

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Monday, 27 September 2021 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

T G Belben (Chair)

K Khan (Vice-Chair)

M L Ayling, R G Burgess, R A Lanzer, S Mullins, A Nawaz, A Pendlington and S Piggott

Also in Attendance:

Councillor B J Burgess, R D Burrett and M G Jones

Officers Present:

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Ian Duke | Deputy Chief Executive |
| Heather Girling | Democratic Services Officer |
| Matt Lethbridge | Community Services Manager |
| Mez Matthews | Democratic Services Officer |
| Kate Wilson | Head of Community Services |

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor B A Smith

1. Disclosures of Interest and Whipping Declarations

The following disclosures were made:

| Councillor | Item and Minute | Type and Nature of Disclosure |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Councillor R A Lanzer | Community Grants Procedure & Outcomes Framework (Minute 4) | Personal Interest – Member of WSCC |
| Councillor R A Lanzer | HASC (Minute 6) | Personal Interest – Member of WSCC |
| Councillor R A Lanzer | HASC (Minute 6) | Personal Interest – WSCC Cabinet Member for Public Health and Wellbeing |

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 6 September 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. Public Question Time

No questions from the public were asked.

4. Community Grants Procedure & Outcomes Framework

The Commission considered report [HCS/29](#) of the Head of Community Services. The report sought approval for the future process and outcomes framework relating to the community grants programme.

During the discussion with the Cabinet Member for Public Protection & Community Engagement, Head of Community Services and Community Services Manager, Councillors made the following comments:

- Confirmation was provided on the proposed new grants procedure and outcomes framework as set out in report [HCS/29](#). The grants process was recognised as being important for organisations as pandemic restrictions eased.
- Verification was provided on the application process and the criteria being applied, focusing on equally rated key priority areas.
- Confirmation that the priorities and outcomes for the new grants programme would be able to be revised periodically as required as there may be a need to adapt to changes in funding and ways of working.
- It was recognised that the application process had been streamlined with a 'simplified' version for the small grants application. Ultimately, the application process for strategic grants would require a greater level of detail than those applying to the small grants but both processes would be predominantly online. Groups would make regular contact prior to submitting applications with officers from Community Development offering support, which would continue throughout the funding process.
- Acknowledgement that the officers' commitment, negotiation and support had been a continuing factor in the success the programme over its many years, building the engagement with the voluntary sector and outside organisations.
- Explanations were sought and obtained on the details regarding the funding pots and budget provision.
- Monitoring reports would continue to be a requirement (quarterly, annually and end of project) so as to ensure the grant was spent as intended, together with action in place if it was spent fraudulently.
- Confirmation was provided on the revised Countywide 'Community Advice and Support Service' (CASS) which would remain as a jointly commissioned service. This would provide for an information and advice service such as currently provided by Citizens Advice West Sussex to be delivered in Crawley. WSCC would lead the countywide procurement process.
- Confirmation was provided on the crowdfunding agreement, particularly as it was commented that crowdfunding may generate significant interest. Currently there was an expectation for an organisation to reach a threshold before funding was released and if that was not reached the organisation would be directed to the small grants scheme. It was recognised that other alternative (external) funding

opportunities may be available for organisations. However, the council would still be looking to assist in signposting.

- Recognition that generally the feedback from the voluntary sector had been one of understanding with regards to the council's position. It was acknowledged there were many groups and organisations within the town and it would be useful for councillors to be aware of which groups were in receipt of funding within their wards.
- There was a need to ascertain the impact on various groups and also promote the grants scheme particularly through the community, through different media, other funding bodies and networking opportunities.

RESOLVED

That the Commission notes the report and requests that the views expressed during the debate, are fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

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

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

The following topics were discussed:

- Having recently returned to the position of Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Community Engagement it was welcoming to be back to celebrate the community spirit in Crawley.
- The portfolio covered a variety of services including most recently the unveiling of a war memorial at St Johns Church to the most recent Crawley Pride event in Goffs Park which was an extremely successful event.
- As part of Fostering Interest in Local Government it was queried if any events would be taking place as part of Local Democracy Week (11-17 October). It was confirmed that further discussions were currently underway.
- Acknowledgement that the OSC would receive its annual update on the Safer Crawley Partnership at its November meeting. Meetings with the Civil Military Partnership had recommenced following the easing of restrictions.
- Details were provided on the structure of the Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour Team and services provided in relation to ASB.
- It was noted it would be beneficial to have a representation on the amount of cybercrime occurring within the town, particularly for the Safer Crawley Partnership update.

