

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Monday, 7 January 2019 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

C A Cheshire (Chair)

T G Belben (Vice-Chair)

M L Ayling, R G Burgess, D Crow, I T Irvine, R A Lanzer, S Malik, A Pendlington and K Sudan

Also in Attendance:

Councillor C J Mullins, A C Skudder, P C Smith and M A Stone

Dave Watmore, General Manager – Hawth (Parkwood Community Leisure)

Officers Present:

Paul Baker	Senior Leisure Officer
Ian Duke	Deputy Chief Executive
Heather Girling	Democratic Services Officer
Simon Jones	Head of Digital and Transformation
Graham Rowe	Partnership Services Manager
Nigel Sheehan	Head of Projects and Commercial Services

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor F Guidera and L Willcock

Absent:

Councillor M W Pickett

Minute's Silence

The Commission observed one minute's silence in memory of former Councillor Rianna Humble who sadly passed away recently.

1. Disclosures of Interest and Whipping Declarations

No disclosures or whipping of interests were made.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 19 November 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. Public Question Time

No questions from the public were asked.

4. Update on The Hawth Management Contract

Members received a presentation from Parkwood Theatres and officers on the Hawth Theatre, which celebrated 30 years of operation in 2018. The update also included information on the changes that Parkwood Theatres had focused on recently, which included:

- Over 5 million tickets had been sold since 1998 and the Hawth recognised the importance and responsibility of a changing arts industry.
- Various acts had increased over the years particularly 'screen to stage', live music tribute acts and local community group use.
- New customers have been attracted to the venue through participation in classes and attendance to the dance studio and the Loft.
- The involvement in the youth theatre assisted in professional development and provides links to secondary schools, together with theatre technical apprentices and performances.
- It was paramount that the Hawth continues to provide the opportunities that are the heart of the Hawth's vision to engage, inspire and entertain.

Members held a question and answer session. The key issues raised and the responses included:

- Confirmation provided regarding the additional ICT software available within the bookings system to deal with high demand of ticket sales.
- Support for the youth theatre productions together with the dance studio events, particularly increasing the attendance of local children and improving wellbeing.
- Clarity provided on the promotion of events together with the distribution of brochures.
- Confirmation that some genres were less popular within the Hawth's programme.
- Support for the accessibility currently provided at the venue however it was noted that further work could always be achieved.
- Confirmation that the current operating arrangements were providing a saving to the council. Recognition that the contract comes to an end in February 2022 and it would be important to improve the financial sustainability whilst addressing the best procurement options for the council. A number of options could be considered to assess the potential value of the service and it was felt beneficial to establish a Members' Working Group prior to the procurement phase.

RESOLVED

That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission thanked Parkwood Theatres and officers for the informative discussion that had ensued.

5. Discussion on the Resources Portfolio

The Commission received an update regarding the Resources Portfolio and questioned Councillor Skudder on a variety of issues.

The following topics were discussed:

- With references made to moving to 'paperless' working, Councillor Skudder acknowledged that the default was to be 'paperless'. It was the intention to lead by example as it was hoped to move to 'less paper' in the future. There was not a specific date but the improved technology would make the transition easier.
- There was support for further ideas to be developed on the 'Fostering Interest in Local Government' item on the Cabinet Member's portfolio, particularly around resident engagement, liaison with young people with specific reference to the Junior Citizen event.
- Clarity sought and obtained regarding shared service provision and the extent of services provided.
- Confirmation obtained with regards to customer services and the promotion of alternative methods including channel shift.
- Information sought as to the Corporate Equality Statement and the approval process.
- It was acknowledged that different approaches to Members' training may increase attendance. A new training needs assessment in May 2019 could prove advantageous, along with the need to review the Member Induction programme.

RESOLVED

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

6. ICT Service Update Report

The Commission considered report [DAT/01](#) with the Cabinet Member for Resources, Deputy Chief Executive and the Head of Digital and Transformation.

The Commission last received an ICT Service update in 2015, and this predominately focused on the web and digital services programme. Under the Scrutiny Procedure Rules, it was requested that an update report be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on the management, delivery and development of the ICT programme, Transformation programme, together with future service provision. It provided further information as to the current ICT projects, improvements that had been made to the delivery of services together with reassurance that work was progressing to address concerns raised.

