

Report to Council

Subject: Overview and Scrutiny Report to Council – April 2015

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny

Date: 21 April 2015

Chairman: Councillor R Morgan

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Progress report from February 2015 to the Present be noted.**

Report:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting 10 February 2015

1. At our meeting on Monday 10 February we received a report on the draft Corporate Plan for 2015 to 2020. We noted that the current Corporate Plan ended on 31 March 2015 and this new Corporate Plan had been developed to take the authority forward over the next five years. On close consideration of the new plan and its strategic aims we went on to have a brief discussion on how this could be made more widely available to members of the public. In conclusion we agreed with the new Corporate Plan and Key Action Plan.
2. We then considered the final report of the O&S Panel Framework Review Task and Finish Panel. This Panel had been established in July 2014 to review the Council's existing Scrutiny Panel framework.
3. The Panel had also considered the possible combination of the Audit and Governance Committee with the Standards Committee, but on reflection the Panel agreed that the possible combination of these two Committees should be omitted from its recommendations.
4. They concluded, and we agreed that, the new structure be based on a four 'Select Committee' system and their general responsibilities were to reflect the four new Directorates. Also, they recommended the continuation of the Constitution and Member Services Scrutiny Panel as a 'Constitution Working Group' to continue its current work on updating of the Constitution. Along with various other recommendations made by the Panel, we agreed that this new system should be implemented in the new municipal year.
5. We then considered a consultation put to us by the Lea Valley Regional Park Authority of its Park Development Framework. While it was not a planning authority, they had a duty to prepare plans for the management and development of the park.
6. We were in general agreement with the majority of their proposals, however there were two matters that caused us concern. Firstly the significant amount of new buildings being proposed and the impact this would have on the green belt. And secondly, there was their reference to the use of Compulsory Purchase Powers for large areas of glasshouses. We noted that the Authority had advised that it was not its intention to use compulsory purchase powers to undermine existing businesses, but the words used in the consultation were not clear on this point. We agreed the draft response as long as it also included our concern on these two points.
7. We then went on to review the Committee's and the Scrutiny Panel's work programme to date.
8. We noted that that the County's Mental Health Services were to give a presentation to

our Committee at our March meeting and discussed the issues we would like them to present on and wondered if the Youth Council would like to be present and ask their own questions.

9. Finally, we reviewed the Cabinet's Forward Plan but had no specific items that we wanted to consider.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting 23 March 2015

10. At our meeting on Monday 23 March we received a presentation from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. We welcomed Chris Martin, the Integrated Commissioning Director (West) and Christine Pace, the CAMHS Commissioning Lead. They gave us an update on the joint re-commissioning of the emotional wellbeing and mental health services for Children and Young People in Southend, Essex and Thurrock. We noted that the new service model was based on need assessments and feedback from consultations with service users and partners. They highlighted the need for more integration, clearer access routes to services and a more family focused approach.

11. Ms Pace indicated that there would be clear support offered to partners working with children and young people as part of their joint working initiative.

12. They were currently commissioning one integrated service for the whole county for targeted and specialist mental health services, and hoped to identify a successful bidder by this May and to 'go live' by November.

13. We then reviewed the progress made by the end of the third quarter, of the Cabinet's Key Objectives for 2014/15; with which we were satisfied.

14. We then considered the report from the Constitution and Members Service Scrutiny Panel on their review of the Planning Committees and their terms of reference. This had started off at the Planning Services Scrutiny Committee where they looked at, among other things, the operation of the speaking arrangements and the terms of reference for the Planning Sub-committees and the District Development Committee. They then made several recommendations, which after some animated debate we agreed.

15. We then considered an amendment to the Council's Complaints Scheme, recommending that step 4 of the procedure, the member complaints panel, be disbanded. This was because, with the new rules introduced by the Local Government Ombudsman, we would not have the time to refer any complaints up to this last stage of the procedure. In any case these meetings were rarely used. Again, after some robust discussions we agreed to support these recommendations.

16. We then reviewed and agreed the terms of reference for the Grant Aid Review Task and Finish Panel.

17. We then went on to review our Committee's and the Scrutiny Panel's work programme to date.

18. We noted that the North Essex Parking Partnership was to give a presentation to our Committee at our April meeting.

19. In view of the recent problems faced by Whipps Cross Hospital and the Barts Health NHS Trust we debated when was the earliest we could usefully invite them to address us on the problems they faced and their proposed solutions. To this end the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has now written to the Chair of the Barts Trust inviting him to the O&S June meeting.

20. Finally, we reviewed the Cabinet's Forward Plan but had no specific items that we wanted to consider.