

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ORGANISATION COMMITTEE

5PM – 19 JULY 2004

COMMITTEE ROOMS 2/3
BRIGHTON TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Hamilton (Chair), Councillors Carden, Davidson, Edmond-Smith, Giebeler, Meegan, Pennington, Simson, G Theobald (Deputy Chair), Williams and Young.

Also in attendance: Councillor Pat Hawkes; David Hawker, Director Children Families and Schools; Peter Wright, Principal Accountant; Bobby Grant, Audit Manager, Audit Commission; Mark Wall, Head of Democratic Services; and John Chard, Member Services Manager

NB Councillor Hamilton chaired the meeting for items 1 to 9 before left the meeting. Councillor Theobald took the chair for the remaining items.

PART ONE

ACTION

1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1A Declarations of Substitutes

1.1	<u>Substitute Councillor</u>	<u>For Councillor</u>
	Pennington	Allen
	Williams	Mallender

1B Declarations of Interest

1.2 There were none.

1C Exclusion of Press and Public

1.3 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.

1.4 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting during consideration of items 1 - 14.

2. MINUTES

2.1 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2004 be approved and signed by the Chair.

3. AUDIT & INSPECTION PLAN

3.1 The Committee considered the report of the Audit Commission in relation to the Annual Audit and Inspection Plan 2004/05 (see minute book).

3.2 The special circumstances for non compliance with Council Procedural Rule 19 and Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended (items not to be considered unless the agenda is open to inspection at least five days in advance of the meeting) was that the report had not been finalised at the time of the despatch of the agenda.

3.3 The Committee noted that it was intended to carry out an inspection of Cultural Services and wondered whether this would include the library service. The Audit Manager confirmed that it would be included.

3.4 In relation to a review of the scrutiny arrangements the Committee noted that the Council was the only one in the country of a similar size operating an improved committee system working alongside the scrutiny arrangements.

3.5 **RESOLVED** – That the report on the audit and inspection plan for 2004-5 be noted.

4. PERFORMANCE MONITORING : CHILDREN, FAMILIES & SCHOOLS

4.1 (a) The Committee considered an Extract from Quarter 3 Best Value Performance Report 2003/2004 for Corporate Services (see minute book). The Committee also considered a briefing note tabled by the Director for Children Families and Schools (see minute book)

4.2 The Committee noted that the directorate was two years old and during that period had inspections carried out by Ofsted and the Social Services Inspectorate in January 2004. Both inspectorates had noted significant improvements in service performance, underpinned by a strong vision and clear leadership.

4.3 The Committee further noted that the key issues were

budgetary; the establishment of the Children's Trust; educational developments; social care and practice; consultation with the young people, parents and carers; service reviews; workforce development; and sound administration.

4.4 **RESOLVED** - That the position be noted

4.5 (b) The Committee considered an extract from Corporate Complaints database for Corporate Services and the report of the Director of Strategy and Governance (see minute book).

4.6 **RESOLVED** – That the complaints update from Corporate Complaints be noted.

5. PROVISIONS OUTTURN 2003/2004

5.1 That the Committee considered an extract from Policy & Resources Committee held on 23 June 2004 and a report from the Director of Finance & Property (see minute book).

5.2 **RESOLVED** – That the provisional out-turn for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account for 2003/2004 together with the minutes of the policy and Resources Committee be noted.

6. CAPITAL MONITORING AND PROVISION OUTTURN 2003/2004

6.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Finance & Property in relation to capital monitoring and provision outturn 2003/04 (see minute book).

6.2 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report be noted.

7. ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT FOR 2003/04

7.1 The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Corporate Services in relation to the annual audit report for 2003/04 (see minute book).

7.2 The special circumstances for non compliance with Council Procedural Rule 19 and Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended (items not to be considered unless the agenda is open to inspection at least five days in advance of the meeting) was that the report had not been finalised at the time of the despatch of the agenda.

7.3 The Committee was concerned to note the issues raised in paragraph 19 of the report about the problems encountered during the year in receiving adequate responses to draft reports. The Committee was informed that Departmental Management Teams and The Management Team received regular reports on progress regarding internal audit reports. There was also an internal report on

Scrutiny that had been produced.

7.4 The Committee also expressed concern that internal audit reports and outcomes were not seen by members but were only reported to officers.

7.5 **RESOLVED** – That the Committee notes the contents of the Annual Internal Audit Report 2003/04 and the Internal Audit Services' assurance on the City Council's control framework.

8. OLD STEINE WAR MEMORIAL RAILINGS

8.1 The Committee considered an extract from the minutes of the Environment Committee held on 1 July 2004 and the report of the Director of Environment (see minute book).

8.2 It was reported that the Planning Applications Sub Committee would consider the planning application on Wednesday 21 July 2004. It was noted that an officer within CityParks would be nominated to co-ordinate responses and who will provide practical assistance within available resources to ex-Services Associations.

8.3 The Panel considered that it was important to monitor the outcomes of scrutiny reviews and it was agreed that the Director of Cultural Services should do this.

8.4 **RESOLVED** – That the extract of the minutes of the Environment Committee together with the report of the Director of Environment be noted.

9. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

9.1 The Committee considered an extract from the minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 23 June 2004 and the report of the Director for Cultural Services concerning future scrutiny arrangements (see minute book).

9.2 The Committee expressed concern that the report on future scrutiny arrangements had been considered by the Policy and Resources Committee before it had been submitted to this Committee. This had meant that the Policy and Resources Committee had taken decisions without the benefit of the comments of this Committee. Members felt that the report had been unduly rushed and had also not taken into consideration the outcome of the audit report on scrutiny.

9.3 Members felt that it would have been helpful to have comparisons with other authorities to see how they are approaching scrutiny arrangements. Members also felt that the outcome represented a missed opportunity as to how to address the alleged

shortcomings in the existing arrangements

9.4 In addition members questioned how members of the public could raise issues for scrutiny.

9.5 **RESOLVED** – (1) That consideration of this item be deferred to the next meeting to enable further research to be carried out on the scrutiny arrangements of other authorities.

(2) That the internal audit report on scrutiny be considered at the same time.

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

10.1 The Committee considered a report from the Director of Cultural Services in relation to the position of the current scrutiny reviews and issues dealt with by the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee (EOSP) and the health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) (see minute book).

10.2 In relation to the reviews, the Committee noted that it was anticipated that the Hove Lettings Policy Scrutiny Panel and the Dome Scrutiny Panel would aim to submit reports to OSOC in November 2004.

10.3 In relation to the Communal Bins Consultation Scrutiny Panel it was agreed that the minutes of the Panel should be available to all witnesses.

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

11. ANNUAL REPORT

11.1 The Committee considered a report from the Director of Cultural Services (see minute book).

11.2 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted and submitted to the next Full Council meeting in accordance with the procedural rules for OSOC.

12. OUTLINE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2004/05

12.1 The Committee considered a report from the Director of Cultural Services in relation to the outline programme for 2004/05.

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

13. ITEMS TO GO FORWARD TO COUNCIL

13.1 **RESOLVED** – That item 11 be submitted to the next council

meeting.

14. ITEMS SCHEDULED FOR NEXT MEETING

14.1 The Committee noted that the next meeting for OSOC would be held on 13 September 2004 and that the following items would be on the agenda:

- Performance Monitoring : Housing & City Support
- Internal Audit Strategy
- Report from the Procurement Panel
- Report from the Bins Consultation Panel
- Update on Current Scrutiny Reviews
- Future scrutiny arrangements
- Best Value report on Children, Families and Schools

The meeting concluded at 7.15 pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2004