

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Monday, 2 October 2017 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

M L Ayling, Dr H S Bloom, C A Cheshire, I T Irvine, R A Lanzer, T Lunnon, K Sudan and L Vitler

Also in Attendance:

Councillor S J Joyce and B J Burgess

Officers Present:

Heather Girling	Democratic Services Officer
Nick Hobbs	Housing Needs Manager
Clem Smith	Head of Economic & Environmental Services

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor B A Smith, T G Belben, R G Burgess and T Rana

Absent:

Councillor A Pendlington

24. Appointment of Chair

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, it was agreed that Councillor Cheshire chair the meeting.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Cheshire be appointed Chair for the duration of this meeting.

25. Disclosures of Interest and Whipping Declarations

The following disclosures were made:

Councillor	Item and Minute	Type and Nature of Disclosure
Councillor R A Lanzer	Proposed Crawley Growth Programme (Minute 30)	Personal Interest – Member of WSCC

26. Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the meetings of the Commission held on 4 September 2017 and 6 September 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

27. Public Question Time

No questions from the public were asked.

28. Amending the Housing Allocations Scheme

The Commission considered report SHAP/60 with the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Housing Needs Manager. The report requested approval for amendments to the Allocations Policy that would increase the prevention of homelessness through use of the housing register.

During the discussion, the following points were expressed:

- The quota system and sub-quota percentage figures identified in Appendix One should read 'up to 80%' and 'up to 20%'.
- Confirmation obtained that where homeless preventions were made via the housing register, the five year local connection criteria would apply.
- Recognition that alternative options for temporary accommodation (TA) were regularly considered by officers and that opportunities to increase the Council's TA portfolio was ongoing.
- Waiting times can be difficult to predict as the Council operates a Choice Based Lettings policy, whereby applicants bid (register their interest) for the accommodation they want, being able to exercise choice.
- "Universal Credit" was not seen to be having an adverse impact as currently in Crawley this only applies to new claimants who are single.
- Recognition that liaison to prevent homelessness regularly occurred with stakeholders, registered providers and landlords.
- Acknowledgement that the changes to the scheme would prevent an immediate and significant rise in homeless applicants in nightly paid temporary accommodation and would give an increased priority (to how it is now) to applicants who were at threat of homelessness.
- Whilst supportive of the report it was recommended that the date for implementation should be agreed in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing.

Recommendations:

That the Commission agreed to support the recommendations to the Cabinet but requested the date of implementation should be agreed in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing.

29. Community Infrastructure Levy - Governance, Prioritisation and Spend Proposals

The Commission considered report PES/257 with the Head of Economic and Environmental Services. The report presented options for the governance, allocation and spend of Community Infrastructure Levy monies and sought approval for the preferred options.

Members made the following comments:

- Clarity was provided over the current “Crowdfunder” guidance and eligibility criteria.
- Confirmation provided over the capital programme together with the proposed priority strategic infrastructure schemes.
- Support for a clear explanation as to how the “Crowdfunder” platform would work which would assist project owners in submitting proposals.
- Recognition that the use of the Crowdfunding for the Neighbourhood Improvement Strand was not a prerequisite for neighbourhood specific proposals, as town wide schemes could be identified. A moderating process would be undertaken to ensure a balanced approach, as each project needed to demonstrate a tangible benefit to the town.
- Acknowledgement that there was the option to promote the “Crowdfunder” platform to companies from a corporate social responsibility perspective.
- Confirmation provided over the capital programme together with the proposed priority strategic infrastructure schemes.
- Acknowledgement that liaison was taking place with Community Development to assist in capacity building and to complement the existing grants programme.
- Support for the scheme together with the review but the Commission felt it would be beneficial to provide a review report after 6 months of operation.
- It was recommended that an equivalent offline version should be made available and in addition that an Equalities Impact Assessment was completed.
- It was recommended that the CIL Steering Group included non-Cabinet Members.

Recommendations:

That the Commission supported the recommendations to the Cabinet with the proposals identified above.

30. Proposed Crawley Growth Programme 2017-21

The Commission considered report PES/259 with the Head of Economic and Environmental Services. The report sought approval for the council’s contribution from the Town Centre Regeneration Fund to support the Crawley Economic Growth Programme.

During the discussion, the following points were expressed:

- Confirmation was provided regarding the capital funding and individual growth programme schemes including highways, connectivity improvements for residents and commuters and community space.
- Recognition that there was an opportunity to work with the Employ Crawley team to facilitate access to job opportunities throughout the programme.
- Acknowledgement that there was an aim to increase public transport capacity and further work would be undertaken throughout Manor Royal. It was noted that publicity of the improvements would be paramount.

