

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Joint Scrutiny Committee

held on Thursday, 30 July 2015 at 6.30 pm

at the Meeting Room 1, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton OX14 4SB

Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Judy Roberts (in the chair), Richard Pullen, Alice Badcock, David Dodds, Monica Lovatt, Ben Mabbett, Bill Service and Ed Blagrove (In place of Katie Finch)

Officers: David Buckle, Susan Harbour, Clare Kingston and Ian Matten

Also present:

From Biffa: Brian Ashby, Regional Manager, Scott Newman, Business Manager, and Ian Gillott, Operations Manager

From Sodexo: Matthew Fowler, regional director

Councillor Elaine Ware (Vale Cabinet member for waste and grounds maintenance)

Number of members of the public: Nil

Sc.1 Confirmation of chairing arrangements for Joint Scrutiny

The committee will be co-chaired by Richard Pullen, the chair of the South Scrutiny committee, and Judy Roberts, the chair of Vale Scrutiny committee. They will take it in turns, where possible, to preside at joint meetings, and there will be no vice chair.

Sc.2 Notifications of substitutes and apologies for absence

South councillor John Woodley Shead has resigned as a councillor, so there is a vacancy at this committee. The place will remain vacant until after a by-election, and it is not permissible to substitute to a vacancy.

South councillor Martin Akehurst will be absent for a period of months and has sent his apologies.

Vale councillor Katie Finch has sent her apologies and Ed Blagrove is here as her substitute.

Sc.3 Minutes and actions arising and referral

There were no minutes for this meeting to consider. Generally, minutes of Scrutiny Committee will take the form of action points and referral of items forward to Cabinet or elsewhere for further consideration. Members will have the opportunity to consider the progress of items at the following meeting.

Sc.4 Declarations of interest

David Dodds noted that he had received hospitality from Biffa when he had been the Cabinet member for waste.

Sc.5 Urgent business and chair's announcements

None.

Sc.6 Statement, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting the Scrutiny Committee

No member of the public has given notice that they wish to make a statement, petition or question.

Sc.7 Work schedule and dates for all South and Vale scrutiny meetings

The document on page 9 of the agenda pack, outlines all meetings of the three scrutiny committees and allows members to see how the committees interact with one another.

The schedule is fluid and members were advised to keep up to date with the schedule which will be appended to all scrutiny agendas and is also available from democratic services.

If members have any items which they feel should be subject to scrutiny, they can either be raised at committee or communicated to the chair/s and democratic services for consideration for inclusion at future meetings.

Sc.8 Annual review of the waste contract: Biffa

The following people came to the table to answer questions from the committee:

From Biffa: Brian Ashby, Regional Manager
Scott Newman – Business Manager
Ian Gillott – Operations Manager

Council officers: Ian Matten, waste and parks service manager and Clare Kingston, head of corporate strategy.

Vale Cabinet member for waste and parks, Elaine Ware, introduced the report. Apologies were received from the South Cabinet member for waste and parks, Tony Harbour.

This item was previously heard at the district scrutiny committees and the minutes were included from these meetings to assist the members of the committee in their scrutiny.

The committee discussed this item and asked questions of the contractor.

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Sc.2

The key issues were recognised to be:
Key Performance Indicators (KPTs)
Satisfaction surveys
Areas perceived to be in need of improvement.

Dimension 1: Key Performance Targets

All Key Performance Targets were discussed, those with action points are recorded.

KPT 2: Rectification of missed collections.
No data was available on this KPT, due to a systems failure.

Action: The part year information available for the current review period, would be added to next year's review to give a more complete picture (Biffa/ waste services manager).

KPT 3: Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting

Action: Proactively target areas with lower recycling rates (Biffa)

Note: small electrical items and textiles will be included in the next few weeks.

Agreed

The committee agreed that the overall assessment for Dimension 1 should be Good.

Dimension 2: Customer satisfaction

The committee considered the report on Dimension 2.

Agreed:

The committee agreed that the overall assessment for Dimension 2 should be Good.

Dimension 3: Council Satisfaction.

Some responses to the council level of satisfaction with the contractor were "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied". The committee was concerned to understand whether these were items for improvement, or whether the category should be changed to "not applicable".

Action: To change the heading to "not applicable" for future reports so that any response other than "satisfied" or "very satisfied" could be identified as an area for improvement.

Areas for improvement: The six items outlined in the report were from the calendar year 2014. Since then, a new team had taken over the work and Biffa, and the officers, were confident that these matters would be improved.

RESOLVED: to endorse the head of corporate strategy's recommendation that the category of "Good" should be awarded to Biffa for their performance during 2014.

Sc.9 Annual review of the horticulture contract: Sodexo

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The following people came to the table to answer questions from the committee:

Matthew Fowler, the regional director from Sodexo.

Council officers: Ian Matten, waste and parks service manager and Clare Kingston, head of corporate strategy.

Vale Cabinet member for waste and parks, Elaine Ware, introduced the report. Apologies were received from the South Cabinet member for waste and parks, Tony Harbour.

This item was previously heard at the district scrutiny committees and the minutes were included from these meetings to assist the members of the committee in their scrutiny.

The committee discussed this item and asked questions of the contractor.

The portfolio holder introduced the item. The report covered the period January to December 2014.

The key issues were:

Key Performance Targets (KPTs)

Satisfaction surveys

Action plan.

The committee noted that Abbey Gardens and received a Green Flag Award once again.

All Dimensions were discussed, those with action points are recorded.

Dimension 1 – Key Performance Targets

Dimension 2 – Customer Satisfaction

This was down from excellent in the previous year to good in the year under review. The contractor feels that this is due to the fact that double the number of customers were surveyed and that the sites at which they were surveyed has changed.

Dimension 3: Council Satisfaction.

Some responses to the council level of satisfaction with the contractor were “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied”. The committee was concerned to understand whether these were items for improvement, or whether the category should be changed to “not applicable”.

Action: To change the heading to “not applicable” for future reports so that any response other than “satisfied” or “very satisfied” could be identified as an area for improvement.

RESOLVED: to endorse the head of corporate strategy’s recommendation that the category of “Good” should be awarded to Sodexo for their performance during 2014.

Sc.10 Introduction to Scrutiny and terms of reference for joint working

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It was noted that the terms of reference for the joint committee had been agreed by both full councils in May 2015, however, there were some matters which would need to be resolved as part of the current constitution review. These included the call-in procedures and the time guillotine for meetings. In the meantime, the committee agreed to adopt the Vale's guillotine rules for Scrutiny, which can be found in the currently published version of the Vale's constitution.

Members of the committee were advised to keep up to date with the current Cabinet work programmes, in case there were items which they wished to come to Scrutiny.

RESOLVED: to review the South and Vale Citizens' Advice Bureaux and the Wantage Independent Advice Centre in March/April next year prior to grant agreement.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm