Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 1 June 2016 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillors Ashford, Bromley, Mrs Cain, Davison, Edgington, Miss Grainger, Naimo, Parkins, and Weed.

Also Present: Councillors Butler, Cross and Mobbs.

1. **Apologies and Substitutes**

(a) Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Boad and Margrave; and
(b) Councillor Weed substituted for Councillor D'Arcy and Councillor Ashford substituted for Councillor Mrs Redford.

2. **Appointment of Chair**

It was moved by Councillor Ashford, and duly seconded that Councillor Boad be appointed Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved that Councillor Boad be elected Chair of Warwick District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2016/17.

(In the absence of Councillor Boad, Councillor Naimo was appointed to Chair the meeting 1 June 2016.)

3. **Declarations of Interest**

Minute number 5 - Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Thursday 2 June 2016 - Item number 7 – Tourism Update

Councillor Naimo declared an interest because she did work for BID Leamington.

Councillors Ashford, Bromley and Edgington declared interests because they were Warwick Town Councillors. They left the room whilst this item was discussed.

4. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2016 and of the Joint Finance and Audit Scrutiny and Overview and Scrutiny Committees meeting held on 19 April 2016 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as correct records.

5. **Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Thursday 2 June 2016**

The Committee considered the following non-confidential item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Thursday 2 June 2016.

Other items the Committee had selected to discuss from the Executive agenda would be discussed later in the meeting.

Item 7 – Tourism Update

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations as they addressed the previous weakness of a lack of monitoring information and measurable objectives, and particularly welcomed the six monthly reports to the Committee on the progress of the DMO's work.

(Councillor Butler left the meeting at the end of this item.)

6. **Comments from the Executive**

The Committee considered a report from Democratic Services which detailed the responses the Executive gave to the comments the Overview and Scrutiny Committee made regarding the reports submitted to the Executive in April 2016.

Resolved that the report be noted.

7. **Review of the Work Programme & Forward Plan**

The Committee considered its work programme for 2016 and the Forward Plan.

Resolved that the following items be added to the Work Programme:

(1) 26 July 2016 – Scrutinising performance of current arrangements for Aids and Adaptations Services;

(2) 27 September 2016 – a verbal report giving an update on the Creative Quarter;

(3) 27 September 2016 – a verbal report giving an update on the Leamington Spa Town Centre Vision.

(4) 31 August 2016 – a verbal report on how HS2 planning applications will be processed;

(5) 31 August 2016 – a verbal report on Phase 2 Leisure Development in Kenilworth;

(6) 4 January 2017 – a verbal report giving an interim update on the HQ Relocation – outcome of Phase 1;

(7) date to be determined after housing futures and changes to the Housing and Planning Act have been completed – a report on the Council Development Company; and

(8) date to be determined once the Local Plan is agreed – a quarterly update on the Local Plan Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

(Councillor Cross arrived during the course of this item.)

8. **Executive Agenda (Non-confidential items and reports) – Thursday 2 June 2016**

The Committee considered the following non-confidential item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Thursday 2 June 2016.

Item 5 – Fit for the Future Change Programme

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations and wished to highlight to the Executive the need to monitor any recruitment and retention issues throughout the year to ensure that the Service Areas Plans could be delivered effectively.

(Councillors Cross and Mobbs left the meeting at the end of this item.)

9. **Task & Finish Group(s)**

Off-street Car Parking Charges Review

The Committee Services Officer updated the Committee on progress made by the Task & Finish Group – Off-street car parking charges review. The T&F Group had met twice during May, on the 9th and on the 26th. The first meeting had been not as constructive as it should have been because of low attendance.

At the second meeting, Councillor Quinney had been appointed to Chair the Group and the Group had questioned the Contract Services Manager on how the Council had fixed the fees charged at its various car parks and where he thought attention should be focussed.

The Contract Services Manager had explained why he believed linear price increases were not appropriate across the District; why Kenilworth had lower car parking charges and that he felt that the Group should concentrate efforts on looking at car parking charges in Warwick, especially in relation to help build up a business case for the works required at Linen Street. The Contract Services Manager had agreed to provide various reports to the Group by the end of June and the Group would be meeting during the first two weeks of July.

Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee suggested that the Group should widen the remit to look at the history behind, and the disparity between, the charges applied to the areas.

Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMO's)

The Committee considered an amended Scoping Document. Committee Members suggested that the T&F Group should make sure that all forms of HMOs were considered across all areas of the District.

Resolved that the Scoping Document as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes be approved.

The Committee Services Officer was instructed to seek volunteers to join the T&F Group.

The Chair thanked officers who had helped with preparing the Scoping Document.

