

Scrutiny Board

Minutes - 3 July 2018

Attendance

Members of the Scrutiny Board

Cllr Stephen Simkins (Chair)
Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Jasbir Jaspal
Cllr Peter O'Neill
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE
Cllr Greg Brackenridge
Cllr Jasbinder Dehar
Cllr Sohail Khan
Cllr Martin Waite
Cllr Alan Bolshaw
Cllr Ian Brookfield
Cllr Alan Butt
Cllr Wendy Thompson

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Leach, Cllr Sweetman, Cllr Dr Hardacre and Cllr Photay.

Cllr Bolshaw, Cllr Ian Brookfield. Cllr Butt and Cllr Thompson were in attendance as substitutes.
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
There were no declarations of interest.
- 3 **Minutes of the previous meeting**
Resolved:
 That the attendance information be updated to show that Cllr Photay was not in attendance.

 That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- 4 **Matters arising**
There were no matters arising.

5 Work programme and feedback from the Annual Planning Event

The Board considered the updated work plan and the feedback from the Annual Scrutiny Planning Event. The Scrutiny Manager confirmed that her team would be in contact with councillors who has requested items at the Annual Event in order to facilitate meetings with appropriate officers and agree the best way to scrutinise the topic.

Resolved: (1) That the work plan be agreed.
(2) That meetings be arranged with officers and councillors who had suggested topics for scrutiny at the Annual Scrutiny Planning Event.

6 Update from the Member Champion for Councillor ICT and Development, Cllr Val Evans

Cllr Val Evans, Member Champion for ICT and Member Development presented an update to the Board on the work that had been undertaken by the Advisory Group.

Cllr Evans confirmed that to date the ICT side of the work plan was going well with many members now using electronic devices to access agendas and minutes.

However, Cllr Evans expressed concerns in relation to the poor attendance by councillors at training sessions and provided some statistics to highlight this. The average attendance at a training session was 8 councillors per session. Additional sessions had been arranged but unfortunately needed to be cancelled due to lack of take up.

In relation to the mandatory training the completion figures were also low as follows:

Basic safeguarding 33/60
CSE 13/60
Equality and Diversity 45/60
PREVENT 16/60
Corporate Parenting 12/60
Protecting information 60/60 councillors complete

Cllr Evans confirmed that all councillors had been sent letters the previous year informing them where to go and what courses they needed to do.

The Board considered that it might be necessary to have a look at the Constitution to ensure that it was clear what training all councillors were expected to undertake. Cllr Evans confirmed that there was some General Data Protection Regulation training coming up and that very few councillors were attending.

Cllr Evans stated that there had been a comprehensive induction programme for all new councillors of which there were 12 and there had been an average attendance of 10 per session which was acceptable.

Some members of the Board stated that they had already been trained on areas such as GDPR and equalities outside of the Council and that they did not feel a need to attend additional training provided by the Council. There was a suggestion that there be a survey to ascertain what training councillors had already received from outside providers. The Board agreed that if it could be evidenced that at councillors had already had similar training that this should be accepted.

The Chair agreed and recommended that a cross party working group be established to consider what action could be taken to improve turn out at training sessions and how often training needed to be undertaken.

The Board also noted that accurate records needed to be kept regarding when councillors had attended a training session.

The Board considered that all councillors could attend the Annual Induction events as one big session a year easier might be easier than many separate events. It was however also noted that new councillors required a different type of training, so this approach might not be suitable and that maybe a separate similar event could be held for existing councillors.

Resolved: That a working group be established to consider the ongoing issues related to member training and development.

7 Fire Safety Scoping Group - Equality Sub Group

The Board considered the make-up of the Group and it was agreed that there be cross party representation from councillors and representation from a wide range of disability groups.

Resolved: That officers approach a wide range of disability groups to invite representatives to join the Equality Sub Group.

8 Annual Scrutiny Report

The Board considered the format of the Annual Scrutiny Report to Council. The Board considered that it was importance to include information as to why councillors did the work they did and why certain areas were chosen for scrutiny. The Board agreed on the importance of evaluating previous scrutiny reviews and that actual examples could be used to show the work and achievements of scrutiny. It was thought that some issues could be captured by a short video that could then be put on the website.

Resolved: That the above areas be taken into consideration when producing the Annual Scrutiny Report for Council.

9 West Midlands Combined Authority - Mayor's Question Time

The Scrutiny Officer updated the Board in relation to the West Midlands Combined Authority Mayor's Question Time. The event would be held in the Council Chamber on Friday 28 September 2018 at 9am.