

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2017
MAIN POINTS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE
AND FOLLOW UP ACTION
REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE
(Contact: Councillor Peter Handley)

(The report is for information)

1. PURPOSE

To consider the main points arising from the meetings of the Committee held on 6 July and 14 September 2017 and provide an update on the follow up action that has been taken.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted.

3. BACKGROUND

At the meeting of the Committee held on 6 July 2017, consideration was given to seven substantive items of business.

3.1. Agenda Item No. 5: Main Points of the Last Meetings and Follow up Action

The Committee noted the report of the Chairman, which gave details of the main points arising from its meeting held on 25 May 2017.

3.2. Agenda Item No. 6: Committee Work Programme

The Committee gave consideration to its Work Programme for 2017/2018.

3.2.1 Oxfordshire Health Care Transformation Project

Members noted that, in response to the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee's referral to the Secretary of State of the Clinical Commissioning Group's decision not to re-procure services at the Deer Park Medical Centre, the Independent Reconfiguration Panel had expressed concern over the manner in which this issue had been dealt with.

The Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee was to give consideration to the Reconfiguration Panel's advice at its meeting to be held on 14 September.

The Committee resolved to write to the Chairman of the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to advise him of the Committee's concerns over the manner in which it had previously dealt with the County Council's referral of Phase One of the consultation on the Oxfordshire Healthcare Transformation Programme and inviting them to attend a future meeting to outline their future intentions.

3.2.2 RAF Brize Norton

Members expressed concern that, despite efforts by the Council's Officers and officials from the Department of Communities and Local Government, no progress had been made towards the commencement of development on MOD land in Carterton.

The Committee resolved to write to the local Member of Parliament, Secretary of State for Defence and the Chief of the Air Staff expressing their concern at the continued delay in the redevelopment of MOD land in Carterton and seeking their support in expediting the commencement of the project.

Prior to any letter being sent, Robert Courts MP requested and was given a briefing on this issue by the Strategic Director, in preparation for a meeting with the relevant Government Minister. Following that meeting, representatives of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation have once more met with the Council's two Strategic Directors to update them on progress. There are a number of strands of work progressing within the MoD and DIO which are likely to impact on the redevelopment of the land in Carterton and a commitment has been given to keep the Council updated on progress.

3.2.3 Local Development Framework

Members noted that a report seeking consideration of responses to Cherwell District and Oxford City Councils on consultations relating to Local Plans and the meeting of Oxford's unmet housing need was to be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 24 July.

In the event, the July Cabinet meeting was cancelled and the Council's response to Oxford City Council's Preferred Options consultation for their proposed new Local Plan was considered and approved at the meeting held on 23 August. The response to the Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review was considered by this Committee at its last meeting prior to consideration at the Cabinet meeting on 20 September

3.2.4 Welfare Reform Act – Meeting with Registered Social Landlords

Members noted that representatives of Registered Social Landlords operating within West Oxfordshire were to attend the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

3.2.5 Planning Enforcement System

Members noted that a briefing paper on the planning enforcement system was to be submitted to a future meeting.

In response to concerns expressed, the Committee resolved to establish an informal Member working group comprised of Members of this Committee and Members of the Development Control Committee to give consideration to the operation of the planning enforcement system.

3.2.6 Leisure Management Contract Working Party

It was noted that arrangements would be made for the Working Party to meet once the new contract arrangements had bedded in.

3.3. Agenda Item No. 7: Cabinet Work Programme

The Committee noted the contents of the Cabinet Work Programme published on 22 June 2017.

3.4. Agenda Item No. 8: Local Police Area Commander – Annual Update

The Committee received a presentation from Superintendent Mark Johns, Local Police Area Commander, Cherwell & West Oxfordshire, regarding policing priorities and levels of recorded crime.

3.5. Agenda Item No. 9: Review of Member Structures and Democratic Costs

The Committee received the report of the Strategic Director and Head of Paid Service which invited Members to make comments upon the report submitted to the Council on 26 April in response to the Leader of the Council's commitment for a review of the current committee structures, electoral cycle and the number of Members of the Council.

Following consideration of the report it was resolved that the Council be advised that the Committee is of the opinion that the current Member structures should be retained.

The Council will consider the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees at its meeting on 25 October.

3.6. Agenda Item No. 10: Performance Indicators – Year End 2016/2017

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Leisure and Communities providing information on the Council's performance at the end of the year 2016/2017.

3.7 Agenda Item No. 11 – Members' Questions

The Strategic Director and Head of Paid Service confirmed that, as requested at the last meeting, the Cabinet had agreed to refer the Madley Park Playing Fields Project back to the Committee for further consideration once the final design of the play area has been completed.

At the special meeting of the Committee held on 14 September 2017, consideration was given to two substantive items of business.

3.8 Agenda Item No. 5 Response to Cherwell Local Plan Partial Review

The Committee gave consideration to the Council's proposed response to Cherwell District Council's consultation on the proposed submission plan for their partial review of the Cherwell Local Plan to address Oxford's unmet housing need.

The Committee recommended that the Cabinet:-

- (a) welcomes the positive steps being taken by Cherwell District Council to review their Local Plan in order to address the issue of Oxford City's unmet housing need.
- (b) approves the draft representation as the Council's response to Cherwell District Council's consultation.

3.7. Agenda Item No. 6 Countryfile Live, Blenheim Palace, 3 to 6 August 2017: Post-Event Feedback

This item was included on the agenda at the request of Mr J C Cooper. Bill Oddy, Group Manager for Environmental and Regulatory Services, was in attendance. To respond to Members' questions.

4. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

None.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

6. RISKS

None.

7. REASONS

The Chairman's summary of the previous meeting is an opportunity for the Chairman to outline to members progress made on their ideas and suggestions from the previous Committee meetings. It will also provide members with a further chance to comment on these subjects and provide a transparent method of showing the effectiveness of members' contributions to this Committee and its key overview and scrutiny role in monitoring, evaluating, questioning, challenging and developing policy.

Councillor Peter Handley
Chairman of Economic and Social Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 15 September 2017

Background Papers:

None