

Crawley Borough Council



Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission Monday 5 September 2016 at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillor B A Smith (Chair)
Councillor R G Burgess (Vice-Chair)
Councillors T G Belben, Dr H S Bloom, C A Cheshire, I T Irvine, T Rana, K Sudan
and L Vitler

Also in Attendance:

Councillor M G Jones

Mr J G Smith MBE, Honorary Freeman and Alderman

Apologies for Absence: Councillors M L Ayling and R A Lanzer

Officers Present:

Lindsay Adams Community Development Manager
Jos Berreen Benefits Case Officer
Heather Girling Democratic Services Officer
Lee Harris Chief Executive
Karen Hayes Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits

21. Members' Disclosure of Interests and Whipping Declarations

The following disclosures of interests were made by Members:-

Member	Minute Number	Subject	Type and Nature of Disclosure
Councillor Dr H S Bloom	26	Cabinet Member Discussion with the Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Community Engagement	Personal Interest – Wife is a Trustee of Crawley Community Voluntary Service

22. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on [27 June 2016](#) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

23. Public Question Time

No questions from the public were asked.

24. Transformation Update – Benefits Redesign

The Commission received an update from the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits and the Benefits Case Officer on the Benefits System Thinking Review.

The main conclusions from the ‘check phase’ were:

- There was a disproportionate amount of evidence being requested.
- A large burden was being placed on customers.
- Letters were being issued that were not easy to understand.

As a result of the ‘redesign’ several changes were made to the system:

- There were now individual caseworkers allocated to customers, involved in the process “end to end” ensuring one contact for the entire process.
- The footfall throughout the “face to face” area had reduced and assessments were being completed more swiftly.
- The team shared learning and all the information was held in one place as a result of improved technology. There was recognition that Systems Thinking had changed the team’s thinking, behaviour and as a result improved performance.

During the discussion, the following points were expressed:

- There was recognition that assigning individual caseworkers was helpful to customers.
- It was considered beneficial that information and communication had been simplified.
- Real time information allowed for improved tracking of fraudulent claims.

RESOLVED

That the Commission welcomed the presentation. The Chair thanked officers for their contribution and attendance at the Commission.

25. Safer Crawley Partnership Annual Review 2015-2016 and Priorities for 2016-17

The Commission considered report [CEx/46](#) with the Chair of the Safer Crawley Partnership and the Community Development Manager, which provided the annual performance report of the Community Safer Partnership along with the future priorities.

During the discussion, the following points were expressed:

- The Safer Crawley Partnership priorities for 2016/2017 had been agreed as issues for Crawley based on consultation with partnership agencies, stakeholder events and having identified the emerging issues.
- Recognition that cyber-enabled crimes were increasing and there was a new Cybercrime Unit being established by the Police and Crime Commissioner to tackle these issues.
- There was an appreciation that the Community Mental Health Social Worker recruited within the NASB Team had resulted in positive outcomes.

- Acknowledgement that safeguarding awareness was being instructed throughout institutions and agencies in relation to child sex exploitation. CSE awareness training had previously been offered to all licensed taxi/private hire drivers in Crawley. There has been approximately 25% take up from taxi drivers and further opportunities to attend the training would be offered later in the year.
- Reduction in speeding was still considered an important issue and was now co-ordinated through Sussex Safer Roads Partnership.
- Members acknowledged the specific offences that had increased since the previous year including noting a rise in sexual offences and supported preventative measures including various approaches such as community safety booklet and working with Trading Standards. Members suggested that self-defence classes in schools might be a good preventative measure, however it was recognised that the latter would require funding and resources.
- The Street Community was identified as a priority for the Partnership as this had become a prevalent issue over the last few years. A multi-agency approach provided necessary help, assistance and working together to move people on while ensuring they were fully aware of how they could access a range of support available. However, some individuals already had pending homelessness applications and offers of accommodation in other local authority areas and had no connection to Crawley. In this respect, partner agencies had offered necessary support wherever possible. The Partnership worked with different group and agencies to discuss the services to identify the options best suited for individuals. The 'alternative giving' campaign had been a sensitive but successful approach.
- Intelligence gathering would continue to assist in the Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) approach by the joint Sussex and Surrey Police and Crime Commissioners SOC Steering Group. This work was supported by WSCC multi-agency partnership working.
- Clarification was sought on the police performance year comparison and whether the trends were peculiar to Crawley.

