

SHOPSHIRE COUNCIL

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2016

2.00 - 3.20 pm in the Ludlow Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury,
Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Responsible Officer: Julie Fildes

Email: julie.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257723

Present

Councillor Claire Wild (Chairman)

Councillors Steve Davenport (Vice Chairman), Joyce Barrow, Gerald Dakin, Roger Evans, Vince Hunt, David Lloyd, Alan Mosley and Dave Tremellen

44 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M Kenny.

45 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None were declared.

46 Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd February 2016

Councillor Evans requested that the minute number 34 be amended to reflect that there had been two nominations for Chairman and an election had taken place. Councillor Lloyd proposed that the minutes contained sufficient information regarding the appointment of Chairman. This was put to the vote.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee held on 3rd February 2016 be approved as a correct record.

47 Public Question Time

No public questions were received.

48 Member Question Time

There were no questions from Members.

49 Additional Information for Quarter 3 Performance Report 2015/16

Members noted that Chart 4 referred to in the Officer report had not been despatched with the agenda, it was agreed that this would be sent out after the meeting.

The Performance Manager gave a presentation to the Committee [copy of presentation attached to the signed Minutes]. Members noted that pay rates had increased in Shropshire in line with the National increase. Although, those living in the County and

commuting out to work received higher wages than those who worked within the County. The Performance Manager commented that the County had low unemployment rates but the industries in the area tended to be those which had historically low wage levels, such as agriculture. Members noted that the County also had higher levels of self-employed workers in comparison to both the West Midlands and Great Britain. The Performance Manager agreed to provide Councillor Hunt with an analysis of the types of business performed by the self-employed. Despite the lower wage rates in the County the average house prices were higher than the West Midlands area, which impacted on affordability of homes for residents.

Members considered increases in the numbers of patients delayed leaving hospital. The Performance Manager commented that the increase was following a National trend. Councillor Dakin informed Members of a Task and Finish Group set up by the Health Scrutiny Committee that had been established to examine integrated services with the NHS and improve working relationships. It was acknowledged that hospitals had a direct impact on adult social care and the demand for its services.

Members discussed the cost of eviction and rehousing housing association tenants who had rent arrears. It was agreed that this was a potential topic for consideration by the Environment and Services Scrutiny Committee. Members also identified a slight decrease in waste recycling rates. It was observed that Shropshire still had a rate well above the National Average. It was suggested that the Performance Manager would provide further information on this and if warranted the Environment and Services Committee would consider whether they wished to pursue the topic further.

Members noted a slight increase in educational attainment at GCSE level, although the improvement was not as good as the County's statistical neighbours, although remained better than the National Average. It was agreed that the Young People's Scrutiny Committee would consider whether this should be added to their work programme.

Referring Members to the graph showing the number of referrals to Children's Social Care, the Performance Manager explained that the improvement was explained by a new effective 'front door' policy which ensured that initial concerns received the most appropriate support which had led to a reduction in referrals. Members noted that the number of looked after children had remained stable at between 300 and 350 children. It was suggested that the Young People's Scrutiny Committee might consider adding Foster Care within the County to their work programme, as they played an important role in caring for children who could not live with their own families.

In response to a Members query the Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance agreed that projected budget figures contained in the end of quarter budget reports differed at the end of different quarters as they were projections and altered as more information became known throughout the year. A Member requested that Cabinet papers be circulated with the Additional Information Report.

50 Future Work Programme for the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee

Members considered the proposed work programme.

Referring to the proposed topic on Local Commissioning (2), Members observed that it was important to find ways of working with Town and Parish Councils in order to meet future challenges of budget reduction whilst maintaining the quality of life for residents.

Members debated the individual merits of sub-committees and task and finish groups respectively. The Senior Solicitor confirmed that Sub-Committees were public meetings and Task and Finish Groups were held in private. Councillor Evans expressed concerns regarding a perceived lack of transparency with Task and Finish Groups, other Members argued that this was not the case and the Group's report would be discussed at a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee which commissioned the work.

Members commented that it had been previously agreed to establish a standing Budget Task and Finish Group for 2017/18 and onwards.

The Chair confirmed that she had spoken with the Chair of the Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee about the possibility of establishing a joint Task and Finish Group to consider the pressures on adult social care. She added that it had been suggested that this work would be started in September to allow initial work to be completed by Officers.

In response to a Member's question regarding the progress of a report completed by the Scrutiny Review Task and Finish Group on new arrangements for Scrutiny Committees, the Chairman stated that this would be discussed at the Scrutiny Chairs Meeting to be held on 6th April 2016.

A Member raised concerns about IT provision for Councillors. The Chief Executive replied that this formed part of the IT Review which was being undertaken. The Council's IT provision for all sections was included within the review and the report would make recommendations regarding options for change, and investment that needed to be put in place to ensure future systems were fit for purpose.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the work programme be agreed.
- ii. That authority be delegated to the Performance Manager to draw up the Terms of Reference for the Local Commissioning Task and Finish Group as set out in Item 2 on the work programme.

51 Date/Time of next meeting of the Committee

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee was schedule to be held at 2.00pm on Wednesday 11th May 2016.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: