

**Performance Monitoring Scrutiny Panel held in The
Spotlight Room, The Hawth, Crawley, on 24 February 2015
at 6.30pm**



45. Present

Councillors: R G Burgess, C A Cheshire, C R Eade, M W Pickett, K Sudan, K J Trussell, W A Ward

46. Also in Attendance

Councillor: C J Mullins

47. Apologies for Absence

None

48. Officers Present

Paul Baker, Senior Leisure Officer
Peter Browning, Deputy Chief Executive
Heather Girling, Democratic Services Officer
Karen Hayes, Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits
Graham Rowe, Partnership Services Manager
Nigel Sheehan, Head of Partnership Services
Vicky Wise, Community Services Manager
Gail Yates, Revenues Business Manager

49. Representatives from Parkwood Theatres in Attendance

Tony Doherty, Managing Director - Parkwood Theatres
Dave Watmore, General Manager - The Hawth

50. Disclosure of Interest and Whipping Declarations

The following disclosures of interests were made by Members:-

Member	Minute Number	Subject	Type and Nature of Disclosure
Councillor C A Cheshire	Minute 52	Update on The Hawth management contract	Friend of The Hawth.

51. Notes and Matters Arising

The notes of the meetings held on [19 November 2014](#) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

52. Update on The Hawth management contract

Members received a brief presentation from representatives from Parkwood Theatres on the management contract together with the performance and changes that Parkwood Theatres had focused on recently, which included:

- Confirmation that the relationship with 'Evolution' for pantomime production would continue and discussions were already underway regarding the pantomime for 2016/2017.
- Parkwood is keen to continue the broad mix of quality programming that appeals to a wide community.
- It was highlighted that the Curzon cinema had received a mixed response upon opening. However with satellite installed in 2014 this has provided the opportunity to screen live and encore performances from both the RSC and ROH.
- The participatory classes have been extremely successful, particularly Sway Dance. The attendance increased from 2498 in 2013 to 5170 in 2014. Furthermore, the majority of those attending Sway Dance had not previously visited The Hawth, thus providing an opportunity to see the venue. Its popularity has resulted in some classes taking place on the main stage. Parkwood will be hosting the first South East Sway National Dance competition in 2015 and children from various classes have been given the opportunity to perform in professional shows.
- Partnership work with Community Arts Development has continued and this will proceed with the potential development of a youth theatre. It is hoped this will offer opportunities for local people and young talent.

Members held a question and answer session with the representatives from Parkwood Theatres. The issues raised and the key responses included:

- Curzon cinema. It was queried whether due to the incorporation of live and encore screenings whether this would affect the showings of other films. It was commented that there is a need to look at the quality of the productions and choose relevant films based on availability of film and dates. It was acknowledged that the screenings take place in a multi-purpose space and this was a compromise but did allow multiple use.
- Concerns raised over the ushers' uniform and perhaps it did not offer a visible presence. It was explained that a corporate uniform was introduced and it takes time for the branding to take effect. It was agreed that the staff look smart and professional and there are always fixed points to locate staff should the public require assistance.
- Support was received regarding the implementation of the items from the Access Officer audit. Parkwood had been very receptive to implementing the changes.
- External events. It was queried whether the change in contractual arrangements had impacted upon the external events such as the Mela and Folk Festival. It was commented that the format for the Folk Festival had changed for 2015. Additionally Community Arts Development work closely with the groups and organisations and facilitate wherever possible.
- Wi-fi. It was commented that the signal within The Hawth was an issue and together with the refurbishment of rooms this would be investigated.
- Concern regarding the condition of the table cloths and chairs. It was confirmed these were due to be renewed.

53. Transformation Update

Gail Yates, Revenues Business Manager provided an update on the 're-design phase' of the Benefits Systems Thinking Review.

The conclusions from the 'check phase' were:

- A lot of failure demand encountered, compared to 40% value demand (am I entitled? I'm reporting a change in circumstances), which resulted in significant waste.
- There was failure to meet some of the customers' nominal value. Achieving what matters to the customer is key.
- There are several system conditions, including legislation, ICT, working practices and the DWP.

Re-design of the service has focused on:

- Communicating the best way for the customer.
- Working on a case by case basis to meet individual needs.
- All assessors have autonomy to make decisions (ie no "hand off" and "single piece of flow").
- The changes in the process provides assessors with more confidence and knowledge.
- The number of 'touches' has reduced from 5 to 1.6 as a result of the system changes.

