

Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Forest Heath
District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Thursday 21 April 2016** at **6.00 pm** at the **Council Chamber, District Offices**, College Heath Road, Mildenhall IP28 7EY

Present: **Councillors**

Chairman Simon Cole
Vice Chairman Bill Sadler

Andrew Appleby
Chris Barker
John Bloodworth

Ruth Bowman
Christine Mason
Reg Silvester

Also in attendance:

Councillor Robin Millar, Cabinet Member for Families and Communities
Councillor Brian Harvey

68. **Substitutes**

There were no substitutes at the meeting.

69. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lance Stanbury.

70. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2016 were accepted by the Committee and signed by the Chairman.

71. **Public Participation**

There were no questions/statements from members of the public.

72. **Presentation by the Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities**

[Councillor Bill Sadler arrived at 6.07pm during the consideration of this item]

As set out in the Council's Constitution, at every ordinary Overview and Scrutiny meeting at least one Cabinet Member would be invited to attend to give an account of his or her portfolio and answer questions from the Committee. Therefore, to carry out this constitutional requirement, members

were asked to consider the responsibilities of the Cabinet Member for Families and Communities, who had been invited to the meeting.

Report No: OAS/FH/16/008, set out the overall responsibilities of the Cabinet Member for Families and Communities, which were:

- Corporate communications;
- Corporate strategy/planning and co-ordination;
- Crime and community safety;
- Customer services, access and engagement;
- Equalities and diversity;
- Families and communities;
- Future of public services and service integration; and
- Health.

Councillor Robin Millar, Cabinet Member for Families and Communities opened his presentation by thanking the Committee for the invitation. He then set out the broad areas of responsibility for (corporate communications; corporate policy; customer services; families and communities). The presentation also included facts and figures, and priorities for the coming year.

Members discussed the presentation in detail and asked a number of questions of the Cabinet Member and officers, to which comprehensive responses were provided.

In particular discussions were held on care and health in communities; evaluating the impact of our families and communities approach; community chest funding; community safety and domestic violence; Mildenhall bus station; and the role of Councillors around being more aware of their ward area and residents but not turning Councillors into social workers.

The Cabinet Member informed the Committee that the work of families and communities portfolio was about pre-prevention and how to help people deal with a variety of issues to stop them developing into something worse.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member for Families and Communities for his comprehensive presentation.

There being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the presentation by the Cabinet Member for Families and Communities.

73. **Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership Annual Report**

It is the duty of the Committee, as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee designated under the Police and Justice Act 2006, to scrutinise the work of the Partnership.

The Committee received Report No: OAS/FH/16/009, which updated Members on the community safety activity in West Suffolk, including the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership (WSCSP) from April 2015 to March 2016.

Over the past year the WSCSP continued to meet and discharge its statutory duties by carrying out an annual assessment of crime, producing an annual plan and carrying out Domestic Homicide Reviews, as required.

In May 2015, the WSCSP completed and published its partnership plan and project plan for identified community priorities for 2015-2016. Attached as Appendix A to the report, was the WSCSP project plan. Progress on the identified community concerns would be evaluated at the April 2016 meeting of the WSCSP.

The report also set out the work of the Strong and Safe Communities Group; the multi-agency Anti-Social Behaviour Group and the PREVENT Strategy, which was published by the Government in 2011. The PREVENT Strategy was part of the country's Counter Terrorism Strategy called CONTEST. The aim of the strategy was to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

Members considered the report and there being no decision required **noted** the contents of the report.

74. **Review and Revision of the Constitution**

As set out in the Council's Constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis would receive a report from the Monitoring Officer setting out minor amendments made arising from changes to legislation, changes to staffing structures/job descriptions or changes in terminology.

Report No: OAS/FH/16/010 set out minor amendments which had been undertaken by the Monitoring Officer under delegated authority from January to March 2016.

The Committee was advised that all Members of the Council had also been informed of the minor amendments made as part of the ongoing review and revision of the Constitution.

The Committee considered the report and there being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the minor amendments undertaken by the Monitoring Officer under delegated authority.

75. **Directed Surveillance Authorised Applications (Quarter 4)**

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order 2010 required that Members should scrutinise the authority's use of its surveillance powers on a quarterly basis.

The Monitoring Officer advised that in Quarter 4, no such surveillance had been authorised.

The Committee asked questions on various surveillance issues to which the Monitoring Officer duly responded.

There being no decisions required, the Committee **noted** the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act, Quarter 4 update.

76. **Decisions Plan: May 2016 - May 2017**

The Committee received Report No: OAS/FH/16/011, which requested that Members peruse the Cabinet Decisions Plan for the period May 2016 to May 2017, for which it would like further information on or which might benefit from the Committee's involvement.

The Committee considered the Decisions Plan for May 2016 to May 2017 and there being no decision required, the Committee **noted** the contents of the Decisions Plan.

77. **Work Programme Update**

The Committee received Report No: OAS/FH/16/012, which updated Members on the current status of its rolling work programme of items for scrutiny during 2016 (Appendix 1).

With regards to the work of the Joint Task and Finish Group on New Housing Development Sites, the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) advised members that following their last meeting on 14 December 2015, the Development Manager undertook to agree the details of the highways adoption conditions with the other Suffolk Authorities and Suffolk County Council. Whilst agreement had been established in principle, the details were yet to be agreed. Consequently, there was no final report to present at the present time. However, every effort would be made to report to the Committee at its next meeting on 9 June 2016.

Members were also advised that the Chairman had now received confirmation from the Suffolk County Council Portfolio Holder for Roads and Transport (Councillor James Finch) who had confirmed that he would be attending the meeting on 9 June 2016 with Phil Magill, Passenger Transport Operations Manager to discuss and answer questions from the Committee on "transport links for rural villages in Forest Heath".

The Committee considered the report, and there being no decision required, **noted** the contents.

The Meeting concluded at 7.40pm

Signed by:

Chairman