

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 25th November, 2013

6.00 - 8.45 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Duncan Smith (Chair), Nigel Britter, Barbara Driver, Colin Hay, Helena McCloskey, Diane Hibbert, Chris Ryder and Sandra Holliday
Also in attendance:	Councillor Penny Hall, Councillor Jon Walklett, Councillor Steve Jordan, Gill Morris, Pat Pratley, Councillor Tim Harman, Mark Sheldon, Councillor Peter Jeffries and Councillor Roger Whyborn

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Councillor Klara Sudbury.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Re: Agenda Item 12: The minute should read "Councillor Driver was keen to set up a task group to look at the use of 106 monies and the transparency of the process. Councillor Britter supported this." Subject to that amendment, the minutes of the last meeting held on 2^d September 2013 were approved as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS, CALLS FOR ACTIONS AND PETITIONS

None received.

5. MATTERS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

All matters that had been referred from Cabinet would be dealt with under agenda item 10.

6. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972-EXEMPT BUSINESS RESOLVED THAT

"In accordance with Section 100A(4) Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following agenda item on Gloucestershire Airport as it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public are present there will be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in paragraph 3, Part (1) Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972, namely:

Paragraph 3; Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

7. GLOUCESTERSHIRE AIRPORT (EXEMPT BUSINESS)

Councillor Tim Harman, as chair of the Joint Airport Scrutiny Working Group (JASWG) introduced their report which had been circulated with the agenda. The JASWG had considered the outcome of a strategic review of Gloucestershire Airport commissioned by Gloucester City Council (GCC). The working group supported the recommendations in the review and the committee were now being asked to endorse the report of the working group and forward it to Cabinet with any comments they wished to make.

The committee had received a presentation on the review and had the opportunity to ask questions. They then went on to debate the issues arising and agreed what points they wished to highlight to Cabinet when it considered the report. The committee asked to be kept informed of future developments with regard to the airport.

RESOLVED THAT

The recommendations of JASWG are endorsed for onward recommendations to Cabinet together with the minutes of this meeting and the issues raised.

8. UPDATE FROM THE JOINT AIRPORT WORKING SCRUTINY GROUP (JAWSG) ON THE FOURTH ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE AIRPORT'S GREEN POLICY

Councillor Harman, as chair of the Joint Airport Scrutiny Working Group, presented the report, which was circulated with the agenda. The JAWSG had met on 21 October 2013 to receive a report and presentation on the fourth review of Gloucestershire Airport's Green policy from the Operations Manager at GAL. The working group had been satisfied with progress made by GAL during the review period however it had made a specific recommendation regarding CO2 emissions.

RESOLVED THAT

- i. the report from the JASWG be endorsed**
- ii. the report be forwarded to Cabinet with a recommendation that Cabinet notes that officers will be working with Gloucestershire Airport Limited (GAL) management to consider whether the ceiling of 4,000 tonnes CO2 for aircraft emissions set down in the green policy should be recalibrated.**

9. FEEDBACK FROM OTHER SCRUTINY MEETINGS ATTENDED

Feedback from Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 6 November – Councillor Penny Hall reported on the meeting, the link to which is : <http://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=669&MId=7571&Ver=4>

Councillor Hall also reported on the monitoring of the ambulance service and the provision for out of hours Accident and Emergency care following the recent changes. The reporting of the performance of the ambulance service is improving. The service is meeting its targets in urban areas but there is concern over its performance in rural areas. There is an issue with discharge of patients

from A & E in the early hours but plans are being put in place to mitigate the situation.

Councillor Hall also updated members on points they had raised at the last O&S meeting. The issue raised by Councillor Sudbury regarding self harm and suicide was to be included in a report to the committee in January on mental health issues.

Feedback from the Police and Crime Panel meeting held on 21 November attended by Councillor Helen McCloskey.

Councillor McCloskey reported that the Police and Crime Commissioner made a presentation at the above meeting on the "Safer Days and Nights for All" initiative which involves partnership between agencies, sharing of good practice, increasing proactive interventions and promoting a diversity of the night-time economy.

The Commissioner informed the meeting that police spending was in accordance with the budget and that he is currently drafting the budget for 2014/5. Work has started on evaluating the Risk Register and this will be reported on at the next meeting of the Panel in January.

There has been an issue about the poor response time for the non-emergency 101 number due to the lack of adequately trained staff manning the service. This has been addressed by recruiting additional staff and setting up two separate teams to service the 101 number and the 999 emergency number. It will also be possible to contact the 101 service by text and e-mail in future. This information will be promoted by media release, Neighbourhood Watch information and could also be included in any literature sent out by members.

The Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner have both expressed concern about outsourcing Probation Service work and have written to the Minister of Justice. Councillor McCloskey also reported that there is a possibility of a Regional Police and Crime Panel being set up which may have more influence with central government in respect of funding issues.

