina Atkinson, Democratic Services Team Leader, referred to the report which included an update on the Work Programme and progress on each of the current Task and Finish Groups.

With regard to the Annual Work Programme event, which had been facilitated by the Centre for Public Scrutiny on 10th May 2012, members were advised that three shortlisted items had been identified: Property Rationalisation Programme and Modern and Flexible Working; Impact of Budget Cuts; and Community Access to Services. Georgina Atkinson advised that the relevant Heads of Service for those areas had been invited to attend the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board Spokespersons, which had been scheduled for 27th June 2012, to discuss the three topics and identify appropriate timescales for review and the key areas members wished to scrutinise. Members were invited to submit any comments or suggestions with regard to the three topics in advance of the meeting.

Members were advised that two proposals for Task and Finish Groups had been submitted by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee: The role of the Health and Well-Being Board in improving outcomes for children and young people; and Academies / Free Schools.

Georgina Atkinson referred to two scoping documents that had been circulated to the Overview and Scrutiny Board for approval in respect of the Post 16 Transport and the Safeguarding Improvement Task and Finish Groups.

Members were reminded that the Overview and Scrutiny Board could now approve proposals for Task and Finish Groups via email. An email had been circulated to members on 16th May 2012 to request approval for a proposed review of the impact of the County Council's reduction in bus services. Georgina Atkinson had not received any rejection emails to the proposal.

With regard to the Safeguarding Improvement Task and Finish Group, members were advised that an interim report would be produced, with a view to the review being completed and the final report published in January 2013.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed to:

- 1) Endorse the report and updated Work Programme 2012/13;
- 2) Add the following three items to the Work Programme 2012/13: Property Rationalisation Programme and Modern and Flexible Working; Impact of Budget Cuts; and Community Access to Services;
- 3) Approve the scoping documents for the Post 16 Transport and the Safeguarding Improvement Task and Finish Groups;
- 4) Approve the proposal for a Task and Finish Group to review the impact of the reduction in bus services;
- 5) Reject the proposal regarding the Task and Finish Group to consider the role of the Health and Well-Being Board in improving outcomes for children and young people. This was on the basis that as the Health and Well-Being Board was still operating in shadow form, it was therefore too

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early to undertake a scrutiny review. The Overview and Scrutiny Board recommended that the Chair of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee discuss the topic with the Director of Public Health;

- 6) Approve the appointment for the Task and Finish Group to review Academies and Free Schools; and
- 7) Request that a copy of the interim report by the Safeguarding Improvement Task and Finish be circulated to all members for information.

7. Any Other Items

No further matters were raised for discussion.

8. Dates of Future Meetings

Agreed.

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Chair

The Board rose at 4.20 p.m.