



Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Group

Minutes of a meeting of the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Group held at Virtual Meeting via Zoom on Tuesday 22 March 2022 at 6.00 pm.

Present Councillor Danielle Stone (Chair)
 Councillor Dermot Bambridge
 Councillor Andrew Grant
 Councillor Rosie Herring

Apologies for
Absence: Councillor Karen Cooper
 Councillor Jo Gilford

Officers James Edmunds, Democratic Services Assistant Manager
 Tracy Tiff, Deputy Democratic Services Manager
 Richard Woods, Democratic Services Officer

25. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

26. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Group held on 30 November 2021 were agreed as a correct record to be signed by the Chair in due course.

27. **Chair's Announcements**

There were no announcements from the Chair.

28. **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

29. **Potential Cross-Theme Scrutiny Reviews**

The Group received a verbal update from the Chairs of each of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Corporate, People and Place on any potential cross-theme scrutiny topics identified from the respective Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programmes.

The Chair of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee explained that, having studied the three committee work programmes, the identified areas of potential cross-theme scrutiny topics were Highways contracts, major contracts and capital contracts, and Housing. On the Highways contract, the Chair of Place Overview and Scrutiny advised that, despite the tender having already been written, it would fall to both the Place and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committees to undertake future pre-decision scrutiny of the contract, with the possibility of joint working between the committees, which would involve an executive summary of the Highways contract with information on key performance indicators, details of arrangements in place for contract management and monitoring, and inspection of the work.

In discussing major contracts and capital contracts, members of the Group agreed that there were a high number of contracts across a range of services which had been inherited from the four sovereign councils, and the priority of future scrutiny activity would be to ensure that contracts were efficient, equitable, delivering value for money and a high quality service. Members agreed that, as matters requiring scrutiny arose, task and finish groups remained a valuable and ideal tool for realising scrutiny activity and providing Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees with the opportunities to work together to take an in-depth look at contracts and go through them line-by-line, and feed back to the appropriate officers accordingly. The Co-ordinating Scrutiny Group would continue to monitor and identify cross-cutting matters.

On Housing, the Chair of People Overview and Scrutiny Committee requested that members across the Scrutiny Committees receive a wide-ranging briefing covering all aspects of Housing and the Housing Strategy across West Northamptonshire in order to gain an in-depth understanding of this topic area, budget implications and the methods and quality of service delivery. The Group agreed that, for practical reasons, such a briefing should be held in the form of a Task and Finish Group to include members of all Overview and Scrutiny Committees, with the opportunity for pre-decision scrutiny activity of the full draft Housing Strategy.

Resolved

- (1) That it be recommended that in future, it is requested that Major Contracts and capital Contracts be brought before the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to determination by Cabinet.
- (2) That a Task and Finish Group or workshop to review the draft Housing Strategy be convened, including members from all three Overview and Scrutiny Committees. It is recommended that the workshop is held virtually via Zoom with breakout rooms to discuss various aspects of the draft Housing Strategy.

The meeting closed at 7.18 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____