

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission



Monday 16 March 2015 at 7.00p.m.

Present:

Councillor W A Ward (Chair)
Councillor K Sudan (Vice-Chair)
Councillors R G Burgess, C A Cheshire, I T Irvine and R A Lanzer

Also in Attendance:

Councillors S Joyce and P Smith

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Dr H S Bloom, K Brockwell, M G Jones and B A Smith

Officers Present:

Peter Browning Deputy Chief Executive
Heather Girling Democratic Services Officer
Lee Harris Chief Executive
Diana Maughan Head of Strategic Housing and Planning Services

81. Members' Disclosure of Interests and Whipping Declarations

The following declarations were made:

Member	Minute Number	Subject	Type and Nature of Disclosure
Councillor K Sudan	87	Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASC)	Personal interest – husband is a 'lay Member' of the Crawley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

No whipping declarations were made.

82. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on [9 February 2015](#) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

83. Public Question Time

There were six members of the public present at the Commission meeting. Northgate residents present were concerned about the proposed relocation of their Surgery to Cross Keys House in the Town Centre. The Commission received questions from Mr J Hopcroft and Mrs Q Hopcroft who both expressed their worries and concerns about the

proposed move and its detrimental effects for Northgate residents and other practice users. Concern was also expressed about the negative effect the move would have on the Northgate Chemist situated on the Northgate shopping parade.

Members of the Commission listened and expressed their thanks to Mr and Mrs Hopcroft for attending the meeting. Councillor Ward (Representative on the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee) provided a brief update. It was reported that consultation with the Crawley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), NHS England (Surrey and Sussex) and local Councillors (County and Borough) on changes to both Crawley Health Centre and Northgate Branch Surgery was continuing.

The Commission received a question from Mr D Probett, regarding the lease of Northgate Surgery and that the details appeared complex. Councillor Ward thanked Mr Probett for attending the Commission's meeting and for his comments. Councillor Ward added that the lease for the practice's Northgate Surgery premises in Woolborough Road is due to be renewed or cease in May 2015. It was also noted that the relocation site is the location of the Crawley Health Centre/Walk in Centre with the contract due to expire September 2015.

Members commented that there had appeared to be few opportunities for consultation regarding this issue, particularly as it had arisen previously in 2012. The Commission felt that after the consultation process had been completed that the Cabinet be requested to undertake a strategic view and agree an overall policy direction.

84. Queen's Square Environmental Improvement Scheme

The Commission considered report [PES/169](#) of the Head of Planning and Environmental Services, which sought approval for the design concept, together with delegated authority for approval for the final design and to appoint a contractor to construct the scheme.

A discussion took place with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development. Discussion areas included:

- Some concern expressed over the proposed water feature and the maintenance required to ensure its upkeep. It was added that being a hard-water area may contribute to the need for repairs. Reassurance was provided that the necessary information had been supplied to the design consultants and CBC Officers will be involved in the process.
- Query was raised regarding the costs incurred in relocating the bandstand together with its refurbishment.
- It was observed by some Members that the bandstand and 'dip' area had previously worked well as a performance area, and the relocation of the bandstand to the Memorial Gardens might restrict the viewing space in its new location. It was felt this might also initiate discussions surrounding permissible activities in the Memorial Gardens. In contrast, there was also an acknowledgement that the removal of the bandstand would expand the area within Queens Square for larger events as well as a variety of smaller activities. Altogether a very flexible use of public open space would be possible.
- Acknowledgement that the Martlets Tree will also be relocated and discussions have taken place with the artist.
- Recognition that work was underway to consult with the retail owners.
- Appreciation of the regeneration programme and improvements to the infrastructure that were being Planned and that should assist in encouraging footfall in the Square.
- Appreciation of the free flow of people that the new design would enable and encourage with Queens Square becoming the community hub of the town once more.

RESOLVED

That the Commission warmly agreed to support the recommendations to the Cabinet.

85. Tenure Determination for Council Housing Sites

The Commission considered report [SHAP/045](#) of the Head of Strategic Housing and Planning Services which sought approval for the tenure mix for two schemes currently being taken forward as part of the Council's approved Affordable Housing Delivery programme and requested delegated authority for decision making for future schemes.

During the discussion with the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Head of Strategic Housing and Planning Services, the following views were expressed:

- The recommendation for 100% social rented housing on the Goffs Park Depot site was supported.
- It was noted that density would be limited by highways constraints.
- There was recognition that the development of the Goffs Park Depot site would need to be sensitive to the characteristics of the surrounding area, with access onto the Old Horsham Road.
- It was noted that the need for affordable housing might outweigh the need for a capital receipt, as a balance needs to be made between available land and obtaining a capital receipt.
- The recommendation to replicate the approach taken in developing Phase 1 of the Breezehurst Drive site for phase 2 of the development, to include affordable rent was supported. There was appreciation that this would maintain consistency across both phases.
- Whilst the majority of Members welcomed the report, there was a request that the Cabinet consider a more mix tenure where possible, particularly where the capital receipt could be utilised on other sites.

