

Cheltenham Borough Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee Minutes

Meeting date: 17 April 2023

Meeting time: 6.00 pm - 7.55 pm

In attendance:

Councillors:

Councillor John Payne (Chair), Councillor Steve Harvey (Vice-Chair), Councillor Graham Beale, Councillor Jackie Chelin, Councillor Stephan Fifield, Councillor Tabi Joy, Councillor Julian Tooke, Councillor Suzanne Williams and Councillor Glenn Andrews (Reserve)

Also in attendance:

1 Apologies

Cllr. Britter sent apologies, with Cllr. Andrews substituting.

2 Declarations of interest

Cllr. Harvey declared a direct interest in item 12 as a member of the Cheltenham Trust's board, and his intention to leave the Council Chamber for the duration of that item.

3 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the 27th February meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

4 Public and Member questions, calls for actions and petitions

There were none.

5 Cabinet Briefing

The Leader did not have a briefing at this time, but was happy to respond to any questions from Members.

The Chair recalled that the Deputy Leader had been asked at the last O&S meeting about the reasoning given for the council's unsuccessful bid for Levelling Up funding. The Leader was happy to circulate the letter she had received on this topic. It was not that their bid had not been good enough, but rather that others were better. Not getting the funding was disappointing but it would not stop them going ahead with the Innovation Centre.

6 Matters referred to committee

Two matters had been referred to O&S by Council on 20th March. It was agreed that both matters would be the responsibility of the Chair's group, as they related to future items.

7 Feedback from other scrutiny meetings attended

Cllr. Clucas' update from the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel on 24th March, Cllr. McCloskey's update from the Gloucestershire Economic Growth O&S Committee on 30th March and Cllr. Bamford's update from the Gloucestershire Health O&S Committee on 14th March were taken as read.

Cllr. Harvey thanked the representatives on other scrutiny committees for raising important issues on Overview & Scrutiny's behalf.

Cllr. Tooke queried the mention of reducing over-recording of crime within the Police and Crime Panel report, suggesting that the under-recording of crime might be the issue rather than the opposite. If it was indeed under-recorded, then he wanted to know the impact on victim experience, the impact on resource planning and why this was the case. The Chair was happy to feed this back to the council's representative to see if she could get a direct response. Cllr. Tooke added that the Police and Crime Commissioner could be invited back to O&S too, which the Chair agreed with.

Cllr. Chelin asked about the procedure for asking questions of the Economic Growth O&S Committee. The Executive Director Place and Communities was happy to look into this and respond offline.

Cllr. Payne noted that the statistics in the HOSC report did not paint a rosy picture of health in Gloucestershire, especially regarding out-of-hours services. A recent update on dental provision had led him to ask the Deputy Leader to contact the Chair of HOSC directly, though he had not yet received a reply.

8 Updates from scrutiny task groups

The update from the Scrutiny Task Group on Tackling Multiple Deprivation was taken as read.

9 Review of scrutiny workplan

The O&S workplan was taken as read. The Chair noted that the 5th June agenda was looking particularly busy at the moment, so it might be necessary to consider some deferrals in consultation with officers.

Cllr. Tooke hoped the future item on accessibility would look at access for all groups and demographics, rather than just wheelchair access. The Chair added that the accessibility forum also looked at these issues, and he would pick the question up offline.

Cllr. Harvey suggested that the race week scheduled for June could benefit from input from a police representative at bronze or silver command level. The Chair agreed that this could be useful. Cllr. Fifield asked whether there could be representatives from the county council and Jockey Club too. The Chair responded that the chair's group would consider how best to review the issue, and agreed that a good range of invitees would be appropriate.

10 Date of next meeting

5th June.

11 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXEMPT INFORMATION

The committee resolved to move into exempt session.

12 Cheltenham Trust

Richard Gibson (Head of Communities, Wellbeing and Partnerships), Laurie Bell (Trust CEO) and Louis Eperjesi (Chair of the Board) gave a presentation on the ongoing situation with the Trust and responded to Member questions.