



PEOPLE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2019

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

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257713

Present

Peggy Mullock (Chairman), Kevin Turley (Vice-Chair), Christian Lea, Elliott Lynch, Cecilia Motley, Kevin Pardy and David Vasmer

15 Apologies and Substitutions

15.1 Apologies were received from Sian Lines (Diocese of Hereford).

15.2 There were no substitutions.

16 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

16.1 There were no declarations of pecuniary interests made.

17 Minutes

17.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2019 had been circulated.

17.2 Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the People Overview Committee held on 5 June 2019 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

18 Public Question Time

18.1 There were no questions from members of the public.

19 Members' Question Time

19.1 There were no questions from Members

20 Committee Update

20.1 There were no updates.

21 Warmer Homes

21.1 Members received an update from the Senior Technical Officer. He advised that a scheme had been developed which would provide 150 gas first time heating

systems and 150 off gas solutions using LPG. He commented that LPG was expensive, and that an oil-based solution was being investigated.

- 21.2 The Senior Technical Officer informed the meeting that there was a proposal being developed around renewable energy solutions but there was a problem in that the Council would not get any return on its investment as it would not receive the FIT.
- 21.3 Members welcomed the progress being made and expressed concern that it appeared that barriers were put in the way of progressing schemes.
- 21.4 The Chairman thanked the Senior Technical Officer for his update and for the good work that was being carried out.

22 Social Worker Recruitment and Retention

- 22.1 Members received the report of the Assistant Director – Children’s Social Care and Safeguarding which gave an update on the recruitment and retention of Children’s Social care social workers.
- 22.2 The Director of Children’s Services stated that the recruitment and retention of social workers was not just an issue for Shropshire as there was a national shortage of social workers which made recruitment more difficult.
- 22.3 The Assistant Director – Children’s Social Care and Safeguarding informed Members that there were now fewer social workers leaving the Council and that retention was better through either progression opportunities or through other opportunities created across the service such as the additional posts created in the Fostering and Adoption team.
- 22.4 The Assistant Director – Children’s Social Care and Safeguarding stated that there had been a commitment to ensuring that Shropshire was a leading employer and that work was ongoing to improve the market place offer to social workers.
- 22.5 The Assistant Director – Children’s Social Care and Safeguarding informed the meeting that the Council was participating in two graduate training programmes “Frontline” and “Step Up” and that this year 4 permanent social workers had been recruited through the Frontline programme and 2 from the Step Up programme
- 22.6 A Member asked whether there were cases where social workers that leave the Council then return as agency social workers. The Assistant Director – Children’s Social Care and Safeguarding advised that this did happen
- 22.7 A Member asked whether it was known why social workers left the Council. The Assistant Director – Children’s Social Care and Safeguarding stated that all leavers attended an exit interview in order that Managers may understand the reasons for staff leaving and that in the majority of cases staff left for personal reasons.
- 22.8 The Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services thanked the Assistant Director – Children’s Social Care and Safeguarding and her team for all the work they do.

23 School Improvement

- 23.1 Members received the report of the Principal Education Improvement Adviser which gave an update on the Education Improvement Service.
- 23.2 The Principal Education Improvement Adviser reminded Members that the Education Improvement Service underwent a major restructure in 2018 due to funding pressures, a review of priorities and the need to create a more flexible workforce to meet the impact of future academisation of schools in Shropshire. He informed the meeting that the Council had specific statutory responsibilities for all schools in Shropshire whether they were a maintained school or an Academy
- 23.3 Members expressed concerns regarding Academies, as it appeared that there was little the service could do. The Principal Education Improvement Adviser advised the meeting that there was an Academy Protocol in place which allowed for annual visits during which an assessment of risk was made. The Director of Children's Services commented that the Council was actively involved with Academies, and that concerns could be escalated to the Regional Schools Commissioner, who held termly meetings with all local authorities within his area.
- 23.4 Members asked that the Regional Schools Commissioner be asked to attend a future meeting of the Committee.
- 23.5 The Chair thanked the Principal Education Improvement Adviser for his report.
- 23.6 Resolved:
- a) That the contents of the report be noted
 - b) That the regional Schools Commissioner be invited to a future meeting of the Committee

24 Work Programme

- 24.1 The Scrutiny Work Programme had been circulated.
- 24.2 The Scrutiny Officer advised members that the next meeting would focus on the Criminal Exploitation of Children and that an additional meeting had been arranged for October 9th.
- 24.3 The Chairman asked Members to advise the Scrutiny Officer of any topics that they wished the Committee to discuss.

25 Date of Next Meetings

- 25.1 Members were advised that the next meeting of the People Overview Committee would be held on Wednesday 11 September 2019 at 10.00am and that an additional meeting of the Committee has been scheduled for Wednesday 9 October 2019 at 10.00am

Signed (Chairman)

Date: