

Swindon Borough Council

Resources and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 12 June 2017

Committee Room 6, Civic Offices

At 6.00 p.m.

Conservative Councillors

*John Haines
Timothy Swinyard (Chair)
Caryl Sydney-Smith
Vera Tomlinson
Steve Weisinger*

Labour Councillors

*Steve Allsopp
Des Moffatt
Robert Wright*

LibDem Councillors

David Wood

Committee Officer: Iain Tucker, Committee Officer (01793) 463605
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Swindon Borough Council can be contacted at the Civic Offices, Euclid Street, Swindon, SN1 2JH (Telephone 01793 445500)

Access Arrangements - The venue is wheelchair accessible and an infrared receiver hearing system is provided. If you have any special requirements to enable you to attend the meeting or would like to receive any of the pages contained in this agenda in a larger print size, please contact the Committee Officer as soon as possible prior to the date of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair

3. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.

4. Minutes (Pages 3 - 4)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 13th March 2017

5. Public Question Time

See explanatory note below. Please phone the Committee Officer whose name and

number appears at the top of this agenda if you need further guidance.

6. Work Programme 2017/18 (Pages 5 - 10)

Date of Despatch: 01 June 2017

Public Question Time - Swindon Borough Council remains committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from the public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters, and matters relating to planning and licensing applications). We will give priority to those who submit questions in writing at least two days before the meeting. Questions must be relevant, clear, and concise. You may not use Public Question Time as an opportunity to make speeches or statements.

Questions in writing should be sent to the Committee Officer whose contact details appear on the agenda above or to the Director of Law and Democratic Services, we will publish it, along with the answer, alongside the Minutes. The process associated with asking a public question is set out in the "Public Question Time at Council Meetings Protocol and Guidance" available on the Council's Website.

(<http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sched=doc&cat=13338&path=0>) or from the Committee Officer named above.

Terms of Reference

To fulfil all the functions of an overview and scrutiny committee as they relate to –

- The Budget Scrutiny function, at the request of the Scrutiny Committee,
- The review, scrutiny and development of policy recommendations,
- The management of performance,
- The monitoring of progress towards delivering corporate priorities, and
- The formulation of advice for the Cabinet, Council and other partners and stakeholders.
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To have specific responsibility for (but not limited to) the scrutiny of: -

- The Council's Revenue and Capital Budget,
- The Medium Term Financial Strategy,
- Strategic Projects,
- Leisure
- Corporate Customer Services

RESOURCES AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 13 MARCH 2017

PRESENT:- Councillors Emma Faramarzi (Chair), Steve Allsopp, Nick Martin, Des Moffatt, Maureen Penny, Caryl Sydney-Smith, Chris Watts and Robert Wright.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Timothy Swinyard.

Also present: Andy Stevens (Head of Revenues and Benefits), Mick Bowden (Interim Head of Finance), Carmel Burton (Corporate Planning Lead), Susie Kemp (Corporate Director, Resources and Transformation).

23. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded members of the need to declare known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

24. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 30th January 2017, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

25. Public Question Time

Mr Roy Worman, Haydon View Community Association, submitted questions regarding the Council's Commitment to Priority 1, Pledge 4, and the review of the Transport Strategy that is to be completed by 2018.

The Chair thanked Mr Worman for his questions and advised that a written response would be circulated.

26. Measuring the Council's Performance - The Council's Performance Dashboard

The Corporate Planning Lead was in attendance and made a presentation to the meeting on the detail of the Council's Performance Dashboard in monitoring corporate progress against the Council's Vision, and its priorities and pledges. The officer explained the differences between the current and previous Performance Dashboards and, in particular, emphasised the project related and conventional reporting elements of the new system, not present in the earlier model.

Following the presentation, the Corporate Planning Lead responded to members' questions and comments in respect of the following matters:

- Format and structure of the Performance Dashboard.
- The pledges relating to health centres when these were part of the Clinical Commissioning Group's remit.
- The function of Peer review and how these might be best utilised to improve service delivery standards.
- Actions to address problems of fly tipping.

- The monitoring and enforcement of street cleaning standards after this function was devolved to Parishes.
- The number of Council officers volunteering to help the community and the areas they covered.
- Accessing performance data by members of the public.
- Opportunities available for community feedback on the Performance data.
- The role of the Internal Audit office in monitoring performance.

Resolved: (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That, with regard the significant improvements reported, the officer obtain and circulate information on the specific measures taken by Milton Keynes Borough Council to improve its service delivery standards

(3) That the Corporate Planning Lead submit a Dashboard Performance update report to the Committee during the next Municipal year.

(4) Promotion to increase public awareness of the Dashboard Performance to ensure more members of the public access and comment on the Council's performance.

