

MINUTES
OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

held on 5 June 2023

Present:

Cllr J Brown (Chair)
Cllr A Kirby (Vice-Chair)

Cllr H Akberali
Cllr A Caulfield
Cllr K Davis
Cllr A Javaid

Cllr R Leach
Cllr J Morley
Cllr L Rice
Cllr M Sullivan

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2023 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2023 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES OSC23-023

Councillor Brown summarised the Matters arising from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 20 March 2023, noting that of the thirteen listed, twelve had been marked complete. It was confirmed that the Strategic Director of Communities and former Director of Legal and Democratic Services, had reviewed Member concerns regarding gas-related complaints and that they did not relate to compliance issues.

Councillor Davis questioned that item 3.3, the invitation of Affinity Water to a meeting of the Committee, had been completed. The Councillor pointed to the mutually exclusive positions of the two parties, Affinity Water could only attend remotely, while the Committee could only meet in person. Councillor Davis suggested that if the position did not change, the Council should write a letter noting the Council's deep dissatisfaction, particularly given it had been Affinity Water that had initiated contact and offered to attend with the Committee duly accommodating in two meetings. Councillor Brown requested that a letter first be written to the Chief Executive of Affinity Water requesting once more that a person

from Affinity Water attend the Committee in person and, if they were not able to attend, that the Committee's deep dissatisfaction be expressed in a further letter to the Chief Executive of Affinity Water.

Members reiterated their wish to extend an invite for Southeast Coast Ambulance and Surrey Fire & Rescue.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

5. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business to discuss.

6. WORK PROGRAMME OSC23-022

Items 6 and 7 were discussed concurrently.

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.

7. WORK PROGRAMME SETTING FOR 2023-24 OSC23-024

Items 6 and 7 were discussed concurrently.

For the July meeting, the Committee agreed that pre-decision scrutiny should be carried out on three items on the Executive Forward Programme due to at its meeting on 13 July 2023; the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, 2023-24 to 2026-27 Working For All Refresh, and the Town Centre Masterplan (which had been submitted to the Forward plan following publication of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda). Councillor Brown indicated that the Public Realm Usage Policy could also be scrutinised by the Committee at its July meeting and would consider such.

Councillor Leach, as Lead Member for Training, proposed that a report summarising the supplied Member Training be submitted to the Committee, which was accepted by the Chair and membership.

Councillor Akberali requested the Committee to consider scrutiny of fulfilment of pledges made by developers as part of construction projects, and the building of high-rises in the Borough and their effect on infrastructure.

Councillor Caulfield had recently submitted a Scrutiny Topic Request to review planning aspects of the Constitution. The Councillor raised concern that the ten-person threshold for comments, and no ability for supporters of an application to speak on an item, hampered considerations of the Planning Committee. Councillor Davis suggested that a review of the Neighbourhood Notification procedure be reviewed.

Councillor Davis had also submitted a Scrutiny Topic Request and Councillor Brown acknowledge that both would be tabled as formal items at the next meeting on 10 July 2023.

The Committee agreed to consider the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information, commonly referred to as the Green Book, as the first item of scrutiny at each meeting. The

Committee further agreed to review the Green Book formally in Sections and invite the responsible Portfolio Holders to each meeting.

Councillor Brown, recognising the large number of commuters, requested that Officers engage with South Western Railway to extend an invitation to discuss at a future meeting train schedules and post-Covid commuter patterns.

Following Joint Waste Solutions' responses to queries raised at the meeting of the Committee on 23 January 2023, Councillor Kirby mooted inviting representatives to a meeting of the Committee later in the calendar year.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Committee agreed to amend the resolutions such that resolution (iii) was not required as no Task Groups were formed. Resolutions (i) and (ii) were agreed without amendment.

RESOLVED that

(i) Officers be directed to fill the Committee Work Programme for the coming year with the proposed topics along suitable timescales; and

(ii) Officers review the feasibility of any significant items proposed for scrutiny or review and report back on if and when the Committee could receive those items.

8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN UPDATE OSC23-025

Members noted that the discussion held at the meeting on 20 March 2023 had been reflected in the webpage. Councillor Davis recommended that the page include link to the Green Book.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

9. PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING INFORMATION

There had been a recent incident of fly-tipping at a Borough recycling point. The area was covered by CCTV and statistics on prosecutions against fly-tipping were requested.

Councillor Davis requested information on 'Miscellaneous Costs' and 'Subsidy of Sheerwater GP Practice' listed in the Sheerwater Regeneration section of the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information.

Councillor Kirby enquired whether metrics from the recent elections would be included in future editions of the Green Book.

RESOLVED that the performance and financial monitoring information (February 2023) be noted.

10. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP UPDATE OSC23-026

The Committee received the update report of the Economic Development Working Group.

Councillor Brown requested that the Chair of the Working Group be invited to attend future meetings of the Committee to respond to Member queries.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

11. FINANCE WORKING GROUP UPDATE OSC23-027

The Committee received the update report of the Finance Working Group.

Councillor Brown requested that the Chair of the Working Group be invited to attend future meetings of the Committee to respond to Member queries.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

12. HOUSING WORKING GROUP UPDATE OSC23-028

The Committee received the update report of the Housing Working Group.

Councillor Brown requested that the Chair of the Working Group be invited to attend future meetings of the Committee to respond to Member queries.

Councillor Kirby suggested the Committee scrutinise safe repair and maintenance of properties to complement the work of the Working Group, to which such information was reported. The Vice-Chair also suggested that the Committee receive a report on the Housing Revenue Account, separate from the General Budget, later in the municipal year. Officers agreed to inform the Strategic Director of Communities of the topic suggestion.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and ended at 7.48 pm

Chairman: _____

Date: _____