RESOLVED

That the report be welcomed and Members looked forward to seeing the next report in a year's time.

26. **Cabinet Member Discussion with the Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Community Engagement**

The Commission noted the brief update given by Councillor Jones on his portfolio and questioned him on a variety of other issues relating to his [portfolio](#).

The following topics were discussed:

- With references made to 'public protection', Councillor Jones noted that his role included the Chair of the Safer Crawley Partnership, Community Safety Improvement Programme (COMSIP) budget and overview changes to the Fire and Rescue Services. It also involved regular meetings with Chief Inspector Padwick and holding a position on the Police and Crime Panel.
- COMSIP was intended to secure a range of small-scale physical improvements to the built environment with the objective to reduce crime, fear of crime, and fear of anti-social behaviour. If a scheme was considered to be feasible and cost-effective, the council contacts residents local to the scheme, inviting comments to assess whether the scheme was supported. If the community safety

improvements suggested at consultation was widely supported, the scheme was added to the programme of projects.

- In terms of neighbourhood forums, Councillor Jones commented that it was important to engage with the community at all levels. Many forums work with the council and provide an effective feedback mechanism. Members acknowledged that communication and consultation can prove challenging but lead to effective outcomes.
- It was recognised that working with the voluntary sector features in many different activities. For instance the establishing of the community grants process and the Community Needs Partnership. Councillor Jones noted the regular work with Crawley CVS and following the request for more participation into the Town Twinning partnership, would welcome further work on Town Twinning if appropriate.

RESOLVED

That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission thanked Councillor Jones for attending and for the informative discussion that had ensued.

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

[South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust Unified Recovery Plan](#)

- SECamb would work with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to resolve the issues it identified with a Remedial Action Plan being put in place.
- Issues appeared to be linked to staff and resources.
- Report to be taken back to HASC when further information and evidence was available.

[Sussex Patient Transport Service](#)

- Locality based improvement plans were being implemented.
- An independent enquiry report would be circulated to members of the HASC when published.

[Central Sussex Stroke Services Review](#)

- It was proposed to develop a fully compliant Hyper Acute Stroke Unit with a co-located Acute Stroke Unit at Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton, with no HASU or ASU provided at Princess Royal Hospital at Haywards Heath.

[Royal Sussex County Hospital](#)

- The [Care Quality Commission](#) (CQC) had rated Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton as inadequate and NHS Improvement had placed the Trust in Special Measures.
- A detailed recovery plan would be produced and further details would be reported to HASC.

28. Update on Scrutiny Panels

Review of Democratic Structures

Membership: Councillors: B A Smith (Chair), Dr H S Bloom, R G Burgess, I T Irvine, T Lunnon, K Sudan and K J Trussell

The next meeting of the Panel was scheduled for 15 September 2016.

Crawley Leisure Card

Membership: Councillors: M L Ayling (Chair), R S Fiveash, F Guidera, B McCrow and R Sharma

The last meeting of the Panel took place on 11 July 2016 and it is anticipated the final report will be reported to OSC and Cabinet in October 2016.

29. Forward Plan – October 2016 and Provisional List of Reports for the following meetings of the Commission

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

October 2016

Article 4 Direction for Manor Royal (Light Industrial to Residential (Provisional Referral)

Affordable Housing Delivery Programme: Redevelopment of 257/259 Ifield Road & Budget for Woolborough Road (Provisional Referral)

Crawley 2030: Supplementary Planning Documents (Full Referral)

30. Closure of Meeting

The meeting ended at 9.57pm.

B A Smith
Chair