10. UPDATES FROM SCRUTINY TASK GROUPS

The Committee reviewed the update of all scrutiny task groups and which had been circulated with the agenda. The chair also referred members to some additional updates on proposed scrutiny topics which had been circulated at the start of the meeting together with a briefing note from Cabinet.

The chair invited the Cabinet Member Corporate Services, Councillor Jon Walklett, to give an update on the ICT network issue which had been referred to O&S by Council in October. Councillor Walklett informed the meeting that the council had received a notice of compliance in the previous week. The Director of Resources, Mark Sheldon will be reporting to the ICT Review Working group in December. His requested to attend the meeting as an observer was noted.

Councillor Driver informed the meeting that the BBC has contacted her as a follow up on the report of the sex trade in Cheltenham carried out by the scrutiny task group she had chaired. . She has kept the Cabinet informed on this and referred the reporter to the report which went to Cabinet together with

the update report on how the recommendations were being implemented

The following are new topics for scrutiny which were agreed at the meeting:

Section 106 Agreements – consultation and enforcement; working party to include Councillors Driver and Britter. Councillor Driver indicated that some of the enforcement issues may be picked up by the scrutiny task group looking at a deprivation in the town centre so there would need to be liaison between the two groups. There will be a request sent to all Councillors for additional members.

Performance measures at Cheltenham Crematorium and Cemetery – Now and in the Future – this topic had been proposed by Councillor Ryder. The working group to include Councillors Chris Ryder, McCloskey and Driver: There will be a request sent to all Councillors for additional members.

Recording of Council Meetings – at the special meeting of Council on 18 November 2013, Council resolved to set up a scrutiny task group to consider the issue of recording a Council meeting on a permanent basis. It was agreed that the ICT working group receives a report on the viability of recording Council meetings depending on what funding is available. The funding available was to be clarified with the Cabinet Member Finance before the start of the review.

Issues referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by Cabinet:

Public Arts Panel – The Cabinet Member Leisure and Culture, Councillor Rowena Hay had requested that the Committee should review the current structure of the panel and its accountability.

Rewiring Public Services – The Leader, Councillor Steve Jordan had proposed this topic to the committee. Councillor Colin Hay to join a on a scrutiny task group co-ordinating the process of determining the CBC view on the document issued by the Local Government Association which puts forward ten proposals for changing the relationship between local and national government.

Pub Closures. Awaiting completed scrutiny registration form from the proposer, Councillor Hay

11. REVIEW OF SCRUTINY WORKPLAN

The Committee reviewed the 2012/13 work plan. It will remain the same with the addition of considering an update from the Deprivation Working Group at the next meeting on 9 January 2014.

Councillor Chris Ryder requested that the Committee also consider a report from the Cheltenham Crematorium and Cemetery scrutiny task group. The Chair of the Committee suggested that he be contacted in advance of the meeting to determine whether any assurances had been received which could be communicated to the Committee.

12. QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Strategy and Engagement Manager, Richard Gibson, presented the Information/ Discussion Paper – Review of the council's half-year performance which was circulated in advance of the meeting.

The paper analyses the council's corporate performance against the corporate strategy. Richard Gibson reported that overall performance is reasonably good and invited questions from the Committee members.

A member asked whether the percentage of planning appeals allowed were increasing or decreasing and if this could be correlated to decisions made by Committee or under delegated authority. She also asked what was the impact on pre - application advice on the number of planning applications refused. Richard Gibson to provide information at a later date.

A member asked why only 88% of staff appraisals had been completed. Officers advised there has been a delay in completing those for staff working in the art gallery and museum because of the disruption of the refurbishment. Some delays have also been caused by maternity leave and long term sickness but the appraisal programme is subject to monitoring and tracking and there are no major concerns at present.

A member asked about the low performance of Leisure@ in respect to the end of year targets. The council is commissioning a review of leisure and culture which will include current performance. There is no working group monitoring the performance at present. It was suggested that the Budget Scrutiny Working Group should undertake the task and the relevant Cabinet Member and officers should be invited to the meeting of 9 January 2014 and report alongside the budget proposals.

A member queried why the milestones to develop the business case for the relocation of the council's offices have not been met and do not have a new action plan attached to them. The 2014/15 Action Plan will be considered by the Senior Leadership Team and more information can be provided about any remedial plans. Cabinet discussions have taken place and suitable alternative locations are still being considered. Councillor Hay noted that the delay in that milestone being reached will have implications on the two further milestones.

It was suggested that at future meetings the Committee be appraised of only those areas which are underperforming rather than receive a full report. It was agreed that a briefing note will be available for the January meeting re Leisure@ and those notes will be tabled at the meeting on 3 March 2014.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is 9 January 2014 at 6pm. Councillor Smith informed the meeting that he will chair the meeting of the 9th and will then step down. Councillor Barbara Driver will take over the role of chair of O&S from that point.

Duncan Smith
Chairman