

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12 December 2016

Attendance:

Councillors:

Learney (Chairman) (P)

Griffiths (P)
Gemmell (P)
Hiscock
Warwick (P)

Laming (P)
Stallard (P)
Tod (P)
Thacker (P)

Deputy Members:

Councillor Thompson (Standing Deputy for Councillor Hiscock)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Bell, Godfrey (Leader), Miller (Portfolio Holder for Economy and Estates) and Pearson (Portfolio Holder for Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health & Wellbeing).

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillors Humby (Portfolio Holder for Business Partnerships) and Weston (Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Built Environment)

1. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Having regard to their roles as Hampshire County Councillors, Councillors Stallard and Tod each declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter on the agenda which may have a County Council involvement. Councillor Thacker made the same declaration as her husband was a Hampshire County Councillor. However, as there were no material conflicts of interest, they all remained in the room under the dispensation granted on behalf of the Standards Committee, to participate and vote in all such matters.

2. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Chairman announced that Ann Reeder, Consultant and Regional Advocate for the South of England Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) was in attendance at the special meeting of the Committee that took place on 30 November 2016,

as part of the Council's review of its scrutiny processes. A feedback report of this review would be available in due course.

The Chairman announced that consideration of the Scrutiny Work Programme and Forward Plan would be taken as a procedural agenda item at the beginning of the meeting in future, to assist with the scrutiny process.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of meeting held 17 October 2016 (less exempt minute), be approved and adopted.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Bell addressed the Committee with regard to the approval for key measures for Winchester Air Quality Action Plan (Report CAB2869 refers) and her comments are summarised under the relevant agenda item below.

5. **TO CONSIDER ESTABLISHING AN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (MAJOR PROJECTS) SUB COMMITTEE**
(Oral Report)

The Committee noted that several Members had expressed a wish to establish a Overview and Scrutiny (Major Projects) Sub-Committee. This had arisen from Members' wish to review the large number of projects the Council were pursuing at the current time, including the development of Station Approach and Silver Hill. The Committee were asked to give consideration to the formation of this Sub-Committee and set out how it wished the Sub-Committee to operate and what its focus should be?

The Corporate Director (Professional Services) emphasised that there was already a process in place via the Cabinet (Major Projects) Committee and the Committee needed to consider how the appointment of a Sub-Committee would add to this existing process. Members queried if there was a similar model existing in a comparable Local Authority and it was agreed that this be further investigated.

Members supported the proposals to establish a Sub-Committee as it was considered that there was a need to scrutinise in depth the process of all of the Council's major projects at key stages and to ensure these projects were adhering to the correct process and were progressed in the appropriate manner. However, it was crucial that the Sub-Committee did not carry out the role of the Committee or reiterate the work of the Cabinet (Major Projects) Committee.

The Committee noted that terms of reference, limitations, parameters and timings of the Sub-Committee, would need to be established in the initial stages. The Sub-Committee should be politically balanced comprising of seven Members (four Conservatives; three Liberal Democrats plus Deputies) which, whilst being chaired by a Member of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, could include the appointment of wider Members of the Council in order to achieve this balance.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That Councillor Tod be appointed Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny (Major Projects) Sub-Committee and consider how the Sub-Committee would operate;
- (ii) That Group Managers be asked to nominate Members for appointment to the Sub-Committee; and
- (iii) That the terms of reference for the Sub-Committee be established in the first instance and approved by The Overview and Scrutiny Committee at a future meeting.

6. **APPROVAL FOR KEY MEASURES FOR WINCHESTER AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN**

(Report CAB2869 refers)

Councillor Pearson drew Members' attention to the Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Bell to Council at its meeting on 20 July 2016, asking Members to 'recommit' to the actions and priorities outlined in the 2006 Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP), later updated through the 2012 Air Quality Informal Scrutiny Group, ahead of any planned review of the AQAP. He introduced the report which provided a response to the Notice of Motion, along with details of the ongoing work carried out with local stakeholders that had taken place this year to produce a new AQAP for the City Centre. The plan presented a series of measures to form the core of the new plan and Members approval was sought, prior to the development of the full AQAP.

It was reported that the Council had declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in the City Centre during November 2003, as outlined in Appendix 1 of the Report. Subsequently, it was noted that the current AQAP had been adopted by the Council in 2006 and consisted of 21 actions to meet the requirements of Section 84(2) of the Environment Act 1995. However, despite delivering many of its objectives, as set out in Appendix 2 to the Report, it still had not met its statutory obligations. It was anticipated that a new Plan, containing higher-impact measures to be delivered more directly by the Council, would help to ensure these obligations were achieved within the coming five years.