- Clarity that the project partners for the programme involved key stakeholders and partners which included WSCC, Manor Royal BID and 'Metrobus'.
- Support for the scheme, which would result in positive outcomes and investment for the town.

Recommendations:

That the Commission supported the recommendations to the Cabinet.

31. Overview & Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2017-2018

Members reviewed report OSC/260 presented by the Chair of the Commission. The report contained the findings from the Commission's Workshop which had been examined and discussed in depth.

The Commission reviewed each of the topics:

Town Centre Parking -

The information already obtained would be circulated imminently however other material was available on the WSCC website.

Review of Outside Bodies and Organisations –

There were mixed views regarding whether to proceed with a scrutiny review. The topic had been heavily debated at the OSC Workshop. Some Members again thought that there would be benefit in clarifying roles, communications, reporting arrangements in addition to being able to survey Members, Link Officers, outside organisations and assess the current administrative process to identify improvements. However other views were voiced that perhaps information could be gained via alternative methods (Members' seminar or officer's report) as opposed to a full scrutiny panel.

It was moved by Councillor Lunnon, seconded by Councillor Irvine that a vote be taken on whether to approve the topic for a scrutiny review. As a result of the vote, the Overview and Scrutiny Commission approved 'Review of Outside Bodies and Organisations' for a scrutiny review.

New Town Hall Reception –

It was acknowledged that Commission Members would be in receipt of a presentation and update report prior to the end of the calendar year.

Identifying and Monitoring HMOs –

Members noted that the update report would be programmed into the OSC Work Programme, provisionally set for early 2018.

Housing Associations –

Members noted that the update report would be programmed into the OSC Work Programme, provisionally set for early 2018. This would allow Members to seek additional information and gain further information on the work of Crawley Homes and Housing Associations.

RESOLVED

1. That the following was agreed following the OSC Workshop for each of the proposed topics:

Town Centre Parking –

- That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission does not proceed with a full scrutiny review.
- That a 'one-off' update report on the original recommendations and actions to-date/so far to be provided to OSC on the Town Centre Parking Scrutiny Panel.
- That further information be obtained on the Chichester and Crawley road space audits, with particular relation to the scope.

Review of Outside Bodies and Organisations –

- That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission approves the topic for a scrutiny review.
- That nominations are sought (via Democratic Services) for the membership for the Panel, based on 5 Members (i.e. 3 Labour and 2 Conservative Group Members in accordance with political proportionality).
- That a Chair for the new Scrutiny Panel be established.

New Town Hall Reception –

- That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission defers a full scrutiny review due to the information and evidence already in place.
- That the OSC receive a report or presentation from the Head of People and Technology setting out the setting out the research, information and survey results together with feedback from Town Hall WG site visits which would allow members to 'scrutinise' the information available allowing members to 'scrutinise' the information available. This can be programmed into the 2017-2018 work plan once the lectern trial approach has been completed.

Identifying and Monitoring HMOs –

- That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission does not proceed with a scrutiny review on Identifying and Monitoring HMOs as this is an area governed by legislative requirements that the Council has to operate within.
- That a 'one off' report is provided to OSC by the Head of Strategic Housing and Planning Services setting out the legislation and how the Council responds.
- That non-Commission Members be invited to attend the relevant meeting of the OSC (with particular reference to members of the Planning Committee given the nature of the suggestion proposed).

Housing Associations –

- That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission defers a full scrutiny review on Housing Associations.
- It is recommended that the OSC receive an update on the work within Crawley Homes and further information on Housing Associations at one of its meetings. This would allow Members to seek additional information.

2. That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission Work Programme for 2017-2018 be agreed as set out in report OSC/260 with an acknowledgement that it would remain flexible to consider other items throughout the year.

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

An update was provided from the most recent HASC meeting. Key items of discussion included:

- ***Patient Transport Service - Now undertaken by South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SCAS). The performance of the service was improving although it was noted that there were still some areas requiring attention.***
- ***Clinically Effective Commissioning – A new regional NHS initiative which aimed to improve the effectiveness and value for money of healthcare services by ensuring that commissioning decisions across the region were consistent, that they reflect best clinical practice, and that they represent the most sensible use of limited resources. It was felt there was a benefit in all the CCGs working together to develop common policies and approaches.***

33. Forward Plan - November and Provisional List of Reports for the Commission's following Meetings

The Commission confirmed the following reports:

- Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2017-2018
- District Heat Network
- Town Centre Signage and Wayfinding
- Future Delivery of Crawley's Building Control Service
- Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) – provisional referral

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.45 pm

Chair