

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ORGANISATION COMMITTEE

5.00PM – 17 JANUARY 2005

BRIGHTON TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Hamilton (Chair); Councillors Allen, Carden, Edmond-Smith, Giebeler, Mallender, Meegan, Simson, G Theobald (Deputy Chair) and Young.

In attendance: Councillors Bennett, Burgess and John.

PART ONE

ACTION

38. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

38.1 The Chair indicated that this was the first meeting with new officer working arrangements and welcomed the new Scrutiny Support Officer. The items on the agenda were taken out of order with the agreement of Members.

38A. Declarations of Substitutes

38.2 There were none.

38B. Declarations of Interest

38.3 There were none.

38C. Exclusion of Press and Public

38.4 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 Section 100A(3) or 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972.

38.5 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the agenda.

39. MINUTES

39.1 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2004 be approved and signed by the Chair.

40. PERFORMANCE MONITORING: CORPORATE SERVICES

40.1 (a) The Committee discussed performance with the Director of Strategy and Governance, the Director of Finance and Property, the Head of Human Resources Management and the Deputy Chairs of Policy and Resources Committee.

40.2 (b) & (c) The Committee also considered an extract from Quarter 2 Best Value Performance Report 2004/05 for Corporate Services and 'Diversity Barometer' Quarter 2 2004/05 and a report of the Director of Strategy and Governance providing information about complaints received during quarters 1, 2 and 3 of 2004/05 about Corporate Services (see minute book).

40.3 The Director of Strategy and Governance reported that the former Corporate Services Department, subject to final agreement, would divide into three Directorates: Human Resources, Finance and Property and Strategy and Governance.

40.4 The Committee asked questions on the Performance Indicators (PIs) regarding Council Tax collection, community cohesion, the diversity barometer and payment of invoices. Members preferred the full-colour format and said it would be helpful if in future year-on-year comparative figures could be provided, where possible.

40.5 Asked whether more detailed information on hate crime was available, officers agreed to look into this and report back.

40.6 Having been asked about the overall budget strategy the Director of Finance and Property described the work of the cross-party budget review group.

40.7 The Deputy Chair of Policy and Resources Committee outlined some key issues on capital financing. Support for local transport planning expenditure had a significant impact, he said. This was being addressed.

40.8 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the reports be noted.

(2) That officers be asked to provide, where possible, colour-coded PIs, comparative year-on-year PIs and more information on hate crime.

BG/MvB

41. COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT 2004 AND OSOC

WORK PROGRAMME

41.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Strategy and Governance and the Director of Finance and Property concerning the result of the 2004 Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) score for the City Council and the proposal about which elements of Cultural Services it should consider at its meeting in February as a part of the Committee's work programme on performance (see minute book).

41.2 Members discussed the 2004 CPA score which was 'good' and heard reasons for optimism that the score could reach 'excellent' for 2006/2007.

41.3 Councillor Carden, Chair of Planning Applications Sub-Committee thanked in particular the Development Control Manager for improvements in the Planning Service resulting in a £750,000 Government grant for further improvements.

41.4 As part of the revised approach to performance monitoring, the Committee considered the various service areas of Cultural Services – Communications, Libraries and Museums, Tourism, Information and Communications Technology; plus (subject to final agreement) Economic Development, for discussion at the next meeting on 21 February.

41.5 Members asked to hear an update on performance of the Library Service across the whole city, how the hours of opening of branch libraries were decided and how hours may change in future and which areas of the city were served by the mobile library.

41.6 'Communications' was also singled out as an area for discussion at the next meeting.

41.7 It was agreed that services other than Libraries and Communications ought not to be overlooked by OSOC and should be considered for discussion next time Cultural Services is focused upon.

MvB

41.8 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That Cultural Services Officers be asked to provide performance information in the broad areas as minuted in 41.5 and 41.6 above.

TM/MvB

[Note: Under item 43 on this agenda, OSOC also requested a performance update at their 21 February meeting on apprenticeships in Brighton and Hove from Economic Development Officers.]

SM/MvB

42. PROGRESS ON CURRENT SCRUTINY REVIEWS AND UPDATE FROM EOSP AND HOSP

42.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Cultural Services detailing the progress made on current scrutiny reviews and updating Members on developments in the scrutiny function including the Education and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panels and replies to scrutiny recommendations from the executive committees (see minute book).