27. Update on Business Rates

The Interim Head of Finance circulated information regarding business rates. He advised that that the Council had very little influence on the amounts of business rates that were charged as the levels of rates was determined by National statute. The Committee heard that the Valuation Office Agency, who are part of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, assigned each business a rateable value. The Interim Head of Finance commented on the partial business rates retention scheme and explained that whilst local authorities are able to keep a proportion of the growth in Business rates, they also bear the risk of having to contribute to any reductions in rates income. Members noted that the losses in income resulted not only from business units being demolished, but also from short period of empty exemptions. In response to a query regarding rates, the Head of Revenues and Benefits explained that 2017 was a revaluation year and elaborated on the types of premises that were either exempt, had discounts or rate reliefs.

Following the introduction of the report, the Interim Head of Finance and Head of Revenues and Benefits responded to members' questions and comments in respect of the following matters:

- The balance between high and low rateable values and how this may attract or detract businesses coming to Swindon.
- Formulae for calculating business rates.
- The type of businesses needed in Swindon.
- Ways to promote and market Swindon.
- Resetting of the deprivation index.
- An explanation regarding the levy on growth.
- The discretionary relief for public conveniences from 2018.
- The provisions of the Local Government Finance Bill.
- The latest developments on the preparation for the 100% business rates retention

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Work Programme 2017/18

Resources and Corporate Services

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 31st May 2017

Author:	Director of Law & Democratic Services
Wards:	All Wards
Locality Affected:	All Localities
Parishes Affected:	All Parish Areas

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 Each year, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees are invited to put together a work programme that details the activities that it will be undertaking during the Municipal Year.
- 1.2 The work programme details the various topics and issues that each Committee intends to look into during the coming year with the aim of producing evidence based recommendations intended to provide service improvements for Cabinet and external agencies/bodies to consider.
- 1.3 Under the Council's Constitution, Overview and Scrutiny Committees are required to agree a work programme at the start of the Municipal Year outlining their priorities and likely outcomes of considering these issues.

The work programme is developed taking into account:

- Corporate priorities and objectives, including the Cabinet Forward Plan
 - Partnership strategic priorities and objectives.
 - The interests and concerns of Members, Council officers, members of the public and other stakeholders such as community and voluntary groups and local businesses.
- 1.4 Committees are encouraged to review the work programme on a regular basis to ensure it remains relevant to the Terms and Reference of the Committee and to prioritise the workload of the Committee to address issues the importance of which might only become evident during the course of the year.
 - 1.5 In the 2016/17 Municipal Year the Resources and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered reports on the following topics:
 - Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services Question and Answer session
 - Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration and Skills Question and Answer session
 - The draft Council Digital Strategy

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Iain Tucker, 01793 463605, itucker@swindon.gov.uk

Work Programme 2017/18

Resources and Corporate Services

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 31st May 2017

- The use of technology to drive down costs and to communicate with the Borough's residents
- Measuring the Council's Performance - The Council's Performance Dashboard
- Update on Business Rates

1.6 Members are reminded that the work programme must also take into account:

- The workload of the Committee and of individual members
- The capacity of officers to support a review
- The resource implications of carrying out a review
- The timescales for a review

1.6 The Resources and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is encouraged to be mindful of its role and remit when considering a work programme for the 2017/18 Municipal Year.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

Consider and discuss items to be included in the Work Programme for the 2017/18 municipal year.

3. Detail

3.1 It is important that Overview and Scrutiny adds value to the work of the Council and the Borough and produces tangible outcomes for local people that result in real service improvements. Selecting the right topics is crucial to ensure that Overview and Scrutiny will be effective.

4. Alternative Options

4.1 The Committee can choose not to have a detailed work programme although it is recommended that it is best practice to do so.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

5.1 There are no financial or procurement implications arising as a result of this report.

Work Programme 2017/18

Resources and Corporate Services

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 31st May 2017

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Section 21 of the Local Government Act requires every local authority to establish an overview and scrutiny function to hold the Executive to account, undertake policy development and review, monitor and improve performance.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 There are no other direct implications arising as a result of this report. Any further implications will be identified when a topic is reviewed by the Committee and in any recommendations made by the Committee.

Links to One Swindon, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 The remit of the Committee includes the review, scrutiny and development of policy recommendations and the monitoring performance of corporate priorities including One Swindon.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 No Diversity Impact Assessment is required at this stage. Any DIA that is required during review of topics included within the work programme will be identified at the appropriate stage.

Risk Management

- 5.6 No risk management issues have been identified at this stage. Any risk management issues will be identified at the appropriate time when a topic is under review by the Committee and if it makes any recommendations.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 None.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Work Programme Topics for 2017/18.

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Work Programme for the Resources and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2017/18

Possible Areas for discussion:

1. The Transformation Programme – how its running
2. The Digitisation Agenda (Glyn Peach, Karen McMahon, Sam Mowbray)
 - Going Paperless
 - IT modernisation process
 - Customer experience
3. Complaints and Insight from customers – the customer journey
4. Using buildings more intelligently
 - Public Use
 - Office accommodation
5. Wichelstowe
 - Resourcing implications for the borough in progressing the development of Wichelstowe
6. Business Rates (in 2018) (Andy Stevens)
 - Welfare Reform
 - Social Inclusion
7. Review of Corporate Priorities

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