



Minutes of the SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE held on WEDNESDAY  
10 OCTOBER 2018 at 7.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor Brackenbury (Chair)  
Bint, R Bradburn, Brown, Crooks, Ferrans, A Geary, Marklew, Miles,  
Patey-Smith, Wallis and C Wilson

**Officer:** S Gonsalves (Director of Policy, Insight and Communications) and  
S Heap (Committee Services and Scrutiny Manager)

**Apologies:** Councillors D Hopkins Jenkins, Morla, Walker and K Wilson

**SM20 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Brackenbury advised the Committee that he was a Council appointed member of the LGSS Joint Committee which might be referred to at Item 7 (LGSS Joint Scrutiny Working Group), when the Committee would receive a progress report from the Council's representatives on the LGSS Joint Scrutiny Working Group.

**SM21 MINUTES**

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meetings of the Scrutiny Management Committee held on 5 September 2018 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record, subject to the Councillor Baines' name being spelt correctly in the list of councillors present.

**SM22 QUARTER ONE 2018/19 - CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Committee considered the quarter one position 2018/19 for corporate performance based on the Council Plan 2016-2020, measured using indicators and projects from all Service Groups. The Committee specifically considered details of performance across all corporate indicators and the Corporate Project Dashboard, which provided a snap-shot of progress of major projects and programmes.

The Committee noted that Service Groups used a wide variety of indicators to measure their performance as part of the performance management framework. A number of these had been adopted as corporate measures that between them provided the basis for a high level assessment of performance in achieving the Council's themes, priorities and outcomes, while also monitoring the 'corporate health' of the organisation.

The Committee in considering the performance data made a number of comments which included:

- (a) the need for greater clarity as to how the figure for processing planning applications was arrived at, specifically whether it included any extensions to the deadline which might have been granted (NI 159);
- (b) that there had been a general improvement in the performance of the housing service, however, a number of indicators were still not showing an improvement which might suggest that the actions being taken were not working, at least in the short term;
- (c) concern over the number of new housing completions, specifically the mix of housing types and the low number of affordable and rental properties being completed;
- (d) concern at the decline in bus usage and the need for the causes to be investigated (NI 177);
- (e) concern at the levels of satisfaction with refuse collection (MKC 46);
- (f) the need to review the measures used to record 'available customer contact' (MKC 799), together with the need for clarity and an explanation of the basis of the indicators in the performance report. It was also suggested that the messages given to customers should be reviewed to ensure that they were giving realistic expectations;
- (g) the need for greater clarity around the time taken to process new Housing Benefit claims and changes to circumstances which should be treated as separate indicators;
- (h) that consideration should be given to additional public health targets, particularly screening for sexually transmitted infections, reduction in smoking and childhood obesity;
- (i) the need for performance information on school admissions, referrals to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and Education, Health and Care Plans;
- (j) that it would be helpful if all councillors were circulated with the Corporate Project Dashboard to allow them to identify areas of concern, particularly ones impacting on their wards;
- (k) an apparent lack of scrutiny of the Council's 2050 targets;
- (l) concern that a number of the indicators mixed quarterly performance and annual targets, which made them difficult to interpret. Officer colleagues should therefore ensure that the basis on which figures were reported was clear and that performance targets were shown in such a way to allow direct comparison with performance;
- (m) that there should be a range of indicators based on the Council Plan priorities;

- (n) that the layout and information reported for the different performance indicators should be standardised; and
- (o) that it was necessary to clarify how regeneration was being scrutinised. It was noted that this would be discussed later in the meeting.

It was reported that indicator MKC1309 'Number of Housing Delivered' was incorrect.

The Committee also noted that progress against the Council Plan was reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis. A number of the priorities were still at the development stage, those elements of the Plan priorities which had become part of the Council's core business would be included as part of the normal performance reporting framework.

