



Place Overview  
Committee

28 April 2022

2.00 pm

Item

**3**

Public

## **MINUTES OF THE PLACE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28 APRIL 2022**

**Responsible Officer:** Sarah Townsend

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### **Present**

Councillor Joyce Barrow (Chairman)

Councillors Paul Wynn (Vice Chairman), Steve Davenport, Geoff Elner, Roger Evans, Pamela Moseley, Peggy Mullock (substitute for Paul Gill), David Vasmer, Roy Aldcroft (Substitute) (substitute for Dan Morris) and Julia Evans (Substitute) (substitute for Julian Dean)

### **52 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Paul Gill and Dan Morris. Councillor Peggy Mullock was in attendance as a substitute for Councillor Paul Gill and Councillor Roy Aldcroft was in attendance as a substitute for Councillor Dan Morris.

Councillor Julia Evans was in attendance as a substitute for Councillor Julian Dean.

### **53 Disclosable Interests**

None were declared.

### **54 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

It was requested that under Minute 48 (Planning Committee Structures) and within the bullet points at the top of page 5, consideration be given to planning appeals supported by Members where officers refused to support them and the results of these planning appeals.

It was also requested that under Minute 48 (Planning Committee Structures) it be noted that Members had 21 days to respond to planning applications, whereas Town and Parish Councils had 31 days and it would be good if both deadlines were the same.

**RESOLVED:**

That with the above mentioned amendments, the minutes of the Place Overview Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022 be approved as a correct record.

**55 Public Question Time**

A question was received from Ms Karen Pearce regarding Shropshire's Local Access Forums. Ms Pearce was not in attendance to ask her question and the Overview and Scrutiny Officer read it out on her behalf. The Head of Culture, Leisure and Tourism responded.

A full copy of the question and response provided is attached to the web page for the meeting and also attached to the signed minutes.

**56 Member Question Time**

There were none.

**57 Planning Committee Structures**

The Chairman explained that the report supporting this agenda item was not available in time for the meeting and she was therefore proposing that this agenda item be deferred.

A comment was made that the Council only had one Scrutiny Officer who was being asked to do an increasing amount of work and it was disappointing that some of the information for the report that might have been supplied by other officers, had not been provided. The Member felt that if the role of the Scrutiny Officer was to write reports and present them at the various Scrutiny Committee meetings, then extra support was needed.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Planning Committee Structures agenda item be deferred to the next meeting of the Place Overview Committee on Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

**58 WSP Contracting Arrangements**

The committee received the report of the Executive Director of Place which summarised the annual performance of the Highways and Transport Engineering Consultancy Term Service Contract, currently delivered by WSP contract for 2020/2021 financial year and built upon the previous reports presented to the Committee and provided an overview of the contract and its outcomes that support the Council and its wider ambitions for the period in question.

The report set out some of the examples of added value that the council has derived from a term provider with a full annual report for the period 2020/21 and an interim report for 2021/22 provided in Appendix A and B. The report also summarised arrangements and plans for tendering the next iteration of this contact.

The Head of Highways and the Commission Manager for WSP were in attendance to present the report and having done so, in responding to questions, the following points were made:

- In terms of spend, the original scope of the contract had increased in value.
- When considering the new contract, key areas such as social value, net zero and active travel would be taken into account. It would look very different to the current contract as it would have a wider bandwidth and would focus on different strategic areas as well as the business as usual aspect.
- Workshops would be arranged to allow members to have the opportunity to be involved in the way in which the new contract is developed.
- More detailed figures, particularly on the total spend, as well as the breakdown of the spend on the North West Relief Road and other big projects would be useful.
- There was currently one Street Lighting Manager in Shropshire on the client side.
- The LED/street lighting program would be delivered in Shropshire within the next two years and the Head of Highways confirmed that the Business Plan to convert street lights to LED could be shared with members. Regarding the specific examples of concern that were raised, he would look into them and directly feedback to the member.
- A recruitment process was currently being undertaken to recruit Highway Development Control and Flood Water Management staff.
- The 20 mph schemes had not been included in the 2020/21 report as they were not relevant at the time. However, they would be included within the 2021/22 report.
- In terms of the benefits of bringing statutory services in house and whether there was sufficient capacity to deliver these services efficiently, the Head of Highways commented that he was confident that they had the ability to deliver this and that it would result in services being more efficient.
- Regarding the KPIs and completion dates in relation to 'Confirm', as detailed in the appendix to the report, the Commission Manager for WSP explained that with quite a number of jobs, additional work may be requested by the clients or is found to be needed whilst on site, due to unforeseen circumstances. This did not mean that work had not been completed on time, rather, that it had been extended.
- Reactive drainage and drainage investigations were now delivered and undertaken directly by the Council.
- Regarding KPI 5 (April – September 2020), the Executive Director of Place commented that he would find out why some of the data appeared to be incomplete and would directly feedback to the member.
- Members were reminded that all highway issues / concerns should be reported through 'Fix My Street'.