The ICT Work Programme had been developed encompassing the following streams:

1. Getting the basics right
2. Helpdesk Review
3. Service Focused
4. Digital Web and Self Service
5. New Town Hall

Workshops were scheduled to develop this initial view into a comprehensive programme of work that incorporated all of the projects, with timelines, costs and dependencies mapped; this would bring the Transformation Programme, New Town Hall and all other enabling digital projects together.

Progress had been made in several areas, including the construction of a Kanban board to provide a clear visual sense of the scale of the work that needed completing. It

showed the seventy projects currently identified, broken down by size of project and stage they have reached.

It was highlighted that the level of complexity should not be underestimated and it would likely take some time. Project Management resources were also needed to manage this effectively and funding was being sought to support this.

Additional governance structures had been implemented to provide management, gateways, oversight and assurance to the ICT Programme. These included a refreshed IT Board, Transformation Board and the Corporate Governance and Assurance Group (CPAG).

Members' main comments included:

- Confirmation as to the services integrated within the 'myCrawley' portal, together with those to be included in future phases.
- Explanation provided as to some of the security features deployed within the council network.
- Acknowledgement that technology was only part of the picture and the council needed to work in a flexible and responsive way, complementing the other wider elements of the Transformation programme, such as culture, space and HR processes.
- Appreciation that the ICT work was planned to restore structure, create clear strategies and plans, implement governance, thus ensuring confidence that the team would rise to the challenges faced over the coming months and beyond.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the report be noted and that the Cabinet Member and officers consider the comments. The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for their contribution and attendance at the Commission.

7. Exempt Information – Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

8. Data Centre Migration Project

(Exempt - Paragraphs 1 & 2 – Information relating to any individual and Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

The Commission considered report DCE/04 of the Deputy Chief Executive.

During the discussion, the following comments were made:

- Support and appreciation for the full and candid report.
- Acknowledgement that the following were contributing factors for weakness and failure of the project in part:
 - Lack of appropriate controls, gateways and project management.
 - Insufficient governance surrounding the project.
 - Unanticipated technical issues affecting delivery, causing significant delay and additional cost.

- Lack of specialist IT oversight for a substantial period.
- In terms of accountability, there was no single point of failure rather a series of decisions which created the conditions that directly contributed to the failing of this project.
- Recognition that training was provided to ensure that the procurement code and advice were followed with regards to projects and recruitment.
- Acknowledgement that there were corporate financial controls in place and that the council manages projects very well. The failures specified within the report were specific to the IT division.
- Appreciation that issues have been addressed in terms of the reintroduction of senior management specialist knowledge of ICT, review of project and programme management and the IT Board together with the establishment of the Corporate Project Assurance Group (CPAG).
- It was highlighted the need to ensure that IT projects were subject to the same scrutiny processes that would apply to projects within other parts of the council.
- Recognition that the completion of the project was on track to be completed by February 2019. Once complete, the Audit Committee (at its meetings in 2018) had requested that an independent Post Implementation Review take place, and work was underway to commission this. The Post Implementation Review would seek to provide assurance, such as whether the project remained in its original scope, was within budget, delivered on time and to provide an opinion on some of the governance aspects of the project. The Post Implementation Review would also include an assessment of whether the project had achieved its stated objectives, was successful in terms of functionality and performance and whether it had achieved value for money. It would also review the way in which the migration was planned, tested and signed off as complete.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the report be noted and that the Cabinet Member and officers consider the Commission's comments. The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for their contribution and attendance at the Commission.

Re-Admission of the Public

Following the end of the Part B item the meeting continued for consideration of business in public session.

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

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

- Workshop had taken place in late 2018 where teenage pregnancy rates had been discussed. Overall rates were had decreased, however abortion rates within Crawley had risen.
- The decision regarding the current housing related support contracts would be extended to the end of September 2019. It was felt that the timescales proposed by the County Council were challenging and unrealistic and consequently a 12 month extension to contracts were sought.

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

The Commission confirmed the following reports:

4 February 2019

- Budget and Council Tax 2019-2020
- Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20
- Capital Strategy 2019/2020
- Allocating Monies Collected Through Community Infrastructure Levy – Infrastructure Business Plan 2019/20
- Statement of Licensing Policy

11 March 2019

- Employment & Skills Plan Update
- Social Mobility Scrutiny Panel Final Report

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 10.30 pm

**C A Cheshire
(Chair)**