

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES

9 APRIL 2013

Chairman: * Councillor Jerry Miles

Councillors:

* Ann Gate	* Chris Mote (1)
* Krishna James	* Paul Osborn
* Zarina Khalid	* Sasi Suresh (4)
* Barry Macleod-Cullinane	* Stephen Wright

Voting Co-opted: (Voluntary Aided) (Parent Governors)

† Mrs J Rammelt	* Mrs A Khan
Reverend P Reece	

Non-voting Co-opted: Harrow Youth Parliament Representative

* Denotes Member present
(1) and (4) Denote category of Reserve Members
† Denotes apologies received

379. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member

Councillor Sue Anderson
Councillor Kam Chana

Reserve Member

Councillor Sasi Suresh
Councillor Chris Mote

380. Declarations of Interest

RESOLVED: To note that the following interest was declared:

Agenda Item 7 – Draft Annual Report 2012-13

Councillor Ann Gate declared a non pecuniary interest in that the Head of the Clinical Commissioning Group was her employer. She would remain in the room whilst the matter was considered and voted upon.

381. Minutes

Members agreed to consider the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2013 as an urgent item for the reasons set out on the supplemental agenda.

With reference to Minute 368, a Member stated that the Minute should be amended to reflect that he had been waiting, at the time of that meeting, for 138 days for the SAP reports he had requested. It had now been 160 days since his original request.

A Member reminded the Committee that the officers concerned had been advised of the expectation that if the information requested was not forthcoming that they would be required to attend the Committee in order to provide an explanation.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2013 be taken as read and signed as a correct record, subject to the inclusion to Minute 368 that the Member had been waiting for 138 days for the SAP reports requested;
- (2) unanimously, and in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Constitution, the former Corporate Director of Resources, the Corporate Director of Resources and the Head of Legal and Governance Services be required to attend the next ordinary meeting of the Committee to explain why the requested reports had not been provided.

382. Public Questions

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were received.

383. Petitions

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions had been received.

384. References from Council/Cabinet

RESOLVED: To note that no references had been received.

RECOMMENDED ITEMS

385. Draft Annual Report 2012-13

The Committee received a report of the Divisional Director of Strategic Commissioning which enclosed the scrutiny annual report 2012-13. The report summarised the activities of the scrutiny committees and scrutiny lead councillors and outlined priorities for the next municipal year.

In response to the reference on page 5 of the report to public questions and petitions, a Member expressed the view that there appeared to be no evidence that the Council was listening to residents. The Member stated that he could not see any change of opinion or policy as a result of petitions and or questions. Another Member suggested that this matter be addressed at the Scrutiny Leadership Group and a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee. The relevant Portfolio Holder and Head of Communications should be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to discuss the matter of resident engagement with the decision making process.

The Policy Lead for Environment and Enterprise stated that the report on his area gave a flavour of the content of the main report. There had been issues in terms of the Harrow Residents' card and the consultation report was awaited.

The Policy Lead for Community Health and Well Being advised that he and the Performance Lead would like to consider recreational activities for the elderly. A member of the Committee asked whether there had been any measurement of the success of the gyms in parks and the Policy Lead advised he would seek to clarify the position. He advised that cross party working was required to encourage the use of the gyms in parks. He also suggested that the introduction of 'trim trails' be considered.

In terms of mental health provision, a Member sought reassurance that that the Leads for Health and Social Care and Community Health and Well Being were working together. The Policy Lead for Community Health and Well Being confirmed that this was the case although further work was required.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Council)

That the Scrutiny Annual Report 2012-13 be approved.

RESOLVED ITEMS

386. Scrutiny Lead Member Report 2012-13

The Committee received a report of the Divisional Director of Strategic Commissioning which accompanied the reports from scrutiny lead members.

Some Members expressed concern in relation to the Council's responsibilities when it took over GP budgets in that there had been some discussion about GPs setting up sub companies and it was questioned how the use of the

funds would be monitored. By way of clarification, a Member advised that GPs ability to set up private companies was not new but that the GPs in the Clinical Commissioning Groups were not able to do this.

A Member advised that the questions in relation to GP budgets should be raised at the Health and Well Being Board and or the Harrow Strategic Partnership. As Chair of the Standing Review of the Budget he had been looking to establish a review of the new arrangements. Targeting of health outcomes could be considered.

RESOLVED: That the actions proposed in the lead reports be agreed.

387. Any Other Business - Written Statement

The Committee agreed to consider a written statement from the Executive as a matter of urgency for the reasons set out on the supplemental agenda. The written statement related to the provision of commissioning panel papers.

Whilst agreeing that the statement be referred to the Access to Information Working Group, some Members challenged the statement in terms of no dates being mentioned and the origin/author of the document not being included. Comment was also made that there was no officer or Cabinet Member present at the meeting to answer questions. It was commented that the document appeared to contradict the Chief Executive's statement made at the Question and Answer Session in January 2012.

A Member stated that he could not understand how the Executive could take the view that budget proposals did not relate to the budget and he questioned how scrutiny could formulate a view as to whether the right decisions had been made if the Committee did not see all the proposals. He added that it was important to get the balance right and to have an equality of information for whichever party formed the Administration. This view was endorsed by another Member who added that the Leader of the Council had said that he was willing to make information available without the need for Members to submit Freedom of Information Act requests.

The Committee agreed that they would like the statement to be included on the agenda for their next meeting to enable discussion with the Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the written statement be referred to the Access to Information Working Group for consideration;
- (2) the written statement be considered at the next ordinary meeting of the Committee when the Monitoring Officer would be in attendance.

388. Vote of Thanks

The Chair thanked Members, the Parent Governor Representative, the Scrutiny Team and Democratic Services officer for their work throughout the municipal year 2012-13. The Vice-Chair echoed these sentiments and also thanked the Chair for the fair and impartial manner in which he had chaired the Committee.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 8.12 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR JERRY MILES
Chairman