

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMISSION
4.00PM 3 JUNE 2008
COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL
MINUTES

Present: Councillors Mitchell (Chairman); Pidgeon (Deputy Chairman), Alford, Morgan, Elgood, Meadows, Bennett, Mrs Cobb, Older, Randall and Wakefield-Jarrett

PART ONE

1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1a Declaration of Substitutes

Councillor Watkins was substituting for Councillor Elgood.

1b Declaration of Interests

There were none.

1c 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.

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

2. MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ORGANISATION COMMITTEE

2.1 The minutes of the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Organisation Committee held on 21 April 2008 were signed by the Chairman.

3. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 The Chairman welcomed everyone to this the first meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission (OSC) and introduced the Interim Head of Scrutiny Ian Glossop who said he was

pleased to be helping develop stronger Overview and CSrutiny at Brighton & Hove and would be working closely with Members and officers.

3.2 The Chairman said it was unfortunate that this agenda was disjointed; the meeting had been scheduled very soon after the Annual Council meeting.

3.3 OSC would be working to produce its own work programme and there would be a report on this to the next meeting on 15 July 2008. It was important that the Commission in its coordinating role be kept updated on the overall workload of all the Scrutiny committees and panels.

3.4 It had been intended that all five Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairmen should serve on OSC. However Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman Councillor Warren Morgan had not been included in the Membership of OSC.

3.5 Members agreed to invite Councillor Morgan to join the Commission as non-voting Member.

3.6 Councillor Morgan accepted.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

4.1 There were none.

5. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

5.1 There were none.

6. NOTICES OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL

6.1 There were none.

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION TERMS OF REFERENCE

7.1 The Interim Head of Scrutiny introduced the report of the Director of Strategy and Governance, on the Commission's terms of reference.

7.2 He said this was a good basis for further progress on ways of working, as the expanding role of Overview and Scrutiny developed in line with the new Constitution.

7.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission had an important role in the monitoring of Overview and Scrutiny in addition to corporate performance and therefore would be kept informed of progress against the Overview and Scrutiny work plans.

7.4 As regards budget and finance reports, to avoid duplication the Chairman said there would need to be a clear understanding of the roles of the Audit Committee and the OSC.

7.5 RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. ANNUAL REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY AT BRIGHTON AND HOVE 2007 - 2008

8.1 The Commission considered the Overview and Scrutiny 2007 – 2008 Annual Report of the former Scrutiny Chairman, Councillor Jan Young.

8.2 Members noted that the Dual Diagnosis Scrutiny Panel would report its findings to a future OSC meeting.

8.3 RESOLVED – That the report be presented to the next available Council meeting.

9. WORKING WITH CABINET MEMBERS

9.1 Members discussed the new roles of Scrutiny, especially ‘pre-decision’ Scrutiny and early involvement in policy development. Overview and Scrutiny needed to maintain close working relationships with Executive members and other decision-makers. In particular the meeting felt that it would be helpful if Executive Members were invited to Overview and Scrutiny committee meetings.

10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY AND THE COUNCIL'S FORWARD PLAN

10.1 The Interim Head of Scrutiny presented the report of the Director of Strategy and Governance on the working of the Council’s Forward Plan and how Overview and Scrutiny might wish to use it.

10.2 He said he will be working with Members and officers on using Overview and Scrutiny to contribute positively to the Council’s policy and change agendas.

10.3 RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

11. THE CORPORATE PLAN

11.1 The Head of Policy introduced the report on the draft Corporate Plan 2008 – 2011. This was a draft scheduled to be considered for approval at 12 June Cabinet meeting.

11.2 It was available only at short notice as it was interlinked with the Local Area Agreement negotiation period and targets.

11.3 The Commission welcomed the clear, well-written report and felt there were some areas that could be considered by the Cabinet for inclusion in the Corporate Plan. These included Car Clubs, the teaching of business skills, private rented sector, supported housing, sustainability in housing, noise pollution, alcohol abuse, aids and adaptations and those not in education and training.

11.4 The Head of Policy said the matters raised would be taken forward to Cabinet at its meeting on 12 June 2008.

11.5 Asked about the creation of a new forum to inform decisions on the personalisation of adult social care and the possibility of duplication and impact on the budget, the Head of Policy said this would be checked.

11.6 RESOLVED – that the Commission’s comments be taken forward to 12 June Cabinet.

12. THE LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT 2008 - 2011

12.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Strategy and Governance on the Local Area Agreement 2008 – 2011.

12.2 The Head of Policy explained that at the time of writing, the targets in the paper were still being negotiated and developed. The final version was scheduled to be agreed with the Government of the South East following July Council meeting.

12.3 The Chairman said it was useful to receive the document and it would be important for the Commission to monitor and track progress on a regular basis.

12.4 RESOLVED – that progress against the targets be regularly monitored.

13. ITEMS TO GO FORWARD TO CABINET OR THE RELEVANT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

13.1 Comments on the Corporate Plan would be taken forward to 12 June Cabinet.

14. ITEMS TO GO FORWARD TO COUNCIL

The meeting concluded at 4.30pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of