

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 June 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr S Bartlett – Chairman

Cllr S Aitkenhead – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr B Dove, Cllr C Goodall, Cllr K Salmon, Cllr M Tarling, Cllr T Trent,
Cllr O Walters and Cllr K Rampton (In place of Cllr P Broadhead)

Also in attendance: Cllr J Hanna and Cllr V Slade

1. Apologies

Apologies for this meeting were received from Cllr P Broadhead and Cllr Dedman

2. Substitute Members

Cllr K Rampton substituted for Cllr P Broadhead.

3. Election of Chair

In accordance with the Constitution Meeting Procedure Rules Councillor Tarling was selected by the Committee members prior to the start of the meeting to preside over the over the meeting for this item and the preceding items. A nomination was received and seconded for Councillor S Bartlett. There being no further nominations it was:

RESOLVED that Councillor S Bartlett be elected Chair of the Corporate and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2023/24 municipal year.

4. Election of Vice-Chair

A nomination for Vice-Chair was received and seconded for Cllr S Aitkenhead. There being no further nominations it was:

RESOLVED that Cllr S Aitkenhead be elected Vice-Chair of the Corporate and Community O&S Committee for the 2023/24 municipal year.

5. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

Cllr M Tarling advised for the purpose of transparency in relation to agenda item 9, Pay and Reward that his wife was an employee of BCP.

6. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February were approved as a correct record subject to an amendment to include the correct wording for the first public question and a minor amendment to the questioners name in the response to the second questions.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting were confirmed subject to the outlined amendments.

7. Public Issues

There were no public issues on this occasion.

8. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report

The Overview and Scrutiny Specialist presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these minutes in the Minute Book. In addition, the Scrutiny Specialist referred to a power point presentation, a copy of which is published on the Councils website.

The Committee was advised that Overview and Scrutiny was a statutory function of all councils operating an executive model of decision making. In relation to this the Committee was advised that in BCP Council, O&S activity is carried out by four O&S committees formed of councillors and co-opted members. In addition, the Committee was informed that there is a requirement to report on the work of O&S to Council, to ensure good visibility of the function and Council ownership of any improvements required. The Committee was advised that the annual report contains a summary of O&S activity undertaken over 2019-23, reflections on working practices and an action plan identifying strategic improvements to the O&S function. In relation to this the Committee was informed that all O&S Committees had received the annual report for consideration, providing opportunity for comment prior to the supply of the final report to Council.

In the subsequent discussion a number of points were raised including:

- A reasonable notice of issues coming forward needed to be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny bodies.
- There were also opportunities for the Committee to add value, plan and contribute to various issues.
- There were only 4 meetings remaining for the remainder of the year and therefore there was a need to be really careful about how work was selected.
- There would be a need to work outside of the Committee if the Committee was able to achieve meaningful scrutiny.

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- It was noted that any Councillor was able to request items to come forward to Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- There would be regular meetings between the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny bodies.
- Special meetings can be constituted if they are required for particular issues. However, the Committee would need to be mindful of resource across the Council and within Democratic Services. There were also opportunities for work outside the committee and this would need to be managed appropriately.
- Use of Scrutiny's powers to effectively look at policy document and build a picture around the issue by calling people to account and effectively investigating different issues.
- The Committee would need to develop its own work programme and would need to find ways to address this effectively. The Chairman commented that the more robust overview and scrutiny is the better the democratic process is.
- Ways of working. The Chairman advised that there may be a need to require sub-Committees and hoped that the Committee would be able to effectively utilise the use of rapporteurs.
- That the work programme for the Committee can change and whilst there was a need to be agile there needed to be a flexible process in agreeing the agenda.
- The importance of Overview and Scrutiny to the democratic process which should be done thoroughly and competently.

9. Pay and Reward

The Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Resources presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these minutes in the Minute Book. The report provided an update on the progress to date with the Pay and Reward project. The report shows evidence on the massive amount of work which has been undertaken to date in the development of this project.

The Portfolio Holder also noted his appreciation of the work undertaken by all members of staff since the inception of BCP Council and it was hoped that this would be resolved and implemented as soon as possible. The Director for People and Culture advised that the purpose of the programme was to resolve the discrepancies in the inherited terms and conditions and grading structures. Staff were TUPEd across from the preceding Councils and these were on different terms which employees remained on.

In February 2023 the entire offer for Pay and Reward was handed over to the trade unions and following a period of review the unions came back with a number of queries around the offer which needed to be resolved if they were to agree to move forward to ballot their members. It was hoped that this would be able to be resolved as soon as possible in order to bring forward the completion of this project.

In the subsequent discussion members made a number of comments, including:

- Whether it was legal to dismiss and reengage an employee on different terms and conditions. If in the event an agreement could not be reached with trade unions this would be considered as the Council would have a duty to address the equal pay issues within the organisation. It was confirmed that the process was lawful but would be a last resort.
- What percentage of staff were members of the negotiating trade unions. The Committee was advised that this information was not available as the trade unions were not obliged to share it and had chosen not to but the unions do act on behalf of all Council staff regardless of the percentage in membership.
- It was confirmed that BBML sat outside of this process and the arrangements for their terms and conditions were considered separately. At present there was no plan to review this. There were a number of companies within the companies portfolio. It was anticipated that there would be a members induction session on the various companies to ensure there was a real understanding of the relationships.

The Chair commented that the Council was progressing this and hoped that agreement would be reached with the unions.

10. Forward Plan

The Chairman presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these minutes in the Minute Book. The Corporate and Community Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee was asked to consider and identify work priorities for its next meeting pending a wider review of its Work Plan in dedicated workshop. The Chairman asked the Committee if there were any comments or suggestions for items for the next meeting.

The Scrutiny Specialist advised that there was a work plan currently in place for the Committee but it was acknowledged that with a new Committee membership there was a need to review this. Members were asked if they could submit any items in advance of the work programming workshop.

The Chairman raised an issue concerning Blue Badges and the process of applying for a badge. There was a general consensus that this should be looked into by the Committee and the membership for the group was agreed.

The Scrutiny Specialist confirmed that this proposal was for a member led process to gather information to evaluate whether to take this forward.

The Committee noted the work plan and the proposal to hold a work programming workshop in July.

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The meeting ended at 7.29 pm

CHAIRMAN