

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMISSION
4.00PM 19 OCTOBER 2010
COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL
MINUTES

Present: Councillors Mitchell (Chairman); Pidgeon (Deputy Chairman), Cobb, Elgood, Kennedy, Morgan, Older, Peltzer Dunn, Wakefield-Jarrett and Meadows

PART ONE

34. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

34.1 The Chairman reminded the meeting that proceedings were being recorded and broadcast.

34a Declarations of Substitutes

There were none.

34b Declarations of Interests

Councillor Mitchell declared a prejudicial interest in item 41, as a member of the Brighton & Hove Strategic Partnership. Councillor Kennedy was a Member of Phoenix Arts, an organisation in receipt of Business Rate Relief. Councillor Morgan was a Trustee of the Crew Club also in receipt of Business Rate Relief.

34c Declaration of Party Whip

There were none.

34d Exclusion of Press and Public

In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in section 100I (1) of the said Act.

34 RESOLVED: That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

35. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 SEPTEMBER

35.1 The Assistant Director, Customer Services answered a question by clarifying that the elections team would work to resolve known issues before the May 2011 elections. The full review of polling stations would start in 2011.

35.2 The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September were agreed and signed by the Chair.

36. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS**37. PUBLIC QUESTIONS/ LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS/REFERRALS FROM COMMITTEES/NOTICES OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL**

37.1 There were none.

38. NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF

38.1 The Revenues and Benefits Manager introduced the report. The full draft policy document was being consulted upon until the end of November 2010 and was available on request. The final proposed policy would be reported to Cabinet.

38.2 The Assistant Director, Customer Services noted that officers in the Revenues and Benefits team made decisions on the merits of each case against the agreed criteria. She clarified that funding proposals would actively feed into the budget process for 2011-2012.

38.3 The Revenues and Benefits Manager answered a query on the flexibility available in assessing applications; the Council actively tried to support organisations trying to contribute to the community.

38.4 Members asked about cost-effectiveness of the application process where the value of the award was relatively low. Officers agreed to provide further information on organisations in receipt of business rate relief and information on the Council's discretion in awarding NNDR DRR.

38.5 **RESOLVED;** that the policy aims be noted and further information be requested as minuted above at 38.4.

39. INTELLIGENT COMMISSIONING PILOTS UPDATE

39.1 The Head of Policy introduced the report on Intelligent Commissioning Pilots. He said the Public Service Board had for some time been looking at ways of working, including the potential for more joint commissioning across the City.

39.2 He said there was much work currently being done by the Public Service Board and Local Strategic Partnership. In particular there were 8 or 9 projects under way looking at:

a) Resource mapping – drawing on the 13 Total Place national pilots on specific service areas to understand; who has resources, how decisions are being made, what is being done and how effective is this?

b) Improving the needs assessment process for intelligent commissioning to better understand the issues affecting the City – who is affected, why and what is the most successful approach in tackling the issues and developing a shared framework for decision-making. For example, child poverty. Aspirational needs are being looked at by the Economic Partnership.

c) The Strengthening Communities review – involving communities in expressing their needs, how needs are best met and how communities can respond eg via the voluntary sector of community groups. The Public Service Board is asking the Community and Voluntary Sector to help shape and information and engage to get heard the voice of communities.

39.3 Forward discussions and a workshop with the Public Service Board, LSP and experts from the national Total Place pilots, identified that some areas lent themselves well to piloting the intelligent Commissioning model.

39.4 Domestic violence, drugs and alcohol were selected as pilots as they are key issues for Brighton & Hove authorities and organisations to deal with in partnership. Performance challenges were being addressed but there were still issues to tackle in these areas.

39.4 The Head of Community Safety told the meeting that the pilots, led by two steering group in the 3 areas of drug-related deaths, alcohol and domestic violence, involved consultation and engagement with a wide variety of stakeholders including Partnerships and the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum. Challenge sessions had been held.

39.5 The findings of the pilots would form the basis of intelligent commissioning from April 2011 in those areas and accumulated lessons learned would feed into a wider framework for the City as a whole.

39.6 The tasks to complete the needs assessments were large and challenging. Analysts from the partnership Community Safety Team, Primary Care Trust, Corporate Performance Team and Police, were taking part.

