

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Scrutiny Committee

HELD AT 6.30 PM ON TUESDAY 12 APRIL 2016

MEETING ROOM 1, 135 MILTON PARK

Present:

Richard Pullen (Chairman)

Paul Harrison, Jeannette Matelot, Pat Dawe, Imran Lokhon, David Turner, John Walsh and Ian White

Officers:

Steve Bishop, Ron Schrieber and Sally Truman

Also present:

Will Hall and Toby Newman

15 Minutes and actions arising and referral

The committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting on 9 February 2016 were an accurate record of the meeting and the Chair signed them. There were no outstanding matters arising or referrals.

16 Declarations of interest

None.

17 Urgent business and chair's announcements

None.

18 Statements, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting the Scrutiny Committee

None.



Listening Learning Leading

19 Work schedule and dates for all South and Vale scrutiny meetings

The work schedule was noted.

A member suggested that future burial ground capacity be added to the work programme. It was agreed that this matter be referred to the Cabinet member for property, economic development and technical services for consideration prior to reporting any proposals to the committee. (Subsequent to the meeting the Cabinet member asked the head of HR, IT and technical services to draft a policy for committee consideration later in 2016.)

20 Draft Corporate Plan 2016 - 2020

Will Hall, Cabinet member for the corporate plan, introduced this item. Also present to answer questions was Sally Truman, policy and partnerships manager

The committee considered the head of corporate strategy's report, which proposed a new corporate plan to cover the period 2016 to 2020. This identified the council's strategic objectives and priorities, and would help guide decisions on the allocation of resources. The corporate plan, if adopted by Council, would replace the priorities set out in the corporate plan that ended in 2016.

The cabinet member stated that the corporate plan would focus activity, guide policy and operational decisions, and inform the public of the council's aims. Many policy choices had been made during informal discussions on the draft plan.

Since the publication of the report to this Committee, an updated version of the plan had been submitted to Cabinet at its meeting on 7 April and this version together with a further amendment proposed by Cabinet had been circulated.

Cabinet had recommended Council on 14 April to adopt this version of the Corporate Plan 2016-20 but the Cabinet member expressed his willingness to consider any suggestions made by this committee.

In response to questions and issues raised by the committee, the Cabinet member reported that:

- the plan was a high-level statement of objectives and actions. Further detail, including measures, targets and specific actions would be included in a corporate development plan, which would be reviewed annually by Cabinet;
- he believed that the plan's objectives were ambitious but achievable, whilst recognising that some would be dependent on other bodies such as Oxfordshire County Council;
- suggested proposals to improve air quality across the district such as the use of energy efficient buses and enforcement of lorry weight limits would be considered and where appropriate set out in air quality action plans;
- under the heading "we will secure our financial future", the wording was deliberately flexible in order not to impose any restrictions on officers at a time when local government finance was subject to major changes.

Following further discussion, the Cabinet member agreed to:

1. clarify the wording of the plan with regard to:
 - ensuring that the skills needs of our employers are identified and that training programmes are in place to provide a skilled labour force; and
 - revising the list of town centres where fixed penalty notices for dog fouling and litter would be issued by the council's environmental wardens.
2. consider the inclusion of the regeneration of the gateway to Watlington.

The committee welcomed many of the plan's objectives and its ambition.

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm

Chairman

Date