

Crawley Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Agenda for the **Overview and Scrutiny Commission** which will be held in **Committee Rooms A & B**, Town Hall, Crawley, on **Monday 9 January 2017** at **7.00p.m**

PLEASE BRING THE FORWARD PLAN TO THIS MEETING

Nightline Telephone No. 07881 500 227



Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Membership:

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

Please contact Heather Girling (Legal and Democratic Services Division) if you have any queries regarding this agenda.

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Emergency procedure for meetings will be circulated to Members and visitors attending this meeting. Please familiarise yourself with these procedures and the location of fire exits.

The order of business may change at the Chair's discretion

Part A Business – (Open to the Public)

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Members' Disclosures of Interest and Whipping Declarations

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, members of the Council are reminded that it is a requirement to declare interests where appropriate.

Members must also declare if they are subject to their party group whip in relation to any items under consideration.

3. Minutes

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission held on 28 November 2016 (**Enclosure A**) and consider any matters arising.

4. Public Question Time

To answer any questions or hear brief statements from the public which are relevant to the items on this agenda. The period will end after **15 minutes** or later at the Chair's discretion.

5. Transformation Update – Planning “Redesign”

To receive a presentation and verbal update on the Planning Systems Thinking Review.

6. Transformation Update – Sheltered Housing “Redesign”

To receive a presentation and verbal update on the Sheltered Housing Systems Thinking Review.

7. Cabinet Member Discussion with the Cabinet Member for Housing

Councillor Stephen Joyce has been invited to attend the Commission for a general discussion on the Housing Portfolio and his duties. A copy of the Portfolio Holder's responsibilities, as set out in the Council's Constitution, is attached as **Enclosure B**.

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

To receive a brief update on the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASC).

9. Forward Plan – 1 February and Provisional List of Reports for the Commission's following Meetings

To consider any requests for items to be referred to the Commission.

10. Supplemental Agenda

Any urgent item(s) complying with Section 100(B) of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Crawley Borough Council



Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission Monday 28 November 2016 at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillor B A Smith (Chair)
Councillors M L Ayling, T G Belben, Dr H S Bloom, C A Cheshire, I T Irvine,
R A Lanzer, T Rana and K Sudan

Also in Attendance:

Councillors P K Lamb and M Pickett

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors R G Burgess and L Vitler
Lee Harris Chief Executive

Officers Present:

Tony Baldock	Environmental Health Manager
Jos Berreen	Benefits Case Officer
Heather Girling	Democratic Services Officer
Karen Hayes	Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits
Paul Windust	Corporate Accounting & Treasury Services Manager

54. Death of Honorary Freeman and Alderman Jim Smith MBE

The Commission observed one minute's silence in memory of former Councillor, Mayor and Honorary Freeman and Alderman Jim Smith MBE. Jim sadly passed away on 9 November 2016.

55. Members' Disclosure of Interests and Whipping Declarations

No disclosures of interests or whipping declarations were made.

56. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on [7 November 2016](#) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

57. Public Question Time

No questions from the public were asked.

58. Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2016-2017

The Commission considered report [FIN/396](#) of the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits which provided an update on the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for the first two quarters of 2016/2017. The Council prioritises its investments as being security of capital, liquidity and yield.

During the discussion with the Leader, the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits, and the Corporate Accounting and Treasury Services Manager the following topics were discussed:

- The breach of investment limits was noted.
- Recognition that repurchase agreements were a form of low risk secure lending and loans to housing associations can provide significant yield when compared to local authorities.
- Support that Repurchase Agreements and Housing Associations investments be appended to the 2016/17 Annual Investment Strategy.

RESOLVED

That the report and recommendations to the Cabinet be noted.

59. Review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme

The Commission considered report [FIN/399](#) of the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits. The Council introduced a local council tax reduction scheme in April 2013. The scheme is means tested and determines the amount by which a taxpayer's council tax will be reduced. Due to Government welfare reform changes it was appropriate for the Council to consider whether it wished to revise the current scheme. The report considered some possible amendments to the current scheme, which, if agreed, would come into effect from 1 April 2017.

