

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **28th August 2018**.

Present:

Cllr. Chilton (Chairman);

Cllrs. Bartlett, Burgess, Dehnel, Farrell, Feacey, A. Howard, Heyes, Krause, Miss Martin, Mrs Martin.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2 (iii) Councillors A. Howard and Heyes attended as Substitute Members for Cllrs. Buchanan and Knowles.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Buchanan, Knowles, Michael, Shorter.

Also Present:

Director of Finance & Economy, Head of Legal & Democracy, Senior Accountant, Senior Policy and Scrutiny Officer, Member Services Officer.

129 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of this Committee held on the 24th July 2018 be approved and confirmed as a correct record, with the exception that Cllr. Feacey be included as present.

130 Future Reviews and Report Tracker and Topic Selection Flowchart

A Member asked whether the topic of Waste Water Treatment Works could be included to be discussed as soon as possible, since she was receiving many complaints from residents in her ward about the continuous odour. It was noted that this item was already on the Tracker for future consideration. The Senior Policy and Scrutiny Officer advised that he had met with the Environmental Protection & Licensing Team Leader about this issue, and he had confirmed that he was in discussions with the Environment Agency and Southern Water. An Odour Management Plan had been compiled by Southern Water and monitoring of the air was underway in the area. It was anticipated that by September, each organisation would be in a better position to consider the best course of action going forward. Therefore, it seemed sensible that O&S consider this item after this point. A Member suggested that assembly of a Task Group would allow for a more in-depth discussion of the issues, with a final report of the task group's findings being discussed by the full Committee.

The topic of Officers whereabouts and cover arrangements for annual leave being communicated to Members was submitted for consideration, since a Member had recently experienced great difficulty trying to speak to Officers regarding an ongoing matter. She added that the staff members she had spoken to were always friendly and approachable, but unfortunately, they were not aware of the issue in hand and therefore could not offer any advice, and this led to frustrating delays.

It was also suggested that the Community Toilet Scheme performance be brought forward for consideration, since it was felt that the scheme was not being adequately publicised.

Recommended:

- That**
- i) A Task Group be convened to examine issues relating to the Ashford Waste Water Treatment Works; the Task Group membership to include Councillors Bartlett, Chilton, Feacey, Miss Martin and Mrs Martin.**
 - ii) A review of the Community Toilet Scheme be scheduled as a priority item within the Committee Tracker.**
 - iii) The report be received and noted.**

131 Exclusion of the Public

The Chairman read out the notice excluding the public from the remainder of the meeting.

Resolved:

That pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following item, namely A Better Choice for Property Limited - Trading Company, as it was likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 where in the circumstances the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

132 A Better Choice for Property Limited – Trading Company

The Committee then considered the exempt tabled papers that contained responses to questions submitted previously by Members, and Officers provided further detail to enquiries made at the meeting. Through discussion of the exempt papers and the information provided by Officers, the Committee resolved to revise and re-submit the recommendations it had previously made to Cabinet in respect of the Trading and Enterprise Board and A Better Choice for Property Ltd, taking into account those recommendations already implemented.

Recommended:

That

- i) The Board of Directors for A Better Choice for Property Ltd produce a statement for Members clarifying whether the company will seek to acquire or provide properties outside of the Borough.**
- ii) The appointment of non-executive Directors to A Better Choice for Property Ltd should be subject to appropriate background and credit checks being completed and the adoption of an anti-bribery and fraud policy.**

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