

# SHOPSHIRE COUNCIL

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2015

10.00 - 11.30 am in the Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate,  
Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

**Responsible Officer:** Jane Palmer  
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### **Present**

Councillor David Minnery (Chairman)  
Councillors David Lloyd (Vice-Chair), Joyce Barrow, Gerald Dakin, Steve Davenport,  
Roger Evans, Vince Hunt, Miles Kenny, Alan Mosley and Dave Tremellen

### **28 Election of Chairman**

The Vice Chairman took the Chair in order to preside over the election of Chairman.

A Member commented that, despite differences of opinion, he respected the hard work undertaken by the former Chairman of the Committee. Other members of the Committee echoed these sentiments and praised the hard work that he had undertaken during his service on the Council.

On being elected to the Chair, Councillor Minnery commented that this meeting had been called by the former Chairman as an addition to those calendared. He stated his intention to make contact with all Group Leaders to discuss individually their views on the future development of the Council's scrutiny function.

### **RESOLVED:**

That Councillor David Minnery be elected as Chairman of the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

### **29 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **30 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

No declarations of interest were declared.

### **31 Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2014**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the Minutes of the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 26 November 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **32 Public Question Time**

No questions were received from members of the public.

### 33 **Member Question Time**

No questions had been received and accepted from Members.

### 34 **Enabling Mobile and Flexible Working**

The Performance Manager provided a general introduction and context to mobile and flexible working including what the Council was trying to achieve through new ways of working and how this was an essential part of a future commissioning Council.

He queried whether the Committee wished to pursue the three areas of focus that had been highlighted by the previous Chairman of the Committee, these being:

1. The use of the Council's assets
2. The importance and role of I.T. including mobile telephony
3. Specific staff skills and behaviours

The Chief Executive commented that the Council had been poor at making money out of its assets in the past and suggested that scrutiny could undertake some useful work in this area, for example:

- ways to turn assets into income and generate £10M over the next 10 years,
- ways to reduce net costs to less than £1M, and
- ways to use assets differently.

He commented that with new equipment staff would be encouraged to work in a different way with connectivity between people without the need for buildings such as the Shirehall. He added that a commissioning Council would borrow and use other space in future rather than having a raft of assets itself.

The Leader of the Council stressed the need for the Council to take a longer term view on its asset management and consider how it could work to generate income from these assets. Members noted that in the future management of the Council's asset portfolio could be contracted out and the skills required could also be commissioned and measured on outcomes delivered.

Referring to increased home working, the Leader commented that this was advantageous to all parties; to staff as it resulted in an improved work/life balance and to the Council as productivity increased. The Chief Executive stated that this was a changing, fluid model and it would be for managers to ascertain the best way of working for their teams. He added that there would be options to book the use of desk space and meeting room space and stressed that flexible working did not necessarily mean 'home working'. It was anticipated that the commissioning base of the Council would amount to 200-300 people, reducing to 100-200 people over the coming years.

In response to Members' concerns regarding the efficacy of the technology necessary to support the new way of working, the Leader stressed that super-fast Broadband was key to the Council's new ways of working and improvements were being rolled out in the county. A Member queried the merits of investing some of the Council's Pension fund into the county Broadband product, but current providers were not considered to have a sufficiently high cash value for investment.

The Leader stressed that the commissioning Council was not a mass privatisation of the Council's services. He stated that the Council would still employ staff, for example contract management and Democratic Services. Members noted that a key part of the commissioning role was to set out the outcomes required and to monitor them to ensure that the requirements were met, contracts would be simpler from the outset with clear specifications and monitoring of outcomes and a reductions in bureaucracy.

Referring back to the 3 areas identified at the beginning of the debate, the Chairman outlined how the work on Assets, Mobile and Flexible Working and Commissioning which was included as a result of discussions, could be progressed through small teams of members working directly with the appropriate Director/their representative and reporting their findings back to a future meeting of the Committee. The Performance Manager confirmed that they would prepare brief scoping documents on each work area. Once drafted these would be circulated to the Committee to ascertain Member interest and appropriate allocation of the tasks.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That three scoping documents be prepared on:
  - The use of the Council's assets
  - Mobile and Flexible Working including the role of I.T. including mobile telephony, and staff skills and behaviours
  - Commissioning including how to measure the impact and delivery of outcomes and commissioning decisions
  
- ii) That the above detailed scoping documents be circulated to members of the Committee to canvass interest in working together in pairs [3 pairs of Members, one pair for each of the three issues] with the appropriate Chief Officer/ or their representative and report their findings to a future meeting of the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee.

**35 Date/Time of next meeting of the Committee**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to be held at 2.30pm on Wednesday 28 January 2015.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

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Date: .....