

WEST DEVON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Minutes of a meeting of the **West Devon Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Tuesday, 7th November, 2017 at 2.00 pm** at the **Chamber - Kilworthy Park**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Yelland
Vice Chairman Cllr Cheadle

Cllr Baldwin
Cllr Evans
Cllr Leech
Cllr Pearce
Cllr Sellis

Cllr Cloke
Cllr Kimber
Cllr Musgrave
Cllr Roberts
Cllr Sheldon

In attendance:

Councillors:

Cllr Edmonds
Cllr Moody
Cllr Parker

Cllr Hockridge
Cllr Mott
Cllr Sampson

Officers:

Executive Director – Service Delivery and Commercial Development
Group Manager – Support Services and Customer First
Specialist – Community Safety, Safeguarding and Partnerships
Specialist – Performance & Intelligence
Deputy Monitoring Officer
Support Services Specialists Manager

48. **Apologies for Absence**

***O&S 48**

Apologies for absence for this meeting were received from Cllrs J R McInnes, D E Moyse, P J Ridgers and D K A Sellis.

49. **Confirmation of Minutes**

***O&S 49**

The minutes of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 October 2017 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

50. **Declarations of Interest**

***O&S 50**

Members and officers were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of this meeting, but there were none made.

51. **Public Forum**

***O&S 51**

There were no issues raised during the Public Forum session at this meeting.

52. **Draft Hub Committee Forward Plan**

***O&S 52**

The most recent Hub Committee Forward Plan was presented for consideration.

The Chairman advised that the 'Productivity Plan Joint Committee' and 'Housing Position Statement' reports were intended to be presented to the meeting of the Hub Committee scheduled for 28 November 2017.

53. **Community Safety Partnership**

***O&S 53**

Cllr Musgrave, in his capacity as the Council's representative on the Community Safety Partnership, presented a report that provided Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the work of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) as defined by Sections 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009.

The Senior Community Safety Officer (SCSO), South Devon and Dartmoor Community Safety Partnership, highlighted several areas within the report and responded to questions. She also raised two areas not listed in the report, the first of which was a methodology for the trafficking of drugs which targeted vulnerable young people and as such was a focus for the Partnership. The second issue was the prevalence of gang culture within one of the towns in the South Devon and Dartmoor area.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- (a) the likelihood of continued funding. In response the SCSO advised that the funding was guaranteed for a further year however there was uncertainty arising from the proposed merger between Devon and Cornwall Police and Dorset Police Authorities;
- (b) that the frontline Police were very supportive, albeit within resource constraints;
- (c) that Members would appreciate a training session on the issues that the Partnership dealt with. All Members supported the request

- for training and it was agreed that it should be included in the recommendation;
- (d) that the Partnership provided very good value for money.

It was then:

RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted; and
2. That training for Members be arranged on issues relevant to the Partnership.

54.

Joint Local Plan: Standing Agenda Item

***O&S 54**

The Lead Member for Strategic Planning and Housing gave a verbal update on progress with the Joint Local Plan (JLP).

Key areas included:

- A timetable for the examination of the Plan would be circulated to Members;
- The Inspector had built in time to enable discussion on matters that may arise;
- There was a comprehensive Local Plan Library as the Inspector was concerned that members of the public could access any documents;
- There had been representations from people with sites that had not been allocated. Alternative sites would only be looked at if sites within the Plan were unsustainable;
- In terms of a five year land supply, full details would be made available to the public on 29 November 2017.

In response to a question on how performance of the Plan could be measured, the Lead Member confirmed that the JLP Steering Group had turned its attention to that and the Plan contained a series of measures. It would be important to agree which were the key measures to monitor. The five year land supply figures would be reviewed annually. It would also be important to monitor and reflect on the performance of the delivery of the Plan itself.

Another Member raised the problem of planning permissions being granted but not actioned, so questioned whether there was any mechanism to enforce. The Lead Member responded that there were a range of actions that could be taken at a local and national level, but that West Devon did not perform badly in terms of housing delivery. The JLP would be a 20 year programme, some sites would come forward sooner than others and the key would be to identify sites that could be in trouble.