The Committee noted that a steering group had met regularly during the past six months, following a presentation and workshop at which findings of the 'Source

Apportionment' study by Bureau Veritas were shared and discussed with an invited audience in February 2016. Stakeholders involved included Hampshire County Council Highways Team, Winchester Action for Climate Change (WinACC) and the Winchester BID.

In conclusion, Councillor Pearson reminded Members that the report was a record of the work in progress and not a finished article at this stage.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Bell addressed the Committee and responded to Members' questions thereon.

In summary, Councillor Bell made reference to how the points raised in her motion had been addressed and expressed concern that bullet point 3 (as set out in paragraph 8.6 of Page 9 of the Report) had not been addressed adequately by actions. She suggested that the wording contained within paragraph 8.11(b), in relation to the development of an Air Quality Supplementary Planning Guidance required a stronger emphasis. Councillor Bell considered that all Council Policies, Strategies and Developments should have a statutory Air Quality element built into them and hoped that this had been applied within the Council's Parking Strategy with significant changes to be addressed in this area. Councillor Bell also made reference to what she considered to be a mismatch between the Air Quality and Car Parking Strategy.

In conclusion, Councillor Bell suggested an amendment to Recommendation 4 to Cabinet as set out in the Report to incorporate paragraph 8.11 within paragraph 8.10 and requested that an additional recommendation be added that, in future, all Council papers (with relevance to Air Quality) contain a mandatory section on Air Quality.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Bell for her attendance and informative representation.

The Committee asked a number of detailed questions and Councillor Pearson, Councillor Godfrey and the Interim Managing Director responded accordingly as summarised below:

- i. It was noted that gateway parking was a useful measure that and although there was insufficient space to physically expand most existing car parks on the periphery to the main Winchester Town Centre the Parking Strategy would address the way in which these are used.
- ii. Council would be considering its options regarding the Parking Strategy and Air Quality in due course to consider a list of priorities to be delivered within budget constraints, in accordance with the aspirations of the public and the Council's vision.

- iii The Council had commenced the transitional process by switching to the use of Euro 6-engined vehicles for its Park and Ride bus services. Stagecoach were also in the process of upgrading its other buses. With the expansion of Park and Ride services since the initial Air Quality Action Plan 2006, it was noted that additional sites were now in use at South Winchester and Pitt, with another site also in development at Barton Farm. Major employers based within the City Centre were encouraging employees to use these services to support the reduction of carbon emissions for the City.
- iv. Measures were in place within the Car Parking Strategy to improve signage and technology to signpost the public to the installation of a smartphone app, currently in development, to enable the public to obtain 'live' parking information.

During debate, several Members considered that the Supplementary Planning Guidance would be extremely valuable but acknowledged that this would only be the case if this was available sooner rather than later.

A Member reiterated the point raised previously by Councillor Bell and suggested that an Air Quality Impact Assessment section be built into every relevant Council report in future for completion. Furthermore, it was considered that the final AQAP, planned for delivery in March 2017, laid out a full range of measures as goals to achieve in the report. In conclusion, these views were not supported by the majority of the Committee.

RECOMMENDED:

THAT THE POSITIVE ACTION TO IMPROVE AIR QUALITY BE WELCOMED AND THE FULL AND SATISFACTORY RESPONSE TO COUNCILLOR BELL'S NOTICE OF MOTION BE NOTED AND RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL.

7. **DRAFT COUNCIL STRATEGY 2017-20**
(Report CAB2876 refers)

Councillor Godfrey introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the affects on the Council's focus and key ambitions for the coming three years as a result of major changes to Government Policy and the continued financial pressures the Council faced. The Strategy outlined how the Council would deliver its ambitions and what it wanted to achieve over the next three year period. The report was currently a draft giving the Committee the opportunity to submit its initial comments to Cabinet.

Members gave consideration to the outcomes, aims and how these are delivered, as set out in Appendix A to the Report and during debate made the following points summarised below:

(i) **Delivering an entrepreneurial approach to efficient public services**

Members asked how the aims and outcomes would be measured? In response, the Corporate Director (Professional Services) advised that the Appendix endeavoured to set out the measures to be taken. Feedback would continue to be sought from customers on all the services the Council provided which would be digitalised going forward. To achieve these aims, the Council would be changing their methodology and approach in the collection of rent and council tax arrears and increasing its Council Tax and Business Rates collection rates to optimise funds and maximise key income streams which would enable deliverability of services and investment/spend locally and contribute to the Council's stability.