RESOLVED

That the Commission in general applauded both schemes and agreed to support the recommendations to the Cabinet.

86. Review of Performance Monitoring Scrutiny Panel and revised operations for the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

The Commission considered report [OSC/234](#) of the Chair of Performance Monitoring Scrutiny Panel (PMSP). The report reviewed the Panel's work together with changes to the functions of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission (OSC). It was proposed to cease having PMSP but replace its work with reports to Members' Information Bulletin (MIB) together with the inclusion of the systems thinking reviews/updates into the work of the OSC.

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

A detailed discussion was undertaken with the Chair of PMSP and the Deputy Chief Executive. Discussion areas included:

- Acknowledgement from some Members that the quarterly budget monitoring and complaints reports could be incorporated into the MIB. However worries were expressed that this could be an inadequate and inferior form of communicating information, with no guarantee that the data would be full and thus could be edited.
- Concern that with the addition of the transformation programme there might be a loss in the opportunity to scrutinise services, particularly at a 'grass roots' level. It was felt that reviewing the transformation programme might not be as robust. In contrast it was commented that PMSP had not demonstrated effective scrutiny and the annual transformation programme would allow OSC to have a bigger input into the planned work for reviewing services. It was also noted that systems thinking challenges current ways of working and might require an alternative approach to scrutiny.
- Support for being able to scrutinise and challenge in a meaningful way, either via all Member seminars, inviting Member attendance at OSC or the potential to amalgamate Policy Development Forums (PDFs) into the work of the OSC. It was noted that all Members currently receive the OSC agendas and can attend each meeting and that additionally PDFs are only activated when required.
- Acknowledgement that the scrutiny function needs to be robust and add value. Scrutiny should review policies and services to ensure it has the intended effect.
- Acknowledgement that previous OSC agendas had included discussions with Cabinet Members together with the Chief Executive. It is proposed these are to be reintroduced for the new OSC work programme.
- Concern expressed by the majority of Members present that the changes could result in a general reduction of Members' input and in consequence their ability to fully exercise their democratic role if various sub-committees or groups were disbanded. There was also a proposal expressed to extend the OSC Membership from the existing 10 Members to 12.
- Support for deferring a decision until further discussion had taken place. It was agreed that a workshop would be convened consisting of those OSC Members in attendance, the Deputy Chief Executive and Democratic Services Officer to undertake an in-depth discussion to review scrutiny within a wider remit and how it can add value. The findings would then be presented to OSC for a final decision on the future of PMSP and revised operations of the OSC.

RESOLVED

That a workshop be convened consisting of those OSC Members in attendance, the Deputy Chief Executive and Democratic Services Officer to undertake an in-depth discussion to review scrutiny within a wider remit and how it can add value. A report to be presented to OSC for a final decision on the future of PMSP and revised operations of the OSC

87. Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASC)

An update was provided by Councillor Ward on the Langley Green hospital. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspected the Hospital in January 2015 and since then improvements have been made. Whilst the Trust recognises that good progress has been made at Langley Green Hospital, there is still further work to do and it is important to establish how improvements can be sustained over the long term. The Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust is planning to commission further external reviews in 2015. Councillors Ward and BA Smith as Crawley Members of HASC, had been asked and invited to visit the Langley Green Hospital in the near future.

Discussions are ongoing in relation to the proposed relocation of Northgate surgery and it was recognised that residents' concerns needed to be acknowledged.

88. Scrutiny Panels

Fairness Commission Scrutiny Panel

The last meeting was held on 19 February 2015 and an update was provided by Councillor Cheshire, in the absence of the Chair. The Panel has devised several possible models as to future provision and is now consulting views from both political groups, together with those of CCVS and CAB in advance of the Panel's next meeting on 9 April. This will assist in ascertaining the viability of a Fairness Commission and whether there would be value in drawing further information together to understand the needs and assist in steering priorities and future partnership working.

Performance Monitoring Scrutiny Panel (PMSP)

The last meeting was held on 24 February 2015 to discuss the performance of The Hawth onsite with Parkwood Theatres, together with a systems thinking update on Benefits.

89. Forward Plan – 1 April 2015 and Provisional List of Reports for the Commission's following Meetings

The Commission considered the latest version of the Forward Plan and the provisional lists of reports for future meetings. The referrals included:

June or July 2015

- Review of Working Groups, Action Groups, Policy Development Forums and Seminars

July 2015

- Budget Strategy 2016/17-2020/21
- Treasury Management Outturn 2014-2015
- Five Year Business Plan for Crawley's Adventure Playgrounds.
- Five Year Business Plan for Tilgate Park and Nature Centre.

90. Closure of Meeting

The meeting ended at 9.17pm.

W A WARD
Chair