42.2 It was hoped that the report of the Hove Centre Lettings Scrutiny Panel would be presented to the next meeting.

42.3 Final nominations for the EB4U Scrutiny Panel were expected soon and the Panel members would agree their Chair. Panel meetings were to be arranged during the working day wherever possible.

42.4 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

43. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING OF EOSP

43.1 The Committee considered the minutes of the Education Overview and Scrutiny Panel (EOSP) meeting held on 7 December 2004 (see minute book).

43.2 The Committee asked where responsible lies for dealing with bad behaviour on school buses; the Support Officer would follow this up.

MvB

43.3 At EOSP minute 29.3 regarding the Ofsted 14 – 19 Area Inspection, Members asked about the provision of vocational courses in the context of the building-related skills needed for local major infrastructure projects. The Director of Strategy and Governance gave an outline of the Living Skills Council, Modern Apprenticeships and other initiatives.

43.4 Members requested more information on vocational training and apprenticeships by Economic Development Officers at the February 21 OSOC meeting.

43.5 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the minutes be noted.

SM

(2) That an update be given to OSOC on 21 February as minuted above at 43.4.

44. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING OF HOSP

44.1 The Committee considered the minutes of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel (HOSP) meeting held on 14 December 2004 and discussed Health Scrutiny with the Chair of HOSP,

Councillor Bennett (see minute book).

44.2 The Members heard that the Joint Committee had met last week and had agreed to conduct fortnightly meetings. Closing date for replies to the NHS consultation on Best care, Best place was 22 February 2005. The Joint Committee had undertaken a tour of sites and would continue to provide progress reports.

44.3 The main focus of HOSP was still on gathering information and progressing the current NHS consultation. Proactive Health Scrutiny was being developed within the resources available.

44.4 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

45. REPORT OF THE DOME PANEL

45.1 Councillor Allen, Chair of the Dome Scrutiny Panel presented the report of the review, which had been initiated by a Policy and Resources resolution of 16th July 2003. He thanked the Panel Members who had worked well as a team and the officers for providing information.

45.2 **RESOLVED** – That the report be approved and taken forward to Policy and Resources Committee for reply; and subsequently to full Council.

JC

46. SCRUTINY REVIEWS – WORKING PROTOCOLS

46.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Strategy and Governance seeking approval to a draft protocol/ways of working for Scrutiny Panels (see minute book).

46.2 **RESOLVED** – (1) That Members note that following the transfer of the Overview and Scrutiny function to Legal Services and the Members Seminar on 14 December, proposals for improving the scrutiny arrangements will be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

(2) That, in the interim, the draft “ways of working” paper attached in Appendix 2 be approved.

47. ORAL UPDATE ON ENFORCEMENT ACTION – 7 RIDGESIDE AVENUE, PATCHAM, BRIGHTON

47.1 The Development Control Manager outlined to the Committee the procedures and background issues relating to 7 Ridgeside Avenue, Patcham.

47.2 The requirements of an Enforcement Notice served on 24 November 2004 are to be achieved by 29 March. It is not known whether the owner lodged an appeal; if so the Notice would be

placed 'on hold' until the Planning Inspectorate determine the appeal.

47.3 If premises were not brought within authorised use on time the Council could consider proceedings for non-compliance.

47.4 Planning enforcement is a discretionary power. Local authorities could agree acceptable compromises; expediency and the public interest would have to be taken into account in deciding whether or not to take enforcement action.

47.5 The Head of Law reminded the meeting that it was inappropriate for OSOC to focus on any individual planning application.

47.6 The Development Control Manager reported that the Enforcement Team Leader would be leaving and a restructuring would take place in which Enforcement Officers would work more closely with Planning Officers to provide a more cohesive team and a better customer service.

47.7 Some Members felt that procedural delays seemed to favour unlawful use of premises.

47.8 The Committee asked for a written report on planning enforcement procedures to be provided to the meeting on 11 April.

47.9 **RESOLVED** – That officers be requested to provide a written report as minuted at 47.8 above.

MvB/MB

48. ITEMS TO GO FORWARD TO COUNCIL

48.1 **RESOLVED** – That item 45, the report of the Dome Scrutiny Panel, together with any reply from Policy and Resources Committee be reported to full Council.

MvB/JC

The meeting concluded at 7.00pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2005