

MINUTES  
OF A MEETING OF THE  
**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

held on 17 June 2019

Present:

Cllr D E Hughes (Chair)

Cllr R Mohammed  
Cllr C Rana  
Cllr M I Raja

Cllr G G Chrystie  
Cllr J R Sanderson

Also Present: Jacqui Hutton (Solicitor), Adam Thomas, Councillor Kemp, Jo Green, Nicola Norman and Sandra Scott.

Absent: Councillors S Hussain, J E Bond and M A Whitehand

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bond, Hussain and Whitehand.

**2. MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on Monday, 25 March and 20 May 2019 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

**3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Environmental Health – Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

It was noted that Councillor Ian Johnson would be writing to the local MP Jonathan Lord on behalf of the Committee to seek a change in the legislation to require all food premises to display their Food Hygiene Rating.

Freedom Leisure Performance Review

As there were no representatives from Freedom Leisure, it would be reviewed at the next Overview and Scrutiny meeting. Members were requested to note a site visit to the Leisure Centre scheduled for October.

Minutes of Meeting held on 20/05/2019

Councillors for following Working Groups are detailed below which were noted.

<b>WORKING GROUP</b>	<b>NOMINATIONS</b>			
	<u>Con.</u>	<u>Lib. Dem</u>	<u>Labour</u>	<u>Independent</u>
Economic Development Task Group (7)	<b>Councillors</b> A Azad K Davis G Elson	<b>Councillors</b> A-M Barker I Johnson	<b>Councillor</b> M Ali	<b>Councillor</b> J Bond
Finance Task Group (7)	<b>Councillors</b> A Azad S Ashall K Davis	<b>Councillors</b> D Hughes J Sanderson	<b>Councillor</b> T Aziz	<b>Councillor</b> J Bond
Housing Task Group (7)	<b>Councillors</b> D Harlow C Kemp R Mohammed	<b>Councillors</b> I Johnson W Forster	<b>Councillor</b> T Aziz	<b>Councillor</b> J Bond

**4. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Urgent Business.

**5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No Declarations of interests were received.

**6. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chairman introduced the Work Programme for the Committee and drew attention to a list of suggested matters for scrutiny in the coming year. It was noted that Freedom Leisure, carried over from last year, would focus on a performance review and include a site visit to Pool in the Park in the coming Autumn. Anti-Social Behaviour and the possible relationship with youth provision would also be added to the Work Programme for consideration.

Members were encouraged to suggest proposals for additional items for consideration over the Municipal Year.

RESOLVED

That the Work Programme be noted.

## **7. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Chairman reminded Members of the Terms of Reference of the Committee. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee were responsible for examining all functions and responsibilities of the Council. The Committee would ensure that the Council delivers its key aims and objectives, by creating an open, transparent mechanism for Councilors to shape, question, evaluate and challenge the Council policies, decisions and performance.

RESOLVED

That the Terms of Reference be noted.

## **8. SCRUTINY TRAINING UPDATE**

The Chairman updated Members on the successful recent training session held for Members. Mark Palmer, Development Director from South East Employers (SEE) facilitated the session.

The following objectives were set for Members:

- To provide Members with an overview of the potential of overview and scrutiny in Woking Borough Council;
- To support Members with the development of a focused and strategic overview and scrutiny work programme;
- To enhance an effective and independent relationship between the cabinet and overview and scrutiny and;
- To support effective overview and scrutiny development with the public and key partners.

## **9. SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION - CLOSURE OF CHILDREN'S CENTRES**

The Chairman welcomed Jo Green from Brookwood Primary School, Nicola Norman from Sythwood Children's Centre and Sandra Scott from Busy Bees, Woking Children's Centre, to the meeting to discuss the impact of closures to local Children's Centres in the Borough including the proposed new Family Centres.

Members were given time to review a report (minute item 9) that had been presented to the Executive Committee for recommendations regarding Woking Borough Council taking lead on the proposed Family Centres.

Following a public consultation recently, Surrey County Council agreed to endorse the re-modelling of the remaining Children's Centres in the Borough to create Family Centres as part of a wider Family Service to support families with children aged 0 to 11 that were thought to be the most vulnerable. The proposal would see Woking Borough Council take lead on services provided for Family Centres in the Borough.

Woking currently have six Children's Centres based in Sheerwater, Goldsworth Park, Knaphill, Horsell, Brookwood and Pyrford. Four of the Children's Centres were proposed to close, leaving the remaining in Sheerwater and Goldsworth which was believed to

service the Borough in continuing to provide support by outreach staff both in family homes and Community Centres.

Concerns were raised on the effects and consequences families would have facing these changes and potentially resulting in them becoming more vulnerable and isolated. It is understood that families benefited largely from the Universal Services approach. The proposed Family Centres would require families to be referred by other Agency's in order to receive support. It was largely feared that families would slip through the net with essential needs not being met.

Adam Thomas, Manager, Family Support Programme, acknowledged concerns raised and was sympathetic towards the Children's Centre staff. However, he provided Members with a positive holistic overview of support offered to vulnerable families.

Existing Children's Centre staff would Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment (TUPE) to Woking Borough Council if a role in the new structure matches their current role. A valuation exercise will be conducted and redundancies would be offered to staff who were unsuccessful in this process.

Training and development for Family Centre staff would be similar to that provided for staff within the Family Support Team. All service providers were working to the same resilience model ensuring that families receive support for their complex needs.

It was agreed that as the transition of some centre's to Woking Borough Council had not yet been confirmed, and staff were still under consultation for their positions, there would be a follow up from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee later in the municipal year.

## **10. PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING INFORMATION**

The Committee had before it the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information for the month March 2019 (the 'Green Book'). Members drew attention to the out of date Green Book. It was discussed the essential need for the updating of critical elements within the financial section of the book. The Chairman would follow up on the latest version of the Green Book.

The Committee reviewed certain aspects of the Green Book, noting the requirement for the Finance Task Group to look further into the decision making process to go over budget on particular items, and what was classed as controllable and non-controllable spending. Scrutiny from the Finance Task Group was also required on the Victoria Square Project, and would be reviewed at their next meeting on 17 July 2019.

RESOLVED

That the Green Book be noted.

**11. INVESTMENT PROGRAMME REVIEW**

Councillor Chrystie brought the Committee's attention to two recent newspaper articles that detailed information on the £95m Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) grant and the specific builds it was linked to. The members of the Committee were unaware of some aspects of the project and identified the requirement for further investigation by a small task group with an update at the next meeting of the Committee on 15 July 2019.

It was also suggested for the Committee to meet the newly appointed external auditors BDO at a meeting later in the municipal year.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and ended at 8.55 pm

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_