RESOLVED

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

6. Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee (HASC)

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

A new system had been set up to monitor performance in the various sectors of WSCC's remit. Key areas of scrutiny for each portfolio included

- Will the new format enable effective scrutiny?
- Effective use of measures in place.
- Measures which are most critical to the committee's focus.
- Management of corporate risk.
- Identifying specific areas for action or response within the portfolio.

- Issues requiring further scrutiny.

The report focussed on highlighting situations within the different portfolios that impacted on delivering the 4 Council priorities.

- Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations
- A sustainable and prosperous economy.
- Helping people and communities fulfil their potential.
- Making best use of resources.

The issue of tackling climate change underpinned all the work. The reports were the first under the new system. There were pressures on both the Adult Services Portfolio and the Public Health and Wellbeing Portfolio and in the coming months the key performance indicators would be considered to see how areas of influence within portfolios were performing and the reports would be published quarterly.

The substantive item from the agenda concerned a report from the Sussex Health and Care Partnership on Covid 19 recovery and restoration of health services for West Sussex residents. Major points included:

- Matters were challenging because of Covid 19 and continued to be so.
- There was evidence of good collaborative working – within the top 10 decil nationally.
- There had been greater elective response including liaison with private providers.
- Integrated services were being developed.
- There was no mention in the report of the role of patient groups in helping to drive services forward.

Operational Response to Covid 19

- 12-15 were being worked on.
- There was a need to separate dosage figures for care homes between residents and staff.

Restoration of Services

- There had been some problems with communicating the position regarding the restoration of services to people.
- Flu vaccine rates had improved on previous years.
- Access to GPs was still a problem – the situation had improved but there was still a lot to do. However, West Sussex was among the best countrywide.
- The default position should not be the emergency services.
- It was important that face to face GP referral improves.

Urgent Emergency Care

- Emergency care had remained open throughout the pandemic but great pressures remain particularly on Walk In Centres and Urgent Treatment Centres

Hospital Elective Treatment

- There was no mention of the Ambulance Service in the report.
- It was important that working with patient groups continued.
- There was a need to keep an eye on acute services.
- Any staff shortages needed to be addressed.

Cancer

- Referrals had increased
- Work was on-going concerning cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

Mental Health

- Need for greater mental health support in schools.
- Expert advice was now going in.

Transformation of Mental Health Services

- Community mental health services were at the heart of the NHS long term plan – developing new and integrated models of primary and community health care.

Primary Care (GP Practices)

- Very high levels of demand
- GP practices never closed but worked in a different way.

- All forms of appointment (face to face, telephone, online) were available.
- There has been a slow but steady increase in face to face referrals.

Winter Planning

- The plan was a dynamic document.
- Winter 2021-2022 likely to be very challenging.
- Work was taking place to build in lessons learned from winter 2020-2021.
- Resilience of GP care was paramount.
- The position of 12-15 year olds was being planned for.
- Booster jabs (third jabs) were coming soon.

7. **Forthcoming Decision List - and Provisional List of Reports for the Commission's following Meetings**

The Commission confirmed the following reports:

OSC 22 November

Budget Strategy 2022/23 – 2026/27

Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2021-2022

2021/2022 Budget Monitoring - Quarter 2

Crawley Economic Recovery Plan

Town Centre Regeneration Programme v3

Crawley Fusion Innovation Centre Scheme Business Case (Part B)

OSC 31 January

2022/2023 Budget and Council Tax

Treasury Management Strategy 2022-2023

2021/2022 Budget Monitoring - Quarter 3

The Chair requested a report to OSC on the major works currently being undertaken at Milton Mount flats, particularly in relation to the water pressure. The report should detail considerations, alternative options and resolutions.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.58 pm.

T G Belben (Chair)