Discussion areas included:

- Training. It was queried if relevant training was provided for staff in liaising with customers, particularly around the refusal of claims. It was commented that a rapport is developed with customers and it is important to explain the reasons behind the decision. It was recognised that people have individuals' needs.
- It was queried whether the number of refusals/rejections had increased. It was noted that one aim is it make it easy for customers to find out if they are entitled and this is being developed further, including investigating other forms of communication. Officers are more accessible over the phone and as a result able to deal with more enquiries.
- Assessors are now contactable over the phone and able to investigate each individual case (eg appeal relating to JSA or ESA) as a "single piece of flow".

54. Quarterly Budget Monitoring Report Quarter 3 (2014-2015)

The Panel considered the report of the [FIN/354](#) of the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits which summarised the Council's outturn for the third quarter 2014-2015 for both revenue and capital spend. Discussions took place with the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits as follows:

- The General Fund shows a projected underspend of £802,000.
- The responsive repairs budget is currently £1m overspent at quarter 3 due to the on-going effects of the storm damage incurred last autumn/winter. Some storm damage work is now being charged to capital where significantly large works have taken place but have been carried out by the responsive repairs contractors. This reflects a change in the methods of working as the division between planned and responsive repairs is eroded. The impact of the change is being evaluated.
- The Council is receiving more council tax income and at the same time taking fewer claims to court. This results in lower court cost income of £50,000.
- In terms of capital expenditure, £26.4m has been spent up to the third quarter. It is projected that there will be capital expenditure of £41m in 2014/2015.
- There was a query within the Temporary Accommodation Acquisitions scheme, and

whether the proposed site for ten new units in Goffs Park Road was the 'Oakhurst Grange' site. It has since been confirmed by officers that this is not this site being purchased.

55. Quarterly Complaints Report Quarter 3 (2014-2015)

The Panel considered the report [PAT/24](#) of the Head of People and Technology, which detailed the different types of complaints and compliments received during Quarter 3.

Further discussions took place with the Deputy Chief Executive, who gave an overview of the report and explained:

- There has been a reduction in complaints as the impact of the new waste and recycling contract settles down.
- The number of missed bins has reduced. It was noted that the number of missed bins accounts for a small percentage of those actually emptied.
- The number of reviews where the customer was dissatisfied with the initial response had reduced. It was commented that most feedback is valuable and the issues are able to be resolved. However in rare instances, the Ombudsman can be used to investigate further.

56. Future of Performance Monitoring Scrutiny Panel

The Panel considered the report of the [OSC/235](#) of the Chair of PMSP. The paper proposed to cease having PMSP but replace its work with reports to Members' Information Bulletin together with the inclusion of the systems thinking reviews/updates into the OSC agenda.

It was recognised that since the Group had been established the use of Best Value performance indicators was no longer required.

It was felt by the majority of Members that the Group had lost its sense of value and recognised that the information compiled for the PMSP reports could be reported through other means thus improving efficiency, for example Members' Information Bulletin. In addition, there was the advantage of the Transformation programme and systems thinking reviews to be incorporated into the work of the OSC. It was highlighted that the amount of scrutiny was not being reduced.

Concerns were raised about the possibility of losing the opportunity to input into discussions and scrutinise issues. In particular the importance to continue to include updates from contractors and services areas/officers. However, it was commented that by incorporating the Transformation plan into the OSC this would actually increase the value of the OSC whilst evolving the scrutiny and review process. It was added that the OSC meets more regularly than the quarterly PMSP meetings and consequently there would be greater opportunity to address concerns. Additionally, separate scrutiny panels could be set up accordingly, whilst in line with Rule 8 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules, OSC Members may refer items relevant to the functions of the Commission (eg Allotments).

The majority of Members were supportive that PMSP be disbanded in favour of updates being provided in the Members' Information Bulletin and the systems thinking review work to be incorporated into the OSC. The decision would be made at the OSC on 16 March 2015, where the Commission would take into account the views of PMSP Members.

RESOLVED

That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission be recommended to disband the Performance Monitoring Scrutiny Panel with immediate effect based on section 2 in the report. Subject to agreement, the Governance Committee will be asked to amend the Constitution in relation to the Scrutiny Procedure Rules and Terms of Reference.

57. Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Panel concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

R G Burgess
Chair