39.7 A process of service mapping is recording the range of services delivered in the City for children and young people, adults and vulnerable needs groups. Generally there is very little information on unit costs. This is an area for improvement in the future.

39.8 Service models are to be investigated to find those that are cost effective, give the best value for money and the best outcomes. A key goal is to start to move investment from crisis intervention more towards early support and preventative work.

39.9 The next stage will be to present the results of the needs assessment and service mapping, so that deeper knowledge and experience of services; for instance from constituents, can be incorporated.

39.10 In order to do this, the Head of Community Safety suggested that one element could be a workshop for OSC Members that would present the data for the Commission's comment.

39.11 Later, after agreement on desired outcomes; also taking aspirational outcomes into account; draft Commissioning recommendations and a draft Commissioning Plan can be drawn up followed by contractual arrangements including arrangements for performance monitoring and review. This process may need to be repeated.

39.12 These will then link with the new decision-making pathway being developed to incorporate all learning from pilots into a framework for the City.

39.13 The Head of Policy outlined the continuous commissioning cycle; understanding the need and key issues; planning the activity; delivering services and review.

39.14 He said exploratory work was going on both internally and with Partners to develop Members' and Strategic Partners involvement at various stages in the cycle. These included

scoping of the commissioning; testing robustness of the needs analysis; agreeing the commissioning strategy; monitoring service delivery and review effectiveness.

39.15 Asked about O&S involvement in the pilot stages, the Head of Community Safety said that a workshop in November would provide the Commission with an opportunity to consider the data that had been collected on needs analysis and service mapping. By this time, some outcomes would start to emerge. Pilots were anticipated to finish by the end of the year.

39.16 The Commission discussed the options and welcomed the suggestion of a half-day workshop during November with a formal response being reported back to the next OSC meeting.

39.17 Members congratulated the officers on a strong report and on the pilots that may well be national best practice nationally for advance work on commissioning

39.18 Replying to a question, the Head of Community Safety said there was no new funding overall; but different funds would come from different sources.

39.19 For example the Alcohol Programme Board was led by the Chief Executive of the Primary Care Trust; the commissioned services would achieve outcomes hitherto unachievable to the benefit of the local authority, partners and the city as a whole.

39.20 Members were concerned that the role of scrutiny be set out formally and asked that the steering groups develop a timetable to include Scrutiny input to the pilot process.

39.21 **RESOLVED** (1) that an Intelligent Commissioning workshop be arranged for OSC during November.

(2) that the outcome from the IC workshop and further information on the decision-making pathway including the stages for scrutiny, be reported to the next OSC meeting, 14 December.

40. TARGETED BUDGET MANAGEMENT MONTH 4

40.1 The Acting Assistant Director – Financial Services introduced the report that had been presented to 14 October Cabinet. He gave an update on the Value for Money Programme.

40.2 There was a question on the number of fleet vehicles, and how many needed replacement. A reply would be provided.

40.3 **RESOLVED**; that the report be noted.

41. LSP - DISCUSSION WITH CHAIRMAN AND UPDATE

41.1 Councillor Mitchell welcomed the Chairman of the Strategic Partnership Roger French OBE to give a progress report to the meeting as set out in the agenda paper.

41.2 Councillors Mitchell and Wakefield-Jarrett are Members of the LSP; the Local Authority has a leadership role and is represented on all the thematic partnerships. Roger French said he was particularly pleased that the partnership was regarded by the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) as strong and mature.

41.3 Noting that the Local Area Agreement (LAA) had been abolished he said a fresh approach would be taken by joint agreement but that the Sustainable Community Strategy was the cornerstone of the current work of the thematic partnerships and still on track to be implemented.

41.4 Partnership Development Workshops had been held to agree priorities. The role of the LSP in Intelligent Commissioning was being considered. There were also to be updated partnership agreements, including for the Transport Partnership that had been established in October 2009.

41.5 He said that all involved were to be congratulated in working together to find common priorities. He hoped a bid jointly with West Sussex County Council to create a Local Enterprise Partnership would be successful.

41.6 In addition to completing and launching the Sustainable Community Strategy, a lot of good partnership work during the year had also included development of the 10:10 campaign; City Volunteering Strategy; Community Engagement Framework; Housing Strategy, the Consultation Portal and Advice Services Strategy Group.