It was noted that Discretionary Housing Payments were being closely reviewed to ensure support continued to be available for those experiencing financial difficulty.

The Committee noted that the Council would continue to seek to acquire commercial properties to generate an income stream to support the local economy and establish a firm income stream moving forward, ensuring that the appropriate professional advice would be sought to ensure any investment was viable.

In conclusion, Members considered that there should be clarification of the meaning of an "entrepreneurial approach", and there should be measurable outcomes that were clear and concise and understandable to residents.

(ii) **Winchester will be a Premier Business Location**

The Committee noted that "Premier Business Location" referred to a variety of aspects including office space, retail space, infrastructure, specific skills, basic skills and investment.

Members raised various matters relating to income generation from visitors to the Town Centre, affordable housing and housing mix in a central location, traffic and travel infrastructure, the need to serve residents and retaining skills locally by providing suitable employment and business opportunities to promote the economic growth of the District going forward.

In conclusion, the Committee wished to see a greater emphasis on work force issues within this outcome.

(iii) Delivering Quality Housing Options

The Committee emphasised that Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO's) should be recognised as providing a valued supply of housing in the District.

(iv) Improving the Health and Happiness of our Community

The Committee suggested that consideration be given to geographical areas to include those residents living in the more remote rural locations of the District who struggle to access the leisure facilities and activities that were available. In response, the Interim Managing Director referred to the work that was on-going at local level with Parish Councils to create opportunities for participation by those in 'hard to reach' areas.

In conclusion it was noted that the Committee wished to see a better understanding of the differences between neighbourhood communities and the opportunities and issues that affect them.

(v) Improving the quality of the District's environment

Members expressed concern that no reference had been made to improving the carbon footprint by cross-referencing the Parking Strategy with the Air Quality Strategy.

RESOLVED:

That the report be welcomed and the improvements to the Strategy noted, subject to the comments set out in (i) to (v) above.

8. ANNUAL EMERGENCY PLANNING REPORT

(Report OS149 refers)

The Committee considered the Report which provided an update on the recommendations of the Flooding Informal Scrutiny Group, previously considered by Cabinet and The Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee noted that Ian Holt, Head of the Emergency Planning Unit at Hampshire County Council was happy to respond to any points regarding County Council powers and would report back to Members at a later date if required.

RESOLVED:

That the information contained in the update of the Flooding Informal Scrutiny Group recommendations, the Annual Emergency

Planning Report summary and update of flood alleviation schemes be noted.

9. **ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2016-2021 (LESS EXEMPT APPENDIX)**
(Report CAB2870 refers)

The Assistant Director (Estates and Regeneration) highlighted the successful developments achieved under the previous Asset Management Plan for 2011-2016, as summarised in the report. The new Asset Management Plan for 2016-2021 set out project plans to include developments in the wider District, as outlined in Appendix 1(f) to the report.

In response to questions regarding the number of public convenience facilities and their state of repair, the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Estates informed the Committee that in the public conveniences in St Maurice's Covert were leased on commercial terms so their refurbishment would need to be justified.

RESOLVED:

That the Asset Management Plan for 2016-2021 be noted.

10. **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND JANUARY 2017 FORWARD PLAN**
(Report OS156 refers)

RESOLVED:

(1) That the Parking Strategy be added onto the work programme for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee to be held 23 January 2017; and

(2) That the Scrutiny Work Programme and Forward Plan for January 2017 be noted.

11. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

RESOLVED:

1. That in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

2. That the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of 'exempt information' as defined by Section 100I and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

<u>Minute Number</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Description of Exempt Information</u>
##	Exempt Minute of meeting held 17 October 2016) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). (Para 3 Schedule 12A refers)
##	Asset Management Plan 2016-2021 (Exempt Appendix))

12. **EXEMPT MINUTE**

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minute of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 October 2016, be approved and adopted.

13. **ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2016-2021 (EXEMPT APPENDIX)**
(Report CAB2870 refers)

The Committee considered the financial information as set out in the Exempt Appendix.

RESOLVED:

That the Exempt Appendix be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 9.10pm

Chairman