

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 JUNE 2018

Present: Councillors Webb (Chair), Rankin, Davies (Vice-Chair), Barnett, Battley, Beaney, Berelson, Cox, Evans and Beaver

Apologies for absence were noted for Councillors Charman and Foster

### 25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor	Item	Interest
Beaver	4 – Performance and Financial Monitoring for 2017/18	He has a membership at the leisure centre mentioned in the report.
Evans	4 – Performance and Financial Monitoring for 2017/18	She has a membership at the leisure centre mentioned in the report.
Battley	4 – Performance and Financial Monitoring for 2017/18	He regularly uses the facilities at the leisure centre mentioned in the report.
Webb	4 – Performance and Financial Monitoring for 2017/18	He is an East Sussex County Councillor
Cox	4 – Performance and Financial Monitoring for 2017/18	She lives in a house that is subject to the Selective Licensing Scheme currently.
Rogers	4 – Performance and Financial Monitoring for 2017/18	She is employed by Table Tennis England

### 26. MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 8 FEBRUARY 2018

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 February 2018 be approved as a correct record of the meeting.

### 27. PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING FOR 2017/18 - YEAREND

The committee began the discussion, taking an introduction from Jane Hartnell, Director of Corporate Services and Governance. She noted that whilst it was important to address where performance did not meet targets and/or needs to be improved, it is

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 JUNE 2018

equally important to focus on the successes and achievements that sits behind a huge amount of work.

The committee discussed the section of the report “Cleaner and Safer”. The committee raised a question in regards to the target of 110 for failed bin collections (per 100,000) and whether this could be changed to 100 as a statement of intent for the new contract to be confirmed by Cabinet. It was stated that this would be difficult to manage, as the bids for the street cleaning service contract are coming in on 18 June 2018, making them difficult to change and influence now.

Further to this, the committee asked what the response should be to complaints about the state of cleanliness on the beach. The Lead Councillor for the Environment and Equalities Portfolio stated that there was a plan organised for detritus on the beach, but the contractor’s management team had been removed so ensuring performance was improved remains challenging. He did confirm that default issues were being issued.

Questions were raised in regards to the Kingdom Contract pilot, and the progress from this. The Assistant Director, Environment and Place stated that the staff retention for the kingdom contract had been a challenge which has impacted on their overall performance. He did continue to explain that there was really helpful information taken from the pilot – firstly on who was committing the offences, and secondly whether they were residents of the town rather than visitors. This intelligence will inform proposals about alternatives and options in regards to enforcement and the use of the Warden’s service in the town.

The Councillors discussed indicators in the report. The first was a question in regards to the 5% target on quarters one, two and four on improved street and environmental cleanliness. It was explained that this has been a longstanding indicator (NI195) and is monitored by an investigative survey, completed three times a year by a contractor who do a selection of objective criteria. The target meant that if any more than 5% of these criteria were logged, the contractor would have failed to meet their targets.

The second was on the target of 200 homes meeting a required standard in quarter four and what this means. It was explained that this 200 home target was for 200 homes to have been inspected throughout the entirety of the year. The Director of Corporate Services confirmed that a list of indicators definitions and direction of travel information would be provided to assist with understanding of the indicators within the report.

Another discussion point on indicators was that of a regular indicator for the issuing of tickets, and whether this information was available somewhere. The answer was that there was some information on default notices and the hotspots of where they were being issued.

A question was asked in regards to information held on fly-tipping and how the current waste contractors could be held accountable with this information. The answer was that there was information held and used as part of discussions with the contractor in relation to performance issues.

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 JUNE 2018

Councillors asked whether there was a correlation between areas where dumping occurred regularly and super output areas. It was stated that there was a correlation, but as these areas are largely the more deprived parts of the town, we know that residents in these areas may not have the means to transport items to the tip and may well be living more chaotic lifestyles than other areas of the town.

There was also a query about the obligations of social landlords to cleansing. It was stated that some social landlords in the borough were responsible for the areas they operated in, and they were not included in the current contract.

Thanks were given to officers by the committee for their work, especially in regards to weather response plans.

Councillors went on to discuss the current indicators in the report. Target 6, increased number of visitors to Hastings Museum and Art Gallery, was queried as to why the current indicator notes the absolute total rather than a target of increase. This query was noted.

Target 7 - the increased number of people using council Leisure centres was also questioned – as to why the target focused on people rather than visits to the centres. It was explained that in the leisure centre contract there are no targets for attendees to the centre currently, but there are a suite of other indicators within the contract.. The Lead Member for the Housing and Leisure Portfolio stated that pressure was being put on the leisure centre contactors around the pricing of their sessions and the new equipment they use. Councillors discussed that the lack of attendance may be down to affordability.

A general question was raised in regards to the setting of targets, and why targets were being lowered rather than staying the same, even if the target was not met. The response given was that targets must be realistic and that when drafted these reflect previous performance and direction of travel which will be circulated where available to the committee in due course.

