

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

25 JUNE 2014

Present: Councillor K Collett (Chair)  
Councillor J Dhindsa (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors J Aron, N Bell, S Greenslade, K Hastrick, A Joynes,  
R Martins and D Walford

Officers: Partnerships and Performance Section Head  
Committee and Scrutiny Officer

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

There were no apologies for absence.

### 2 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY)

There were no disclosures of interest.

### 3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2014 were submitted and signed.

### 4 OUTSTANDING ACTIONS AND QUESTIONS

The Scrutiny Committee received updates on questions and actions raised at previous meetings.

#### PI 37 – In depth review of performance data

The Committee and Scrutiny Officer asked Members to consider suggestions for in depth reviews of the performance data reported in the Partnerships and Performance Section Head's report later in the agenda. The Partnerships and Performance Section Head added that it would be possible to obtain some comparative data with other Hertfordshire authorities.

#### OA 8 – County Council review of mental health services for young people

The Chair informed the Scrutiny Committee that she would be attending a seminar on this matter. Councillor Aron would also be attending.

Councillor Joynes reported that the County Council had set up a Topic Group to review services for those with Autism. It would be held on 7 November and members were welcome to attend the topic group and observe the review.

#### PI 39 – CCS12 Complaints resolved at Stage 1

Following a question from Councillor Bell, the Partnerships and Performance Section Head advised that it had not been possible to obtain a more detailed response due to technical problems with the software. She advised that as soon as it was possible to obtain more details, they would be circulated to the Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED –

1. that the Partnerships and Performance Section Head provide more detailed information about the unresolved complaints reported in the Quarter 3 report for 2013/14, as it becomes available.
2. that the updates be noted.

#### 5 **EXECUTIVE DECISION PROGRESS REPORT**

The Scrutiny Committee received the final edition of the Executive Decision Progress Report 2013/14 and the latest edition of 2014/15.

The Committee and Scrutiny Officer informed the Members that the outstanding items in the 2013/14 edition had been transferred to the 2014/15 edition and updated as appropriate.

It was acknowledged that there were a large number of items scheduled for the July Cabinet meeting.

The Committee and Scrutiny Officer stated that officers had not yet advised when the Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy would be presented to Cabinet. She reminded Members that officers were only required to give 28 days notice. The Notice of Executive Decisions was regularly updated and all Members were informed when it was published.

RESOLVED –

that the report be noted.

#### 6 **UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND MEASURES - END OF YEAR (QUARTER 4) 2013/14**

The Scrutiny Committee received a report of the Partnerships and Performance Section Head which provided an update on the Council's performance indicators at the end of year, Quarter 4 2013/14.

It was confirmed that the indicators relating to Revenues and Benefits would be reported to Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel in future. This was as a result of the change from operating Shared Services with Three Rivers District Council to a Lead Authority model.

The Committee and Scrutiny Officer confirmed that Overview and Scrutiny Committee would receive updates from the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel, either in person at the meeting or as a written report. All Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee would also receive copies of the minutes. In addition all Councillors were informed when the Scrutiny Panel's agenda and minutes were published on the Council's website.

#### CCS2 – Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of fly tipping)

The Partnerships and Performance Section Head advised that the information had not been available for the report but she would circulate the information as soon as it became available.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed that this was an area they would like to investigate further and that it would need to be added to the work programme. Members requested that the report incorporated the following -

- Bulky items/waste – How many items are collected? How regularly is it used?
- Has there been an increase in fly tipping since charging for bulky items?
- When reports are received about bulky items what happens?
- Is there any follow up action when fly tipped material is cleared?

#### CCS5 Number of people sleeping rough on single night

Councillor Joynes noted that the Council received a grant to fund street outreach work. She asked how much longer the Council would receive this grant.

The Partnerships and Performance Section Head advised that further information could be supplied. In response to a question from the Chair, she explained that the national requirement was that local authorities calculated the number of people sleeping rough on one specific night. She advised that numbers were monitored and work continued throughout the year.

The Chair suggested that this could be an area that the Scrutiny Committee could look at in more depth.

#### CCS7 – HomeLet

The Partnerships and Performance Section Head informed the Scrutiny Committee that a survey was currently being undertaken. Landlords, tenants and letting agencies would be approached to share their views.

The Chair asked that the Scrutiny Committee was provided with the results of the survey.

### DG1 – Voter Registration

It was noted that Individual Electoral Registration had been introduced and that residents were required to register online. Members were concerned about those people who did not have access to the internet and how they would be able to register to vote. They were also concerned about the harder to reach members of the community.

The Scrutiny Committee requested that an all-Member briefing was arranged to cover the new arrangements and how people could register to vote with particular emphasis on those people it was more difficult to reach.

### HR1 – Sickness absence

The Scrutiny Committee acknowledged the reduction in sickness absence and particularly the data for March of 0.3 days.