During the discussion with the Leader, the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits and Benefits Case Officer, Members main comments included:

- Disappointment was voiced that a response had not been received during the consultation period from the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner.
- Reference was made to appendix 3 in the report to the "estimated additional cost avoided to WSCC and Sussex Police" that should apply to options 1-4.
- Members sought and gained clarification on a number of matters raised including the option 4 proposal, the calculation of housing benefit allowance and the council tax reduction applied, particularly for those working non-standard hour contracts.
- Concern was expressed over the complex nature of the report and as a result there were mixed views from Members in terms of considering the options for recommendation. Whilst one Member recommended options 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5c, the majority of Members favoured the principal concept to support those options that had a less negative impact on those most vulnerable.
- The Commission took the opportunity to thank all the officers concerned for the work undertaken and commitment in the Benefits Service. Particular reference was made to Karen Hayes (Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits) and team members including Jos Berreen (Benefits Case Officer).

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report and supported the principal concept to support those options that had a less negative impact on those most vulnerable.

60. Review of Statement of Licensing Policy Gambling Act 2005

The Commission considered report [PES/222](#) of the Head of Economic and Environmental Services. The report documented the proposed amendments to the Council's revised Statement of Licensing Policy (Gambling Act 2005), which had been generated from responses following a 12 week public consultation exercise that concluded on 25 September 2016.

During the discussion with the Environmental Health Manager, Members expressed the following comments:

- Support that the policy achieved a balance between respecting access to premises and protecting the rights of individuals.
- Clarification sought on the terms of reference for licensing and licensing-sub committees.
- Acknowledgement that the statutory guidance now included local area profiles and operators risk assessments. The latter of which would include premises lone-working, a requirement of the Health and Safety at Work Act.

RESOLVED

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

61. Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policy 2016

The Commission was informed that this item had been deferred with prior agreement of the Chair. The amended policy required further consultation and review. It would now feature on the OSC agenda in early 2017.

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

The recent HASC meeting took place in November 2016. Key items of discussion included the Patient Transport Service contract move from Coperforma to South Central Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust (SCAS). A further update would be provided at the next meeting.

63. Forward Plan – January 2017 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:

Crawley Town Hall
Future Delivery of Crawley's Building Control Service
Sheltered Housing Service Review
Local Development Scheme (LDS) – provisional referral

64. Closure of Meeting

The meeting ended at 7.57pm.

B A Smith
Chair

**Crawley Borough Council Constitution
Cabinet Member for Housing
Portfolio Responsibilities**



Cabinet Member for Housing

Deputy Leader of the Council

Crawley Homes - Landlord Role

The provision, management and control of Council dwellings including rents

Management and development of Council land held for housing purposes

Housing administration

Control of empty housing properties

Housing Strategic Role (including statutory functions)

Provision of housing advice, homelessness service and maintenance of housing register

Assessment of housing need and management of Housing Strategy

Release of funds to Housing Associations under the LAHAG programme in respect of schemes included in the approved capital programme

Unfit properties and houses in need of repair and improvement, houses in multiple occupation, the abatement of overcrowding and improvement grants

Joint working with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development to meet the housing needs of the borough

General oversight of local housing issues

Liaison and Joint Working with Social Services and Health (in relation to housing issues)

Council Tax Reductions and Housing Benefit

Responding to the Government's Welfare Reform agenda with the Leader of the Council

Specific Delegations:

- (1) Power to vary the rent of dwellings and garages held on the Housing Revenue Account
- (2) The approval of variations to the affordable housing requirements specified in Core Strategy Policy H5 for any housing scheme where it has been evidenced that scheme viability cannot support meeting these requirements in full, or where changes in housing needs of housing policy may justify any variation to the percentage and/or tenure mix being sought
- (3) To discharge the functions of the Council in relation to the appropriation of surplus land (excluding residential dwellings) from the Housing Revenue Account for a different use/purpose