

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2017
MAIN POINTS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING 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 28 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 28 September, consideration was given to nine substantive items of business.

3.1. Agenda Item No. 5: Welfare Reform Act

The Committee received a presentation from Mr Rob Hawkins and Mr Colin Bloodworth of Cottsway Housing regarding the Company's work in the District and future development plans. It was agreed that they be invited to attend again in six months' time to provide an update on the impact of the introduction of Universal Credit.

3.2. Agenda Item No. 6: 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 meetings held on 6 July and 14 September 2017.

3.3. Agenda Item No. 7: Committee Work Programme

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

3.3.1 RAF Brize Norton

Members received an update on discussions with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation regarding the development of the REEMA north site.

3.3.2 Oxfordshire Health Care Transformation Project

The Strategic Director provided an update on the Oxfordshire Health Care Transformation Project. It was agreed that representatives of the Clinical Commissioning Group be invited to attend the next meeting, together with the local Member of Parliament, to provide information on their response to the Independent Reconfiguration Panel's Report and Recommendations in relation to the closure of the Deer Park surgery and on the consultation on phase two of the Oxfordshire Healthcare Transformation Programme.

In addition, it was agreed that Officers would enquire whether it would be possible for the Council to be represented at meetings of Healthwatch.

3.3.3 Police, Community Safety and CDRP

Members expressed concern over the recent increase in criminal activity in the District and agreed that the Local Police Area Commander be invited to attend a future meeting prior to the submission of their usual annual report.

3.3.4 Leisure Management Contract Working Party

It was agreed that arrangements would be made for the reconstituted Leisure Management Contract Working Party to meet without delay.

3.4. Agenda Item No. 8: Cabinet Work Programme

The Committee noted the contents of the Cabinet Work Programme published on 19 September 2017.

3.5. Agenda Item No. 9: Choice Based Lettings Review

The Committee received the report of the Group Manager for Revenues and Housing Support which provided an update on the progression of Choice Based Lettings within West Oxfordshire since its introduction in October 2016.

The report was subsequently considered by the Cabinet on 18 October when it was agreed that, following the completion of the twelve month trial and positive stakeholder feedback, the digital nominations (Choice Based Lettings) approach be confirmed and continued and the Council recommended to confirm the Allocations Policy previously adopted as part of the trial. That recommendation was approved by the Council at its meeting held on 25 October.

3.6. Agenda Item No. 10: Performance Indicators – The Council's Planning Enforcement Function

The Committee received and considered information on the operation, staffing levels and reporting arrangements of the Council's Planning Enforcement function.

Members agreed not to proceed with the institution of a Working Party to consider the operation of the planning enforcement system at this juncture but Officers undertook to explore the possibility of introducing some form of simple monitoring arrangement to enable Members to report potential unauthorised development and monitor the progress of investigations

3.7 Agenda Item No. 11: Performance Indicators – Quarter 1 2017/2018

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 quarter 1 2017/2018.

3.8 Agenda Item No. 12: Syrian Refugees – Update

The Committee received a brief update on what the Council was doing to assist the Syrian refugees in the District and how the project was progressing.

3.9. Agenda Item No. 13: Members' Questions

In response to concerns raised by the Chairman regarding the capacity of the Fire Service to respond to calls for medical assistance it was agreed that this issue be raised with the Clinical Commissioning Group at the next meeting.

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: 30 October 2017

Background Papers:

None