Councillor Joynes asked for further information about the measures put in place by the Council to mitigate against the stress experienced by front line services, including the Customer Service Centre.

The Partnerships and Performance Section Head advised that there was ongoing monitoring of the service and additional training was put in place as required. Customer Services Officers regularly received training on how to handle difficult situations.

The Chair suggested that it might be useful for Councillors to be told about the 'day in the life of a Customer Services Officer'. It was suggested that it might be possible for Councillors to shadow officers in that area. The Partnerships and Performance Section Head and Committee and Scrutiny Officer would contact the Customer Services Section Head to find out if this would be possible.

### RESOLVED –

1. that the report be noted.
2. that the information about fly tipping (CCS2) be circulated to the Scrutiny Committee as soon as it becomes available.
3. that an item be included on the work programme related to fly tipping and performance indicator CCS2.
4. that further information about the grant from the Department for Communities and Local Government for street outreach work, related to people sleeping rough, be circulated as soon as possible.

5. that an item be included on the Scrutiny Committee's work programme to enable a more in depth review of CCS5.
6. that the results of the HomeLet survey be circulated to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
7. that an all-Member briefing be arranged to explain the registration procedure for Individual Electoral Registration.
8. that the Scrutiny Committee be given a presentation on the 'Day in the Life of a Customer Services Officer'.
9. that officers investigate whether it would be possible for Councillors to 'shadow' officers in the Customer Services Centre.

## **7 HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee and Scrutiny Officer informed the Scrutiny Committee that Councillor Aron had been appointed as Watford Borough Council's representative to the Hertfordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee for 2014/15.

RESOLVED –

that the appointment be noted.

## **8 COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP TASK GROUP MEMBERSHIP**

The Scrutiny Committee received a report of the Committee and Scrutiny Officer which sought approval of the membership of the Community Safety Partnership Task Group for 2014/15. The report incorporated six names which had been submitted by the Liberal Democrat and Labour Groups.

The Committee and Scrutiny Officer advised that the Scrutiny Committee needed to decide how many members should participate in the Task Group. In the past this had been seven Councillors. She suggested that if Members were minded to appoint a Task Group of seven Councillors they may wish to offer the final place to the Green or Conservative Councillor.

The Chair proposed that the Task Group should comprise seven councillors and that the final place should be offered to either the Green or Conservative Councillor, in addition to the six named in the report. She suggested that the Councillors should be contacted to discuss it themselves and agree who would take up the final place.

Following a question from Councillor Martins, the Scrutiny Committee confirmed that the Chair should be appointed at the Task Group's first meeting. Members

felt that it was not appropriate for Overview and Scrutiny Committee to dictate who should be eligible to be Chair.

RESOLVED –

1. that the Community Safety Partnership Task Group comprises seven Councillors.
2. that those Councillors listed in the report, namely Councillors Aron, Bolton, Martins, McLeod, Mills and S Williams, be appointed to the Community Safety Partnership Task Group for 2014/15.
3. that Councillors Brandon (Green) and Mehta (Conservative) be invited to agree who would take the final place on the Community Safety Partnership Task Group.

9

### **BUDGET PANEL**

The Committee and Scrutiny Officer reminded the Scrutiny Committee of the membership of Budget Panel following Annual Council on 11 June 2014. She advised that the Chair, Councillor Khan, would be invited to attend Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide an update of the Panel's work. If he was unable to attend the meeting he would be asked to provide a written update.

RESOLVED –

that the Budget Panel membership of Councillors Khan (Chair), Joynes (Vice-Chair), Aron, Counter, Derbyshire, Dhindsa, Greenslade, Martins and Taylor be noted.

10

### **OUTSOURCED SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL**

The Committee and Scrutiny Officer reminded the Scrutiny Committee of the membership of Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel following Annual Council on 11 June 2014. She advised that the Chair, Councillor Taylor, would be invited to attend Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide an update of the Panel's work. If he was unable to attend the meeting he would be asked to provide a written update.

RESOLVED –

that the Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel membership of Councillors Taylor (Chair), Hastrick (Vice-Chair), Counter, Dhindsa, Greenslade, Joynes and Martins be noted.

11 **PROPERTY TASK GROUP UPDATE**

Councillor Bell, the Chair of the Property Task Group, informed the Scrutiny Committee that the Task Group had not met since its first meeting. A meeting was being scheduled for the end of July or beginning of August. The Task Group would be able to review the interim report following its presentation to Portfolio Holders in July.

RESOLVED –

that the update be noted.

12 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Scrutiny Committee's latest work programme had been circulated with the agenda. It was noted that the suggestions discussed earlier in the meeting would need to be added to the timetable.

RESOLVED –

1. that the report be noted.
2. that the two discussion topics to be added to the work programme.

13 **DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

- Monday 11 August 2014 (For call-in only)
- Wednesday 17 September 2014
- Thursday 30 October 2014 (For call-in only)

Chair

The Meeting started at 7.30 pm  
and finished at 8.55 pm