

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Monday, 3 September 2018 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

C A Cheshire (Chair)

T G Belben (Vice-Chair)

M L Ayling, R G Burgess, F Guidera, I T Irvine, R A Lanzer, M W Pickett and L Willcock

Also in Attendance:

Councillors P K Lamb and M A Stone

Officers Present:

Natalie Brahma-Pearl Chief Executive

Heather Girling Democratic Services Officer

Karen Hayes Head of Corporate Finance

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors D Crow, S Malik, A Pendlington and K Sudan

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 25 June 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3. Public Question Time

No questions from the public were asked.

4. Corporate Priorities 2018- 2022

The Commission considered report [CEX/48](#) with the Leader and Chief Executive. The report set out the Council's Corporate Priorities for the period 2018 to 2022, and sets the strategic direction of the Council for the next four years, which is linked to the

current administration's manifesto, Transformation Plan and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Councillors made the following comments:

- Support for the work of neighbourhood forums, although it was acknowledged that there were different levels of engagement in various areas of the town.
- Clarity provided on delivering value for money and income generation opportunities.
- Recognition that work had commenced developing the organisation and staff, defining the culture and being clear about values and expectations.
- General support for the document, setting out the strategic direction as requested by officers, partners and residents. However, it was suggested by some Members that within Section 2 (*Delivering affordable homes for Crawley and reducing homelessness*) there should be an explicit reference to a Duty to Co-operate with other local authorities to deliver housing for CBC residents as reflected in the Local Plan, thus acknowledging the principle that local planning authorities should work collaboratively to ensure that strategic priorities across local authority boundaries are properly coordinated. It was suggested the Cabinet be requested to consider this addition.

RESOLVED

That the Commission welcomed the report but requested the Cabinet incorporate explicit reference to a 'Duty to Co-operate with other local authorities to ensure neighbouring authorities deliver our housing needs' within Section 2.

5. 2018/2019 Budget Monitoring - Quarter 1

The Commission considered report [FIN/449](#) with the Leader and Head of Corporate Finance. The report set out a summary of the council's actual revenue and capital spending for the quarter for June 2018 together with the main variations from the approved spending levels and impact on future budgets.

During the discussion, the following points were expressed:

- Confirmation that robust budget monitoring systems were in place. However there was an acknowledgement that there was a need to work more efficiently and develop new ways of working.
- Recognition of the five year business plan for Tilgate Park and Nature Centre currently underway, to result in a self-financing position by 2020/21. Support for other parks within the town to benefit from publicity and/or investment.
- Explanations were provided in relation to various costings within the HRA and capital programme, with particular reference to usage and costs of garages and also to individual ICT projects. It was recognised that due to the long timescale of capital projects the report provided a quarterly update, without specific detailing.

RESOLVED

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

6. Cabinet Member Discussion with the Leader of the Council

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

The following topics were discussed:

- The nature of the different leadership roles operating in various models of governance.
- The Leader's role is in accordance with legislation. Under the scheme of delegation, the Leader holds all responsibility for Cabinet functions and determines the scheme of delegation for the discharge of Cabinet functions, enabling and trusting Cabinet Members to support the council's strategic direction.
- In recognising the rewarding work achieved, particularly in housing, it was also noted that challenges occasionally proved demanding and there was a desire to look long-term.
- With references made to civil contingencies, the Leader acknowledged the importance of reviewing the emergency and contingency plans to ensure they remained effective.

RESOLVED

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

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

The Commission confirmed the following reports:

24 September 2018

- Budget Strategy 2019/20 – 2023/24
- New Town Hall Update
- District Heat Network

19 November 2018

- Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2018-2019
- Public Space Protection Order – Car Cruising
- Three Bridges Improvement Scheme Final Design

4 February 2019

- Budget and Council Tax 2019-2020
- Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20
- Statement of Licensing Policy

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.15pm.

**C A Cheshire
(Chair)**