

**SCRUTINY & OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

**12<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2012**

Present: Councillors: George Cockman (Chairman), Brian Donnelly (Vice-Chairman) John Chidlow, Philip Circus, Leonard Crosbie, Laurence Deakins, Jim Goddard, Brian O'Connell, Jim Rae, Kate Rowbottom, David Sheldon, David Skipp, Tricia Youtan

Apologies: Councillors: Andrew Dunlop, Josh Murphy

Also present: Councillors: Duncan England, Gordon Lindsay, Christian Mitchell

SO/1 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED

That Councillor George Cockman be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing Council year.

SO/2 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED

That Councillor Brian Donnelly be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing Council year.

SO/3 **TIME OF MEETINGS**

RESOLVED

That meetings of the Committee be held at 5.30pm for the ensuing Council year.

SO/4 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

SO/5 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

SO/6 **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chairman of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee wanted to record thanks to Councillor Sheldon for his dedication to chairing the Committee for the past five years.

SO/7 **REPLIES FROM CABINET/COUNCIL REGARDING SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS**

(a) The Committee noted the response from the Cabinet Member for a Safer and Healthier District to the recommendations from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, following the review by the Social Inclusion Working Group on Disability Access to the Council's Services.

The Committee was not satisfied with the response to recommendations one and four, it was agreed that these were statements of what the Council was currently delivering and there were no details on how the Council would improve its delivery of services.

Therefore recommendations one and four would be referred back to the Cabinet Member for further details on how the Council intended to improve its delivery of disability services following the review by the Social Inclusion Working Group.

(b) The Committee noted the response from the Cabinet Member for a Safer and Healthier District to the recommendations from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee on providing additional services at Horsham Hospital.

The Committee noted that there were no further updates at this stage.

**RECOMMENDED TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR A SAFER AND HEALTHIER DISTRICT**

(1) That the Cabinet Member provide further details on how it intended to actively seek feedback at strategic intervals from local disabled people with a range of disabilities, namely, visual impairment, deafness and learning disabilities to ensure our communication was accessible.

(2) That further details be provided on how the Council intended to take proactive action to foster good relations between disabled people and non disabled people, and to highlight that we need a mixture of communication techniques (eg making sure that any podcasts/Youtube clips have a written transcript or subtitles for Deaf and hard of hearing residents).

SO/8 **APPOINTMENT OF THE STANDING WORKING GROUPS**

The Committee appointed the Members of the standing Working Groups for the ensuing Council year

(a) Business Improvement Working Group

The following Members were appointed by the Committee to the Business Improvement Working Group: Councillors Peter Burgess, John Chidlow, Malcolm Curnock, Laurence Deakins, Andrew Dunlop, Frances Haigh, David Jenkins, Brian O'Connell

The Committee noted that there were two additional terms to the Business Improvement Working Group's Terms of Reference, these had been recently added to allow the Group to pick up on any items which might arise out of the combined Budget Review/Performance Management Working Group.

(b) Social Inclusion Working Group

The following Members were appointed by the Committee to the Social Inclusion Working Group: Councillors Peter Burgess, George Cockman, Christian Mitchell, Godfrey Newman, Kate Rowbottom, David Skipp, Claire Vickers, Tricia Youtan

The Committee noted that a standing item for the Social Inclusion Working Group was to consider health matters which may become more significant with the future changes i.e. to the provision of additional services at Horsham Hospital.

SO/9 **BUDGET REVIEW WORKING GROUP – TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

There had been no further meetings of the Budget Review Working Group and therefore there was no update from the Chairman.

RESOLVED

That an update be given in respect of the Budget Review Working Group

REASON

All Working Group updates are to be received by the Committee.

SO/10 **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT WORKING GROUP - TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

There had been no further meetings of the Business Improvement Working Group and therefore there was no update from the Chairman.

RESOLVED

That an update be given in respect of the Business Improvement Working Group

REASON

All Working Group updates are to be received by the Committee.

SO/11 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP – CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE AND NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD 16<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2012**

The Chairman of the Performance Management Working Group presented the notes of the meeting held 16<sup>th</sup> May 2012.

There were no further updates from the Working Group and the meeting was the last before the Working Group was combined with Budget Review Working Group.

RESOLVED

That the notes of the Performance Management Working Group meeting held 16<sup>th</sup> May 2012 be received

REASON

All notes of Working Group meetings are to be received by the Committee.

SO/12 **SOCIAL INCLUSION WORKING GROUP – TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

There had been no further meetings of the Social Inclusion Working Group and therefore there was no update from the Chairman.

RESOLVED

That an update be given in respect of the Social Inclusion Working Group

SO/12 Social Inclusion Working Group – To receive an update from the Chairman (cont.)

REASON

All Working Group updates are to be received by the Committee.

SO/13 **SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESSES WORKING GROUP – CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE AND NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD 13<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2012**

The Chairman of the Supporting Local Businesses Working Group presented the notes of the meeting held 13<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

Since the last meeting the Chairman of the Working Group had requested some further information from the officers on empty retail units, business rates and car parking for the five villages which the Group was focusing on. This information had been provided and would be emailed to all the Working Group Members.

There had been a suggestion that the review only include villages and not the larger market towns, as there was already a lot of work being carried out in market towns to support local businesses, such as Billingshurst, However, in order to ensure that the review remained focused the Committee supported the Chairman by agreeing to continue with the five market towns and villages of Billingshurst, Ashington, Pulborough, Rudgwick and Steyning, as a sample of the District.

As Ashington parish council had initiated this review it was suggested that their participation and involvement in the review be encouraged. The Chairman of the Working Group would contact the parish council regarding their representation.

RESOLVED

That the notes of the Supporting Local Businesses Working Group meeting held 13<sup>th</sup> June 2012 be received

REASON

All notes of Working Group meetings are to be received by the Committee.

SO/14 **TO RECEIVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW WORK PROGRAMME**

There were no suggestions for the Scrutiny and Overview work programme

SO/15 **TO RECEIVE THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee noted the Scrutiny and Overview work programme for 2012.

The Committee noted that staffing levels in the Development Management department had been raised as an area of concern by the Performance Management Working Group and the Members suggested that this be reviewed further by the Business Improvement Working Group.

Members were concerned that some larger planning applications were not being dealt with quickly enough which could have serious implications and the Chairman of the Business Improvement Working Group agreed that this area should be subject to review.

Members emphasised that they did not question the officer's capability but the workload.

The Committee supported this review. Many Councillors had received complaints from residents in their ward as a result of the planning issues.

Members noted that it was not for Scrutiny to review staffing within the department as this was for the Council's management to review, but the Working Group could review performance levels and productivity levels and therefore the Scrutiny work programme would be amended to reflect this.

The Committee also noted that due to the heavy workload of the Business Improvement Working Group, additional meetings would be required.

An additional amendment was made to the work programme; the 'Hospital Provision Sub Group' would be changed to the 'Health Matters Sub Group' to encompass the wide range of matters which were likely to arise in the near future.

SO/16 **ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA BUT CONSIDERED URGENT**

There were no urgent items.

The meeting finished at 6.37pm having commenced at 5.30pm.

CHAIRMAN