The Committee was advised that implementation of ERP Gold was to be considered by the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee at a future meeting

In response to questions it was noted that:

- (a) an analysis following the review of Grid Road safety had still to be completed;
- (b) a number of the quarterly outcomes would be considerably changed when the Quarter Two performance was reported as the figures currently being reported were quite dated, or were new during Quarter One, examples included the V4 Grid Road crossing project in the Western Expansion Area and the new Traffic Improvement Scheme in the Eastern Expansion Area; and
- (c) The Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating given to each project was subjective and open to interpretation, but each indicator was put through a robust challenge process before being reported.

It was suggested that the Head of Customer Services should be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to give some background to the performance of customer services.

**RESOLVED –**

1. That the Service Director (Growth, Economy and Culture) be requested to clarify the basis of the figures for the percentage of Planning Applications within Target Period (NI157) and whether the reported performance is against the base target, or the target when an extension had been granted.
2. That the Service Director (Public Realm) be requested to provide an explanation of the increase in the percentage of Household Waste Sent for Reuse, Recycling and composting (NI192) when compared with Quarter 4 2017/18 outturn figure.

3. That in future the time taken to Process New Housing Benefit Claims and the time taken to Process Changes to Circumstances (MKC910) be reported as separate Indicators.
4. That, if possible, additional Indicators be included in future reports which cover:
  - (a) Reduction in Childhood Obesity
  - (b) Childhood Mental Health Issues
  - (c) Sexual Health Screening
  - (d) Stopping Smoking Rates
  - (e) School Admissions – Annual Allocations
  - (f) School Admissions – In-Year Allocations
  - (g) School Results
  - (h) Time to Process Education Health and care Plans
  - (i) Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub Referrals
  - (j) Customer Satisfaction with the Waste / Recycling Service
5. That the Scrutiny Management Committee's Planning Group be requested to consider how performance against the Council's 2050 targets would be best reported as part of the performance reporting arrangements and how best they could be subjected to scrutiny.
6. That the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee's Planning Group be requested to bring forward to the next meeting of the Management Committee a proposal as to how it considers School Admissions could be included within its work programme.
7. That all councillors be circulated with the Corporate Project Dashboard on a quarterly basis, both for information and to enable them to identify any issues of concern, particularly in relation to their Wards.
8. That the Chair of the Management Committee be requested to take up with colleagues the adequacy of the Customer Management System to record all contacts made by persons following up earlier contacts and the responses provided from the System to ensure that they give customers a realistic expectation of when and how their issue will be addressed and resolved.
9. That officer colleagues be requested to consider basing the performance reporting around the Council Plan Priorities.

**SM23****REPORTS FROM CHAIRS ON ISSUES WHICH HAVE ARISEN AT MEETINGS OF THEIR COMMITTEE**

The Committee received reports from the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committee on issues which had arisen at recent meetings of their committees, or they were expecting to arise at forthcoming meetings.

The Chair of the Strategic Placemaking Scrutiny Committee referred to the particular circumstances regarding a review of a called-in decision by the Committee's Sub-Committee and his concerns that the Sub-Committee's comments were not being given appropriate weight by the responsible Cabinet member, or officer colleagues.

The Chair of the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee reported that the Committee would be submitting its report on the draft Budget 2019/20 to Cabinet. The Chair referred to the improved process which had seen business cases being submitted to the Committee alongside any savings proposals.

The Committee also received a report from the Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Committee following its meeting on 26 September 2018.

RESOLVED –

That a briefing be provided to the Scrutiny Management Committee's Planning Group as to the circumstances around the Strategic Placemaking Scrutiny Committee's Call-in Sub-Committee's referral of the decision relating to the V4 Crossings back to the decision maker for review and the information provided to the decision maker when undertaking the review.

**SM24****LGSS JOINT SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP**

The Committee received a progress report from the Council's representatives on the LGSS Joint Scrutiny Working Group.