Councillors discussed housing and planning in the borough, and raised questions on an issue with another local authority. Eleanor Evans, Planning Services Manager updated the committee on this issue and outlined the associated impact on performance and associated ongoing challenges.

It was noted that major application targets were on track; however there was a lack of staff resources and this could further mean that issues could arise with meeting these targets in the future.

Councillors discussed affordable homes, and what can actually be defined as affordable housing. It was stated that affordable housing is currently 80% of the local market.

Indicator 25, the proportion of working days / shifts lost due to sickness absence was discussed. A question was raised about whether it could be split in to short and long term sickness. The request was noted.

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 JUNE 2018

It was conveyed that efforts were being made to get staff back to working health as soon as possible, so that the pressures on teams who were left without colleagues due to sickness could be alleviated.

Furthermore, it was stated by the Lead Member for the Corporate Services Portfolio that there was awareness training for staff, and appointed mental health champions. It was also noted that most mental health sicknesses were not work related, and measures were made to help employees stay active in the workplace, such as yoga and a table tennis table.

High rates of flu incidence were acknowledged during January and March, and the subsequent impact of this on the sickness absence figures. It was suggested that this could be possibly offset in the future by offering staff flu vaccinations. The flu vaccinations are currently only in place for front line staff. Offering flu vaccinations more widely could assist with future resilience arrangements.

MyHastings was then discussed and Councillors identified the associated challenges of digital inclusion. It was noted that the IT literacy of people was rising, and Hastings has some of the highest IT literacy in the nation. It was also acknowledged that increasingly moving services online also offsets demand on back office staff and the example of Christmas was given where when the council offices were closed there was more online access of services. It was noted that going forward it will be important to continue moving services online and potentially make some services online only, mindful to the challenges of digital exclusion.

The committee acknowledged the success of the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme but noted that changing circumstances meant that we cannot continue the scheme into the near future.

### **RESOLVED that:**

1. **That the committee's comments on 2017/18 performance be addressed by the relevant Lead Members(s) with appropriate action and report back.**
2. **That performance indicator targets for 2018/19 are considered and agreed**
3. **That staff be thanked for their hard work and achievements**

The reason for these recommendations were:

To assist the council to undertake performance management arrangements.

## 28. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW OF EDUCATION INTERIM REPORT**

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 JUNE 2018

Mark Horan, Continuous Improvement and Democratic Services Manager presented the Review of Education Interim Report. This was to update Members on Scrutiny review work with regards to Education and to propose next steps for continued Scrutiny work in this area..

He explained that a review on education in the borough went on as part of the 2017/18 Scrutiny programme, building on previous Scrutiny reviews in the area. This review was chaired by Councillor Rankin. Cllr Rankin suggested the review was very helpful in terms of inviting in representatives from the local education bodies to discuss issues with the quality of education in the borough. The outstanding question that the new Scrutiny committee will need to decide is the extent to which they retain a focus on Education in their 2018/19 programme.

Questions were raised by the committee in regards to the grant from the Education Opportunities Area. There were some important facts to note, in that these grants could only be used for revenue, and not capital expenditure. Furthermore, that it was important that funds are spread out evenly between all partners in the borough, so that not just one organisation receives the funding.

It was agreed that these issues will be considered by the committee at their forthcoming Scrutiny Steering Group and that a representative from the new Scrutiny committee would work with the leader and/or deputy leader to forward plan for the quarterly Opportunities Area briefings. The appropriate representative from Scrutiny would also need to be agreed by the committee.

It was agreed that this would be discussed at a Scrutiny Steering group in the future.

### **RESOLVED that:**

- 1. The 2017/18 Education Scrutiny review team recommends that the 2018/19 Scrutiny Members work programme includes a continued focus on the local education landscape.**
- 2. That should recommendation 1 be agreed, then the 2018/19 Scrutiny chair or her/his Scrutiny nominee in conjunction with the Leader of the Council facilitate the Opportunities Area briefings to HBC Members to involve (a) chairing the briefing meetings and (b) preparing lines of inquiry.**

The reason for these recommendations was:

Scrutiny has a longstanding interest in local education attainment and opportunity and this is shared with cabinet colleagues and members more broadly. It is therefore important that members have fruitful dialogue with Opportunity Area colleagues to ensure longstanding concerns are being raised and addressed in a coordinated manner where possible.

### **29. UPDATE ON THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2017/18**

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 JUNE 2018

Mark Horan, Continuous Improvement and Democratic Services Manager presented an update on the Overview and Scrutiny committee's work programme for 2017/18.

The committee welcomed a potential focus on education for the upcoming programme subject to agreement by the new committee at their annual planning meeting. The programme for 2017/18 was now complete. A Scrutiny Steering Group will be scheduled shortly to prepare for the annual planning meeting.

**RESOLVED that:**

**The committee note the updates to the overview and scrutiny work programme for 2017/18.**

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.12pm)