41.7 Since the last progress report there had been a number of changes at a national level which would impact on partnership; the discontinuation of the Comprehensive Area Assessment, Audit Commission, National Indicators, South East England Development Agency and Government of the South East as well as the LAA.

41.8 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission queried a number of areas and heard replies from Roger French and the Head of Partnerships and External Relations:

- How will performance be monitored? – A performance framework would be developed - Partnership Development workshops are taking partners' views into account
- How will changes to the Health Sector be taken into account? – The structure of the Partnerships was being reviewed.
- How will partnership work on child poverty be affected? – Joint workshops are being held with a view to a report in December.
- What is the role of partnerships in intelligent commissioning (IC) and what is the timetable for involvement? – Joint working on restructuring and new processes is considering this. The IC pilots on Domestic Violence and Drugs, (report elsewhere on this agenda) provided lessons to learn and these would be incorporated in future working.

41.9 Summarising, the Head of Partnerships and External Relations said there would be a report to the Public Service Board on a range of on-going work taking into account the new Council Strategic Director structure, outcomes from the Partnership Development Workshops, consideration of the Thematic Partnerships plus innovations in sustainability and engagement.

41.10 The Chairman looked forward to more information as the partnerships developed and thanked Roger French for a thorough progress report. She said this was the only Forum where members have an opportunity to hear about the Strategic Partnership and comment.

41.11 The Chairman of the LSP reminded the meeting that Scrutiny of partnerships was welcomed; and in their role of holding to account, Scrutiny Committees may wish to invite Chairs of the Partnerships to future meetings.

41.12 RESOLVED That the report be noted

42. O&S COMMITTEE UPDATE - CYPOSC

42.1 Councillor Averil Older, Chairman of Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee gave a verbal update on the work for the Committee this year. This has included:

For Education: Reports on: Falmer Academy; Ofsted Inspections; Universal Free School Meals; Traveller Education Service

For Health; Childhood Obesity; Teenage pregnancy; Update and Review of Therapy Services for the Disability Service

For the Children & Young People's Plan (CYPP) and the Trust: Sure Start Children's Centres; Consultation on the CYPP; Performance Improvement Reports; Children's Rights and Equalities; Child Poverty; New Council responsibilities for 16-19 Education & Training; Changes to governance arrangements of the Trust Board

For Social Services; Corporate Parenting; Safeguarding

42.3 Scrutiny Panels on Children & Alcohol and School Exclusions have been completed and endorsed.

42.3 CYPOSC has considered the Children and Young People Trust's Budget strategy and in-Year Grant savings

42.4 There have been Councillor questions on: St. Mary's School Closure; School Examination and test results; Primary school Places

42.5 Workshops were held on Children Health Joint Needs Assessment, the draft CYPP and more recently a group was set up to look at the Audit Commission's One Place Report on Under-Achievement.

42.6 For the future CYPOSC is to focus on budget savings in Children's Services; the draft youth services review and consultation on the Child Poverty Strategy.

42.7 RESOLVED that the report be noted

43. OSC WORK PROGRAMME AND GENERAL UPDATE

43.1 The Head of Scrutiny updated the Commission on the work of scrutiny panels and new topics for scrutiny review, Private Sector Agents, Renewable Energy and Music Industry, following consultation during the Summer.

43.2 He referred to the Benchmarking undertaken by the Centre for Public Scrutiny following a survey in 2009. The Chairman commented that in comparison with other authorities, good scrutiny work is being done in Brighton & Hove and good value for money.

43.3 With regard to temporarily co-opting a non-voting third sector representative as set out in Appendix 3 of the report, the Head of Scrutiny said that co-opted members can provide scrutiny with additional viewpoints.

43.4 It was also suggested that additional publicity be arranged for scrutiny meetings on budget-setting at a time when budget reductions were being discussed.

43.5 Following a vote it was agreed to co-opt temporarily a third sector representative on to 14 December and 1 February 2011 meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission that focus on the draft budget proposals.

43.6 RESOLVED; that a third sector representative be temporarily be co-opted onto Overview and Scrutiny Commission as set out at Appendix 3.

44. ITEMS TO GO FORWARD TO CABINET MEMBER, CABINET OR FULL COUNCIL

44.1 None.

The meeting concluded at 6.00pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