It was noted the work of the Group had been somewhat dominated by the financial difficulties being experienced by Northamptonshire County Council and that Council's relationship with LGSS. Also meetings had been postponed as a result of the ongoing review of the LGSS operating model.

The Council's representatives indicated that there were significant cultural differences between Milton Keynes as a unitary authority and the two County Councils which comprised LGSS, particularly as Cambridgeshire County Council operated a committee system and therefore did not have a separate scrutiny function.

It was suggested the Council's representatives on the LGSS Joint Scrutiny Working Group and the Council's representatives on the LGSS Joint Committee would be better placed to represent the Council's interests if they had knowledge of the issues each body was addressing.

The Committee also raised the issue of whether the Council would be liable if LGSS Law was to experience any financial difficulties.

RESOLVED –

1. That consideration be given to adding the Council's ongoing relationship with LGSS to the Scrutiny Work Programme, once the outcomes of the LGSS Operating Model Review is known.
2. That the Committee be advised of the status of LGSS Law and whether the Council has any ongoing financial liability resulting from its membership of LGSS.
3. That consideration be given to a mechanism which facilitates the Council's representatives on the LGSS Joint Committee and the LGSS Scrutiny Working Group being aware of the issues being addressed by each other's bodies.

**SM25**

**WORK PROGRAMME UPDATES**

The Committee considered possible changes to the work programmes of the various scrutiny committees, particularly the arrangements for Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee's trial call for evidence in respect of the contribution of education and skills specifically to the Renaissance of Central Milton Keynes and aspirations arising from the National Infrastructure Report.

The Committee also discussed the possibilities for scrutinising the Council's Regeneration Programme and School Admissions.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Housing Revenue Account item scheduled to be considered by the Budget and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 11 December 2018 be removed from the work programme.
2. That the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee's Planning Group, in conducting the trial call for evidence in respect of the contribution of education and skills specifically to the Renaissance of Central Milton Keynes and aspirations arising from the National Infrastructure Report, be requested to consider having a limit on the length of written submissions.
3. That as the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee's consideration of the Contribution of education and skills specifically to the Renaissance of Central Milton Keynes and aspirations arising from the National Infrastructure Report will include the implications of growth for Milton Keynes, the Children and Young People and the Strategic Placemaking Scrutiny Committees' Planning Groups consider whether it would be appropriate to hold it as a joint meeting
4. That the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee's Planning Group be asked to identify a date for an additional meeting to consider the trial call for evidence.
5. That the Community and Housing Scrutiny Committee's Planning Group be authorised to manage the items on its agreed work programme to achieve best fit operational timescales.

6. That the Community and Housing Scrutiny Committee's Planning Group be requested to consider how best the scrutiny of the Council's Regeneration Programme could be best managed and fitted into the scrutiny work programme and a proposal submitted to the next meeting of the Management Committee.
7. That the Committee Planning Groups be ask to submit any views on how the Regeneration Programme should be scrutinised, to be considered by the Management Committee alongside the proposal from the Community and Housing Scrutiny Committee.

**SM26 REFERRAL: COUNCIL – 19 SEPTEMBER 2018: SCRUTINY OF REGENERATIONMK**

The Committee noted that this matter had been addressed at the item above.

**SM27 SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – PLANNING GROUP: 24 SEPTEMBER 2018**

The Committee considered the outcomes from the meeting of the Committee's Planning Group held on 24 September 2018.

The Committee noted that Councillors Miles and Wales from the Labour Group had been nominated to the Primary School Sector Alternative Provision across Milton Keynes Task and Finish Group.

RESOLVED –

1. That the outcomes from the meeting of the Committee's Planning Group held on 24 September 2018 be confirmed.
2. That, being mindful of the workload of the Community and Housing Scrutiny Committee, the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee be requested to undertake the scrutiny of all aspects of gambling as detailed in the work programmes of two committees, but when doing so inviting members of the Community and Housing Scrutiny Committee to attend the meeting.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 9.24 PM