

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION MEETING

4PM, 9 SEPTEMBER 2008

HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Mitchell (Chairman), Councillor Pidgeon (Deputy Chairman),
Councillors Alford, Cobb, Elgood, Meadows, Morgan, Randall, Wakefield-Jarrett

Also Present: Councillor Fallon-Khan

PART ONE

30 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

30a Declarations of Interests

30.1 There were none.

30b Exclusion of Press and Public

30.2 The Committee 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 Schedule 12A, Part 5A, Section 100A(4) or 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

30.3 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

31 MINUTES

31.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2008 be agreed and signed by the Chairman.

32. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

32.1 The Chairman said she would be asking for a reply to her letter to the Chief Executive regarding the independence of the City Inclusion Partnership following the OSC discussion at 15 July OSC meeting.

33. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

33.1 There were none.

34. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

34.1 There were none.

35. NOTICE OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL

35.1 There were none.

36. DISCUSSION WITH CABINET MEMBER FOR CENTRAL SERVICES, COUNCILLOR AYAS FALLON-KHAN

36.1 The Chairman welcomed Councillor Fallon-Khan to the meeting, to give a broad overview of his policy areas and discuss the relationship between Scrutiny and the Executive.

36.2 Councillor Fallon-Khan outlined his portfolio and said he was supportive of scrutiny as it was a positive development in open decision-making. He answered questions, including on:

36.3 a) Sustainability – suggesting that an e-module on sustainability be widely promoted as part of policy development in the area.

36.4 b) City News – stating that there would be a review later in the year.

36.5 c) Public Engagement – commenting that good communications with the public already included the Council's website, City News, web-casting of meetings and opportunities for 1:1 contacts.

36.6 d) Dignity at Work Policy - officers advised the meeting that this would be published later in the year.

36.7 e) Staff Development– agreeing the importance of training and Personal Development Plans.

36.8 The Chairman thanked Councillor Ayas-Khan for his helpful replies and expressed the view that this was a positive development for the relationship between Scrutiny and the Executive.

37. ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN AND CORPORATE PROPERTY STRATEGY 2008 - 2011

37.1 The Assistant Director, Property and Design, introduced the report on the Asset Management Plan and Corporate Property Strategy 2008 – 2011. This would be presented to Cabinet for approval on 16 October.

37.2 Members were pleased with the headline national performance indicator results as set out in table 5b. The Assistant Director answered a number of questions in detail. Further queries were raised for consideration as follows:

37.3 Can the meaning be clarified in the final document, regarding the integrated approach and separate responsibilities? Also is there scope for greater joined-up working between Departments (Paragraph 3.5.2, bullets 1 and 2)

- 37.4 Where can the Value For Money Process be viewed? (para 6.4)
- 37.5 Can local cooperatives be given greater support to help regenerate local vacant shops?
- 37.6 What plans are there for the Bevendean neighbourhood shops and can officer support be given to a recently-established resident working group? (para 3.3)
- 37.7 Can the Community Land Trust process be investigated further? (para 4.3.4)
- 37.8 Both the Chairman and Councillor Fallon-Khan complimented the officers on their work and the layout and content of the report.
- 37.9 **RESOLVED:** That the above remarks as minuted from 37.3 to 37.7 are taken into consideration in finalising the report to cabinet.

38. CORPORATE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2008 - 2011

- 38.1 The Procurement Strategy Manager introduced the report on the revised Procurement Strategy.
- 38.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission discussed the Corporate Procurement Strategy and was very supportive.
- 38.3 The Members were pleased that a relatively high proportion of the Council's money is being spent with local organisations.
- 38.4 The Commission was also pleased with other measures being taken to support the local economy and voluntary sector and the commitment to the use of plain, jargon-free English in procurement documentation.
- 38.5 Members expressed the view that social enterprises were a key feature of the Strategy.
- 38.6 Some Members also felt that the procurement of PVC windows should be investigated in the context of environmental protection and sustainability.
- 38.7 The meeting thanked the officers for a full and interesting report.
- 38.8 **RESOLVED:** That the above remarks as minuted from 37.3 to 37.7 are taken into consideration in finalising the report to Cabinet.

39. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PLAN

- 39.1 The Interim Head of Scrutiny outlined the Commission's Work Plan.
- 39.2 Councillor Fallon-Khan suggested three areas that the Commission may wish to consider for scrutiny as follows:

- 1) A review of public buildings for administrative purposes.

- 2) Membership development, in particular for newly-elected councillors and with regard to the new constitution.
- 3) Aspirations to reach the top quartile of top-performing Overview and Scrutiny functions.

39.3 Cllr Elgood asked the meeting to feed back on progress on Scrutiny's comments to Cabinet on Equalities and the Inclusive Council Policy.

39.4 **RESOLVED:**

- 1) that the report be noted.
- 2) that the three suggested matters for possible scrutiny be added to the OSC work planning process.
- 3) That Cabinet be asked to consider the views of the Commission as part of the forthcoming Dignity at Work proposals.

The meeting concluded at 5.30pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2008