One Member asked if proposals to standardise the methodology for assessing housing need could affect the numbers of houses that the authority was required to provide. The Lead Member responded to the question in detail and concluded that within the JLP area, the Group

had added together the requirements and then looked at the most sustainable way to provide those houses across the three authorities.

The Chairman thanked the Lead Member for his update and agreed that it would now be appropriate for a short update on progress of the Plan to be presented to the O&S Committee at each meeting.

55. **Quarter 2 Performance Measures**

***O&S 55**

The Lead Member for Support Services presented a report that set out the performance levels against target as communicated in the Balanced Scorecard and the performance figures supplied in the presented background and the exception report. Member's attention was drawn to a new indicator, percentage of Change of Circumstances benefits claims received online.

During discussion, reference was made to the following:

1. The length of time taken to process new benefits claims being back within tolerance;
2. Whilst it was accepted that not all benefits claimants had access to a computer, encouraging channel shift would 'free up' call handlers to assist those who needed to contact by phone;
3. The indicator for percentage of enquiries resolved at first point of contact no longer being collected. This led to a wider discussion on the Customer Contact Centre and Members were advised that the Centre was set up in such a way that the Customer Contact Centre Manager was able to quickly move resource within teams to respond to changing levels of demand;
4. The way that sickness absence was recorded was not helpful and this would be reviewed to reflect the single organisational workforce.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the performance levels against target communicated in the Balanced Scorecard and the performance figures supplied in the background and the exception report be noted.

56. **Ombudsman Annual Review Letter 2017**

***O&S 56**

The Lead Member for Support Services presented a report that considered the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review Letter 2017 regarding complaints received against the Council for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017. As part of his introduction, he set out how the level of complaints had decreased over the previous four years indicating a steady improvement in service levels.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the Ombudsman Annual Letter for 2017, as presented at Appendix A, be reviewed, corporate lessons learnt and whether service improvements are required had been considered.

57. **General Data Protection Regulation -Readiness Update**
***O&S 57**

The Lead Member for Support Services presented a report that outlined the changes that the Council would need to implement in order to achieve compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) by 25 May 2018. He advised that progress would be reviewed on a regular basis.

The Support Services Specialist Manager advised Members that the Information Commissioners Office had been in touch in respect of the need for Members to be registered as data controllers. As part of their role, they collected data relating to residents. He advised that it was likely that the Council would cover the cost of ensuring all Members were appropriately registered. He also confirmed that training for town and parish councils on Data Protection Regulations was being considered. Members welcomed this information and requested that they be included in any training sessions that were arranged.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the approach to General Data Protection Regulation readiness ahead of implementation in May 2018 was supported, and that Members should be fully trained in the implications and responsibilities of the regulations.

58. **Task and Finish Group Updates (if any):**
*** O&S 58**

(a) Partnership Grant Funding Review

The Chairman confirmed that this group had not met yet, and also advised that the name of the group should be Partnership (not Discretionary). They would meet in time to bring a report to the January 2018 meeting of the O&S Committee.

(b) Performance Measure

By way of an update, it was confirmed that joint working with South Hams District Council was currently on hold. The outcome of this piece of work was not needed until April 2018.

59. **Annual Work Programme 2017/18**
***O&S 59**

The Chairman introduced the latest version of the Work Programme for the next 12 months and the following updates were highlighted:

- Following recent incidents where the Ambulance Service were reported to have failed to provide an appropriate level of service to

residents, a Member asked if they could be invited to attend a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to have the opportunity to outline how they were facing public sector challenges. The Committee agreed to this request and asked that they attend the meeting scheduled for 27 February 2018;

- JLP Update would now be a standing agenda item for every meeting.

60. **Member Learning and Development Opportunities Arising from this meeting**

***O&S 60**

The Chairman advised the Committee that a trainer had been sourced to deliver the Overview and Scrutiny related training and this would take place on the morning of 5 December 2017 commencing at 10.00am.

In addition, the Committee noted that, further to items earlier in the agenda, training sessions would be arranged on the Community Safety Partnership and Data Protection.

The Meeting concluded at 4.20 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
