

OVERVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY FORUM

Tuesday, 10th May, 2016

Present:-

Councillor Slack (Chair)

Councillors	J Barr	Councillors	P Gilby
	Borrell		T Gilby +
	Callan		Perkins
	V Diouf		Sarvent
	Derbyshire		

Anita Cunningham, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
 Rachel Lenthall, Committee and Scrutiny Co-ordinator
 Donna Reddish, Policy and Communications Manager +

+ Attended for Minute No. 58

56 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS INTERESTS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

No declarations of interest were received.

57 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catt and Dyke.

58 DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING - PROGRESS ON THE COUNCIL PLAN - YEAR 1 - 2015/16

The Deputy Leader and Policy and Communications Manager attended to provide members with a progress report on the Council Plan for Year 1, 2015/16.

The Policy and Communications Manager informed Members that moving from a 1 year Council Plan to a 4 year Council Plan had achieved a positive effect with 85% of commitments for Year 1 being fully delivered with a further 2 close to completion. The 34 projects for 2015/16 were included as an appendix to the report and the Policy and Communications

Manager noted that many of the projects were going above and beyond the mandatory requirements of the Council.

Members asked if there had been a noticeable impact since the introduction of a risk assessment on all housing applications. The Policy and Communications Manager responded that the restructure within the Housing Solutions and Neighbourhoods teams had given more resources to focus on tenancy sustainment and supporting council tenants. The introduction of Universal Credit and changes to housing benefits for under-25s would further affect the tenancy sustainment rates but the new structure had put the council in a stronger position to tackle those challenges.

Members commented that the Council had performed well, delivering on several big projects alongside running the day-to-day Council operations. However, concerns were raised regarding key project no. 30, the consultation on options for the former Queen Park's Sports Centres' land, as asbestos had been discovered unexpectedly and had delayed work. Members suggested that when scoping work, officer's need to ensure that they have explored all hidden costs before announcing that a saving would be made.

Of the commitments for 2016/17, Members asked which 3 carried the biggest risks. The Policy and Communications Manager replied that the 3 biggest risks would be:

- Sheffield City Region as the combined authority was linked to several projects in Chesterfield. Chesterfield Borough Council was applying to be a full constituent member, but there was a level of uncertainty regarding Sheffield City Region's involvement with the projects if it failed in its application.
- £29million investment in Council Housing Stock – there were concerns with maintaining the level of investment in future years.
- Outdoor market – the costs involved in the reconfiguration were higher than anticipated and the project was on hold.

Members enquired about progress on the Co-op development. The Deputy Leader reported that the development was unlikely to progress any further until the restaurants on the ground floor had been let. A gym had shown interest in occupying the basement and there was a hotel

interested in using the upstairs floors. Members also raised concerns over the uncertain status of the BHS store on Vicar Lane. The Policy and Communications Manager noted that business lettings were still doing better than the previous year and there was approximately 91% occupancy across all the units in the town centre. The Deputy Leader added that as Vicar Lane is owned by a private company, the Council receives only 10% of the rental from the units on Vicar Lane.

Members asked if the major developments in the town centre would include a varied combination of units, e.g. retail, restaurants etc. The Deputy Leader explained that the Northern Gateway project would involve mostly housing to increase the amount of people living in the town centre and raise customer levels for the new and existing businesses.

Members had concerns that the area of town between Stephenson Place and Marks and Spencers, and in particular the Victoria Centre, was run down and not thriving. The Deputy Leader advised that the Victoria Centre was owned privately and the owners spent little on maintenance. The Policy and Communications Manager added that Chesterfield town centre was maintaining its position compared to other towns in the family group that included Mansfield and Worksop.

Members thanked the Deputy Leader and Policy and Communications Manager for presenting the progress report and answering their questions.

RESOLVED –

1. That the progress report be noted.
2. That the Deputy Leader and Policy and Communications Manager be invited to the November meeting of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum to provide a progress report on the implementation of the Council Plan.

59 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

The Policy and Scrutiny Officer submitted a report that included the details of the proposed Overview and Scrutiny Committees' Work Programme for 2016/17.