**RESOLVED:**

1. The committee considered the annual performance of WSP for the financial year.

2. The committee considered proposals for the future iteration of the contract and advised of any areas of concern.
3. That progression of the new contract be reported back to the Place Overview Committee on a six monthly basis.

## 59 Kier Performance Report

The committee received the report of the Executive Director of Place which provided information on the performance of Kier in the past year and outlined some of the positive changes that have taken place to improve the contract to improve performance and value.

The Head of Highways and the General Manager for Kier and the Shropshire Highways Alliance were in attendance to present the report and having done so, in responding to questions, the following points were made:

- Compared to twelve months ago, a wider range of interventions was in place for repairing potholes e.g. 'Find and Fix' on the unclassified network.
- KPI figures for the whole of the last financial year would be provided at the Committee's next meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022.
- The Head of Highways would look into the concerns that had been raised regarding the repaired potholes on the Trefonen Road, Morda.
- Kier had now fully migrated to the Councils 'Confirm' software system, which provided far greater levels of transparency and synchronisation of management systems. Every job undertaken by Kier required a before and after photograph to allow both Kier and the Council to see the quality of the work. Information such as when the job had been programmed to be undertaken and when it was actually completed could also be viewed.
- Regarding the Bridgnorth and Hodnet depots being closed due to safety requirements, a twelve month review to identify whether there is a business case to invest the significant cost of repairs required to bring them back up to operational standards or whether the current arrangements should be made permanent was still ongoing. The aim was for this decision to be made by the autumn.
- Around £4m had been allocated for resurfacing across Shropshire this year.
- Joint working was undertaken with utility companies who were required to provide their annual plans to the Council in advance, to allow for road resurfacing work to be co-ordinated as far as possible.
- Both Shropshire Council and Kier have progressed restructure proposals which continue to be refined as the service evolves and ensures that the correct level of resources at technician level is in place.
- An Engagement Officer had been appointed by the Council which would result in more effective working with supply chain partners and improved community engagement.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. The committee identified areas of concern on Kier performance for further review as part of the highways improvement programme over the coming year.

**60 Place Overview Committee Work Programme**

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented the Place Overview Committee’s proposed work programme for the 2021-2022 municipal year. It was noted that a dedicated committee work programming session would be held on Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

Regarding Clean and Healthy Rivers, the committee were informed that this had been put onto the work programme to be considered at a future meeting. Councillors Kate Halliday and Pam Moseley were involved and would be meeting with the Chairman and the Overview and Scrutiny Officer for further discussion within the next few weeks.

A member asked if the Local Access Forum could be added to the committee’s work programme and the Overview and Scrutiny Officer explained that the Communities Overview Committee had looked at this topic during the Covid-19 pandemic. As the Communities Overview Committee would shortly be meeting to discuss their work programme, the Overview and Scrutiny Officer commented that he would have a discussion with them regarding whether they wanted to revisit this item or whether they would be happy for the Place Overview Committee to include it within their work programme.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Place Overview Committee’s work programme for the 2021-2022 municipal year be agreed.

**61 Date/Time of Next Meeting of the Committee**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Place Overview Committee was scheduled to be held on Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 commencing at 2.00 p.m.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: