



Minutes of a meeting held remotely of Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 25 May 2021.

In accordance with relevant legislation, these minutes are a record of decisions taken. They are not intended to be a verbatim account of the meeting. A full webcast of the meeting can be accessed on the Council's Website at www.Cotswold.gov.uk

Councillors present:

Stephen Andrews – Chair
Claire Bloomer
Patrick Coleman
Roly Hughes

Gary Selwyn – Vice-Chair
Dilys Neill
Richard Norris
Ray Theodoulou

Stephen Hirst

Officers present:

Chief Executive
Group Manager, Strategic Support
Business Manager, Corporate Responsibility

Chief Accountant
Democratic Services
Monitoring Officer

OS.65 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Gina Blomefield and Andrew Maclean.

OS.66 Substitute Members

Councillor Hirst substituting for Councillor Blomefield.

OS.67 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Hirst indicated that he was once a governor of Sir William Romney's School, Tetbury. Having taken the advice of the Monitoring Officer it was agreed that in the context of the aims of the report presented at Item 9 this was not a material interest.

OS.68 Minutes

RESOLVED that subject to the following additions to minute numbers OS.61 and OS.62, the minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2021, be approved as a true record:

OS.61 - 106 Monitoring - Members noted that this issue had been presented to this Committee before and that the same issues seemed to be appearing, including the monitoring of S106 payments due to Gloucestershire and the need for a fee to be charged. They were assured that this would be a matter addressed within the Local Plan Update. Consideration would also be given to what statistics might best assist monitoring and evaluation by the committee.

OS.62 - Planning Enforcement Update - Members noted that a number of historic cases were listed as only requiring a formal report before closure, yet still remained "live". It was suggested that the need for the development of metrics, such as (e.g.) the number of live cases older than 6 months, 1 year etc. be addressed.

Record of Voting – for 8, against 0, abstention 1, absent 1.

OS.69 Chair's Announcements

There were no announcements from the Chair at this point in the meeting.

OS.70 Public Questions

No questions had been received from the public.

OS.71 Member Questions

No questions had been received from Members.

OS.72 Called-in Decisions

No executive decisions had been the subject of Call-In since the Committee's previous Meeting.

OS.73 Tetbury and Fairford Leisure Provision Task and Finish Group - Final Report

Councillor Gary Selwyn, Chair of the Task and Finish Group introduced the report. He gave thanks to the Members of the group, Councillors Dilys Neill and Gina Blomefield, together with Officers who supported the group, with their experience and expertise, who were the Group Manager, Strategic Support, Chief Accountant and Democratic Services.

The group approached this task with an open mind starting with a desktop review of all the papers available to the group. Interviewees contributed to the debate and the group paused regularly to discuss feedback and agree the next steps in the process.

Nearly a decade has passed since the decisions were taken, some interviewees had very clear memories, others far less, and not everyone was available. Councillor Selwyn was very confident that the report presented to the Committee gave an informative record and clear objectives on lessons which may be learnt. He noted that the Cabinet had commissioned a

Leisure Strategy, and the findings of the report could be taken into account in the final strategy.

Councillor Selwyn also explained the different sections of the report, giving the background to the review, that this was not a formal investigation, it was an informal group approach to highlight key issues, concerns expressed with the leisure provision in Tetbury and Fairford, and lessons learnt from the review to be recommended to Cabinet.

Comments from Members and answers from the Task and Finish Group were as follows:

- (a) Reference was made to the council receiving the accounts and reports from the centres. The group had reviewed all the reports and accounts available to them.
- (b) The group also considered whether the strict and proper guidelines were followed when the contract was awarded to the schools, Members questioned whether a new set of guidelines were necessary.
- (c) Schools were not primarily set up to provide leisure facilities, they were to teach children and the safeguarding issues at the schools were paramount. Safeguarding was not something that the group specifically considered, although this was a valid consideration in the provision of leisure facilities on school sites.
- (d) It was noted that the schools in Tetbury and Fairford did not have swimming pools at the time when they took over the facilities, which would have been a big attraction for people.
- (e) The group did consider the issue of whether when the schools took over the facilities, was it realistic that they would have been able to achieve success as a leisure operator, without public subsidy, if the Council was unable to make a success of these sites.
- (f) It was noted that the Cotswold School in Chipping Campden did pull out at an early stage of these negotiations and the pool and the gym at the school were run by two different organisations.

It was proposed that the key lessons set out below be recommended to Cabinet. This was proposed by Councillor Andrews and seconded by Councillor Selwyn.

RESOLVED that the findings of the Task and Finish Group, set out below, be recommended to Cabinet:

- (i) Clear service requirements and desired outcomes need to guide all procurement and service delivery decisions, so that there is a robust process to evaluate quality, viability, social value and community impact, in addition to financial cost.**
- (ii) Strategic needs analysis should be used to bring objectivity to good commissioning decision making, so that the desired outcomes are delivered sustainably.**
- (iii) The robustness of cost : quality assessments brought to formal procurement evaluations should apply equally to other commissioning routes, so that risks, quality, viability and efficiencies are all considered as part of the due diligence process.**

- (iv) Reports to Members should explicitly frame alternative options and the associated risks, costs and benefits so that a clearer understanding between cost and social value informs their decisions.
- (v) Any significant proposed changes to service provision (or policy decisions) should be subject to an impact assessment, so that any potentially positive or negative impacts are understood, as well as presenting an opportunity to better involve stakeholders in our decision making process.
- (vi) Formal monitoring of relevant grant agreements should be undertaken in conjunction with finance, so that any concerns over financial viability of a service can be identified at the earliest opportunity.

Record of Voting – for 9, against 0, abstention 0, absent 1.

OS.74 Future meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Business Manager, Corporate Responsibility introduced the report explaining some new ways of working for the Committee which would add value to the work of the Committee. The following points were highlighted:

- (a) The Cabinet Forward Plan would be a new recurring item on the agenda.
- (b) Task and Finish Groups would look at specific pieces of work, scoping these groups and ensuring resources were available prior to commencement.
- (c) Presentations could be given on bigger issues, such as Broadband.
- (d) The work plan of the Committee would be much more focussed on key issues, scoping out pieces of work, with a template to work from.
- (e) Training for the Committee would take place.

This would shape the work of the Committee, working together with the Cabinet, although having independence as the Committee would not be carrying out the work of the Cabinet.

RESOLVED that the report and any comments made be noted.

OS.75 Draft Work Plan 2021/22

The next meeting was to take place on 29 June 2021, which would include items on Crime and Disorder, Publica Update, along with other standing items.

The Meeting commenced at 4.00 pm and closed at 5.45 pm

Chair

(END)

Unconfirmed