10. **Health Scrutiny Sub Committee**

Resolved that

(a) Councillors D'Arcy, Edgington, Parkins and Mrs Redford be Members of the Health Scrutiny Sub Committee for the municipal year 2016/2017; and

(b) all other Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee be substitute Members of the Health Scrutiny Sub Committee for the municipal year 2016/2017.

11. **Member Children's Champions: End of Year Report**

The Committee considered a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (BH) giving an annual, end of year statement from the Member Children's Champions as part of the Committee's scrutiny and safeguarding function.

The two Councillors who had previously held the role of Children's Champions, Councillors Mrs Falp and Gallagher, had both resigned from the positions. The Portfolio Holder, Councillor Grainger, had subsequently been asked to cover the one post.

The Deputy Chief Executive (BH) was asked to write to the Leader of the Council asking if he would wish for a Member from Overview and Scrutiny Committee to take on the role of Children's Champion to help Councillor Grainger. Councillor Parkins volunteered to take on the role if necessary.

The Deputy Chief Executive (BH) also agreed that training would be repeated to inform Councillors about their role protecting the welfare of children.

Resolved that

(a) the end of year report be noted;

(b) the resignations of both Councillor Mrs Falp and Gallagher from the positions as Children's Champions is noted, and that the new Member Children's Champion will be the Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Protection, Councillor Grainger; and

(c) the Deputy Chief Executive (BH) will write to the Leader to find out whether he wishes a Member of Overview and Scrutiny Committee to take on the second position as Children's Champion.

(The meeting finished at 8.02 pm)

Appendix 1

Scrutiny Review Outline

Review Topic	**Review of WDC's role in dealing with Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs)**
Working Group Members	Kristie Naimo, Ian Davison, others…
Key Officer Contacts	Head of Housing & Property Services, Head of Neighbourhood Services, Private Sector Housing Manager, Electoral Services Manager,
Officer Support	TBC
Rationale	There have been numerous problems concerning Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) across the District, resulting in public complaints to members, officers and local newspapers. The issues raised cross departments within Warwick District Council (WDC) as well as external stakeholders. WDC aims to deliver better housing standards, social cohesion, and to provide homes to suit the needs of the residents living in our district; in view of these complaints, Councillors would like to review the effectiveness of the current policy position and operational arrangements regarding HMOs, in order to determine if additional measures are required to improve the licensing and management of these homes for the benefit of tenants and the local community.
Purpose/Objective of Review	To review the issues surrounding HMOs in Warwick District, consider if additional measures are required to improve the licensing and management of HMOs and make appropriate recommendations to the Overview & Scrutiny regarding a potential future report to Executive on actions that could be taken.
Scope of the Topic	**To review the current arrangements in respect of:** • Identification of HMO properties • Licensing of HMOs • Enforcement actions involving HMO properties • Waste and recycling collection from HMOs • The effectiveness of the current Article 10 direction • Registration of electors living in HMO properties • Engaging with the residents of HMO • Effectiveness of measures to tackle Identified Anti-Social behaviour arising from HMO properties • Information sharing between Council departments and with external agencies in respect of HMOs
Indicators of Success	Decision made on whether recommendations are required to improve the way WDC and other stakeholders deal with HMO properties

Specify Evidence Sources		WDC's current HMO licensing policy WDC documentation on the location of identified HMOs WDC documentation on safety assessments of licensed HMOs WDC documentation of planning enforcement issues relating to HMOs Government consultation on HMO licensing (when published) National policies on HMO regulations Other Local Authorities' HMO regulations and policies Research and case studies already conducted	
Specify Witnesses/Experts		Briefing from each relevant department on current policies, procedures and approach applying to HMO properties. Residents (individual and associations) living in HMOs and in their vicinity Warwick University Students Union Warwick University Stakeholder relations/housing Landlords Forum (and other landlords) WDC, Town & County Councillors representing areas with a high prevalence of HMOs eg Central and South Leamington Letting agents	
Specify Site Visits		Licensed and unlicensed HMOs within the District Possible visit to a Council with a different licensing scheme	
Consultation with Stakeholders		Collection of case studies Collation of emails already sent to various officers	
Level of Publicity		Medium - High	
Barriers/dangers/risks		Lack of resources to deliver, lack of engagement with or by stakeholders	
Projected Start Date	June 2016	**Draft Report Deadline**	October 2016 (depending on publication date of government review)
Meeting Frequency	Monthly	**Projected Completion Date**	December 2016
Date to evaluate impact		12 months	
Methods of tracking / Evaluating		*Standing Item on O&S Committee workplan* *Formal outcome report to O&S Committee*	