

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD
21st February, 2018

Present:- Councillor Steele (in the Chair); Councillors Cowles, Clark, Cusworth, Evans, Mallinder, Napper, Sheppard, Short and Walsh.

Apologies for absence:- Councillors Brookes and Wyatt.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-

<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

104. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER, 7 DECEMBER, 14 DECEMBER AND 20 DECEMBER 2017

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, held on the following dates and as now submitted, be approved as correct records for signature by the Chairman:-

22nd November, 2017

7th December, 2017

14th December, 2017

20th December, 2017

105. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made at this meeting.

106. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

107. CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY AND SUPPORT FOR ALL CUSTOMERS

Consideration of this item was deferred until a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

108. SCRUTINY REVIEW OF AGENCY, INTERIM AND CONSULTANCY USE

Further to Minute No. 92(5) of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on 17th February, 2017, consideration was given to a report, presented by the Senior Adviser (Scrutiny and Member Development) concerning the outcome of the cross-party scrutiny review of the Council's use of agency, interim and consultancy staff. The purpose of the review was to seek assurance that the Council measured performance and value for money in its use of agency staff and consultants and was taking appropriate action to maintain spending within acceptable

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limits. The recommendations of the scrutiny review group were based on information and evidence collated during the course of the review and the review group's challenge of existing practices and developing protocols.

The full report of the scrutiny review of agency, interim and consultancy use, including its recommendations, was included with the agenda for this meeting.

Members discussed the following salient issues:-

: the need for more clarity in the reporting of spending on agencies and consultants;

: the intention of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to review progress twice per year to ensure that progress is being maintained in reducing expenditure on the use of agencies and consultants;

: learning from the contributions of agencies and consultants in order to increase capacity within the Council;

: the impact on working hours, employees 'multi-skilling' and employee remuneration;

: the reporting of the outcome of the audit of the number of agency staff who are in post for a continual period of twelve months or longer.

It was also noted that this scrutiny review had coincided with the inception of the Council's Workforce Development Board and the review group had undertaken the challenge of that Board's work as the scrutiny review progressed. Many of the scrutiny review groups findings had been implemented prior to completion of the report of this review. The twice-yearly review, referred to above, will include the role of the Workforce Development Board.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the report and recommendations of the scrutiny review of agency, interim and consultancy use, as now submitted, be approved and forwarded to a meeting of the full Council for its consideration.

(3) That the Cabinet also be requested to consider the report and recommendations of this scrutiny review and to report its response and action plan to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

109. DCLG SELECT COMMITTEE - EFFECTIVENESS OF SCRUTINY

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Senior Adviser (Scrutiny and Member Development) stating that the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Select Committee had conducted a review of the effectiveness of local authority overview and scrutiny committees and had published its report in December, 2017. A copy of the Select Committee's full report was included with the agenda.

The Select Committee's report discussed the role of scrutiny, party politics and organisational culture, accessing information, resources, Members' training and skills, the role of the public, the scrutiny of public services provided by external bodies and the scrutiny of combined authorities.

In considering the Select Committee's various recommendations in respect of increasing the effectiveness and profile of scrutiny in local authorities, Members noted that a number of the recommendations were already in practice in this Council:-

- scrutiny committees reporting to full Council, rather than to the Executive of the Council;
- scrutiny committees having access to financial and performance data held by the local authority, including commercially sensitive information;
- Members of the Executive attend scrutiny committee meetings only when invited to do so as witnesses.

Members also discussed the following salient issues:-

: there should be scrutiny of the procurement processes, especially in cases where the Council enters into high-value contracts for periods of several years;

: ensuring parity of esteem between Scrutiny and the Executive;

: the continuing improvements being made to this Council's scrutiny processes.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the Chair of the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Select Committee, Clive Betts M.P. be invited to attend a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for discussion of the improvements being made to scrutiny processes in this Council.

(3) That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board shall build into its work programme consideration of the involvement of scrutiny in major procurement/commissioning exercises to ensure that democratic oversight is maintained.

110. YOUTH CABINET/YOUNG PEOPLE'S ISSUES

Discussion took place on the arrangements for the Children's Commissioner's Take-over Day meeting, to be held at the Town Hall, Rotherham on Thursday, 1st March, 2018, commencing at 5.00 p.m. All Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board are to be invited to attend and it was confirmed that representatives of a number of schools will also be present. The meeting would include consideration of the work experience arrangements for secondary school pupils.

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

111. WORK IN PROGRESS

Health Select Commission:-

The Chair reported on the recent activities of the Health Select Commission:-

: Members of the Health Select Commission had recently attended an interesting and informative visit to Carnson House, Moorgate Road, Rotherham, a facility which offers a confidential service for adults in Rotherham aged 18 years or older, who are tackling or recovering from problematic alcohol use;

: the agenda for this Select Commission's next meeting will include an item about the Council's Carers' Strategy.

Improving Lives Select Commission:-

The Chair reported on the recent activities of the Improving Lives Select Commission:-

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: the Select Commission continues to engage with issues involving the voice of the child; the Lifestyle Survey 2017 (a survey of Year 7 and Year 10 pupils attending secondary school in Rotherham) had recently been considered;

: the Select Commission has also just considered issues concerning children who are missing from education;

: this Select Commission has two sub-groups considering (i) adult education/learning; and (ii) performance issues;

: future agenda items for this Select Commission will include

- complex abuse processes;
- this Council's child-friendly Borough initiative;
- the recommendations and accompanying action plan arising from the recent inspection of this Council's Children and Young People's Services by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted);
- an update on the following initiatives : 'edge of care', family group conferencing and multi-systemic therapy.

Improving Places Select Commission:-

The Chair reported on the recent activities of the Improving Places Select Commission:-

: recent consideration of the forthcoming use of the temporary bus station on the Forge island site within the Rotherham town centre (whilst the interchange is being refurbished), including passenger facilities and safety on the temporary site and the possibility of traffic congestion at Corporation Street, Rotherham, which will accommodate temporary bus stops;

: consideration of the repairs and investment contract for public sector housing in the Rotherham Borough area; issues include : the role of the contractors Mears and Fortem; performance indicators; the calculation of the value for money achieved by the contracts; safeguarding on site; apprenticeships for women in the construction industry; Members of the select Commission will be making visits of inspection to view work in progress on Friday, 4th May, 2018;

: at a recent meeting, the Select Commission had welcomed an official from the office of the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner who was developing the neighbourhoods' integrated working together strategy

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

The Chair reported that, further to Minute No. 137 of the meeting of the Council held on 24th January, 2018, the Chief Fire Officer of the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is to be invited to attend a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for discussion about the reinstatement of the second pump at the Rotherham Fire Station, Fitzwilliam Road, Eastwood.

Resolved:- That the information shared in relation to the Select Commissions' activities be noted.

112. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call-in requests.