The Chair noted that the involvement of Members in the work programming sessions had been successful in creating a work programme that included many issues that Scrutiny Members wanted to look at. Members commented that the sessions had worked well and had engaged Members in the decision making process. However, it was noted that some Members were absent for one or both sessions, the sessions would be evaluated to identify why Members did not attend.

Members were invited to state their interest in joining one of the five Scrutiny Project Groups (SPGs). The following responses were received:

- Play Strategy – Councillor Lisa-Marie Derbyshire
- Venues – Councillors Tricia Gilby and Lisa-Marie Derbyshire to joint lead
- Future of former QPSC – Councillors Ray Catt and Kate Sarvent to joint lead
- Development of the Town Centre – Councillors Howard Borrell, Ian Callan and Vickey Diouf
- Markets – Councillors Andy Slack and Jeannie Barr

The membership of the groups would be confirmed at the next meeting of their respective Scrutiny committees. There was some uncertainty over the SPG on the Play Strategy, Councillor Derbyshire and the Policy and Scrutiny Officer would meet with the Interim Environmental Services Manager to discuss the plans for the strategy.

In addition, the Scrutiny Member nominations for the Council Working Groups were discussed and one Scrutiny Member was put forward for each. It was explained that this role would involve reporting back to scrutiny committee. It was also noted that if any Council Working Groups were established to look at Friends of Groups and Workforce Fit for the Future, that Scrutiny committees should consider nominating a Scrutiny Member to join the groups.

Members thanked the Policy and Scrutiny Officer and Committee and Scrutiny Coordinators for the work they had done for the work programming action planning days.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2016/17 be approved and recommended to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs).
2. That the following appointments to Council Working Groups be approved:
 - Member Development – Councillor Lisa-Marie Derbyshire
 - Constitution – Councillor Kate Sarvent
 - Housing Policy/HRA – Councillor Suzie Perkins
3. That the appointment of Members to Scrutiny Project Groups be recommended for approval to the Council's OSCs.
4. That the Policy and Scrutiny Officer and Councillor Lisa-Marie Derbyshire meet with the Interim Environmental Services Manager to discuss the plans for the Play Strategy.
5. That the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum consider appointing a representative to a Friends of Group Working Group should one be created, or that the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee consider creating a Scrutiny Project Group.
6. That the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum consider appointing a representative to a Workforce Fit for Future Working Group should one be created.

60 **SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16**

The Policy and Scrutiny Officer submitted a report and a draft copy of the Scrutiny Annual Report for 2015/16. The annual report was complete pending the Chief Executive's Comments. The Chair remarked that the Annual Report indicated that Scrutiny had changed for the better particularly through the increased involvement of Members in the work programming. Members also expressed that the work programming "away days" had improved the balance of items being put forward to the Scrutiny committees.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum approve the Scrutiny Annual Report 2015/16 for submission to Council.
2. That the Policy and Scrutiny Officer in conjunction with the Joint Chairs be permitted to make any late, minor amendments to the Scrutiny Annual Report 2015/16.

61 FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan was considered by the forum.

RESOLVED –

That the Forward Plan be noted.

62 SCRUTINY MONITORING

Consideration was given to the Implementation Monitoring Report for Scrutiny Committee Recommendations. It was noted from the new work programme that an ICT (under Great Place, Great Service) update and an Internal and External Communications update was due for the next meeting of the forum on 14 June, 2016.

Member's also informed the Forum that on 16 May, 2016 there would be a Concessions Policy Working Group meeting and some members of the former Scrutiny Project Group had been invited to attend. Feedback would be received at the next meeting of the Forum on 14 June, 2016.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Monitoring Report be accepted and aligned with the new work programme.
2. That feedback from the Concessions Policy Working Group be received at the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on 14 June, 2016.

63 JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The minutes of the Joint Scrutiny Panel meeting on 10 March, 2016 were presented to the committee.

Councillors Borrell and Slack attended the Joint Scrutiny Panel meeting and noted that the meeting had been brief. Though Members commented that the meetings were often called at very short notice, it was agreed that continuing to scrutinise joint working was useful, particularly the Building Control Transformation project as that project was a good example of commercialisation.

RESOLVED –

That the minutes be noted.

64 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENTS

There were no Overview and Scrutiny Developments reported.

65 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum held on 12 January, 2016 were presented.

RESOLVED –

That the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.