

Minutes

of a meeting of the Joint Scrutiny Committee

**held on Monday, 16 November 2020 at 6.30 pm
at the virtual meeting**

Watch the recording here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDiyXcG0hI8>

Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members:

South Oxfordshire District Councillors: Ian White (Chair), Sam Casey-Rerhaye, Stefan Gawrysiak, Alexandrine Kantor and George Levy.

Vale of White Horse District Councillors: Nathan Boyd, Andy Cooke, Amos Duveen, Hayleigh Gascoigne and David Grant

Officers: John Backley, James Carpenter, Liz Hayden, Candida Mckelvey and Sally Truman

Also present: Cabinet Members, Councillors Andrew Crawford, Andrea Powell and David Rouane, Council Leader, Councillor Emily Smith.

Saba representatives Nigel Griffin and Andy Marr

Sc.33 Apologies for absence

Acting Deputy Chief Executive, Adrianna Partridge, sent her apologies.

Sc.34 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on the 21 September 2020 were agreed as a correct record and will be signed by the chair as such.

Sc.35 Declarations of interest

None.

Sc.36 Urgent business and chair's announcements

There was no urgent business.

Sc.37 Public participation

There was no public participation.

Sc.38 Performance review of Saba (Car Park Operators) 2019-2020

Cabinet member for Housing and Environment, Councillor David Rouane, introduced the report. The report asked scrutiny committee for its views on the performance of Saba in providing the car park operations services in the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

The report related to Saba's performance in delivering the Car Park Operations contract for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. There are 13 South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) car parks, and 14 Vale of White Horse (VOWH) District Council car parks.

Nigel Griffin and Andy Marr were present as Saba representatives. Also present to answer questions were officers John Backley, Technical Services Manager, and Liz Hayden, Head of Housing and Environment.

The committee discussed each of the four dimensions which make up the overall assessment. It was viewed as unfair to have a poor customer satisfaction rating. The processing of ECN's was unlikely to generate positive feedback because it related to being fined, therefore it was emotive.

However, there had been no complaints raised, which is very positive.

Saba representatives explained that there will be a survey issued relating to all correspondence for current customer satisfaction. This will include questions on how helpful the information given is.

Officers confirmed that key performance indicators (KPIs) were set out in the contract and were revised when the contract was novated from Vinci. With regards to the KPI 7 (customer satisfaction) officer expectation was for the contractor to bring a solution to the council.

It was confirmed that Saba were responsible for ECNs and collections, and not for other issues in car parks such as litter.

There was a potential error on point 18 to 19 – 98%. Liz Hayden will check and if necessary, would amend this figure.

The committee expressed that the report was useful, and showed the areas for improvement, such as the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system. Liz Hayden confirmed that technical issues which were delaying this project are being resolved.

Cabinet member for finance expressed the view that a good substitute for customer satisfaction on ECN is the number of appeals made and upheld.

The locking of Charter car park was questioned – it was explained by officers that this is the only lockable carpark, and it is only levels 3 and above that are locked in the evening to prevent vandalism.

Praise was given to the officers and Saba for the report and monitoring, and for the service going forward.

A motion from the Chair was moved and seconded as follows;

RECOMMENDATION:

The scrutiny committee considered the Saba performance for 2019-20 and ask Cabinet to consider neutralising or removing the KPI on customer satisfaction, given the issues around assessing it. The committee acknowledged the very good work of Saba and officers.

All voted in favour.

Sc.39 Performance management

Cabinet member for Corporate Services, Councillor Andrea Powell, presented the paper on performance management.

Also present was James Carpenter, Head of Corporate Services, and Sally Truman, Customer Assurance Manager, to answer any questions.

The councils did not have a corporate performance framework in place at the moment.

Many teams had performance reporting linked to their workplans, but this was not integrated into a common framework or linked directly to delivery of the council's corporate plan. Now that the Corporate Plan 2020-24 had been adopted by both Councils, it was a good opportunity to implement a Performance Management Framework. A new reporting framework would allow us to also capture qualitative feedback.

The public consultation on the corporate plan showed that the public want to see meaningful reporting to improve transparency and accountability.

The committee were asked whether they support and can give feedback on the approach in the paper.

The paper was a positioning paper, and paragraph nine highlights needing to ask the right questions, paragraph twelve highlights key principles, and picking up on the 'golden thread' theme. Paragraph 14 was the structure of the report, in paragraph 26-28, committee are asked to note the risks.

The committee commented on the following:

It was expressed that the need for this was supported. The simplicity and the timelines were important and had already been identified. It was a good positioning start.

It was important to retain focus and to measure what we value not value what we can measure. Committee would like to see some contextual value around it. It was responded that qualitative measures were important to capture as well, and the team were aware. We can learn and evolve as the system will be sufficiently flexible to allow us to learn and adapt as we move forward with our delivery plans.

The role of the newly in-house HR department was discussed and how it related to this. Officers confirmed that the performance management framework was previously a local, piecemeal approach – now we will have a strategic approach and can link in current work happening in HR around culture and performance – this was an improvement. It was confirmed that unions were being kept up to speed.

It was confirmed that critical review of small percentage failings would be identified and learnt from. This linked to reaching out to underrepresented groups as we can learn the most from them in order to improve how we reach out.

Scrutiny committee asked officers to consider whether it was appropriate to include the process for performance review of contractors in the corporate framework.

The report presented to the committee asked them to note the Council's proposed approach to developing the Performance Management Framework, the principles that would be included, the reporting cycle and provide their feedback.

The committee summarised their discussion by motioning that the committee felt that the plan presented was very clear and officers and Cabinet member were thanked.

Sc.40 Work schedule and dates for all South and Vale scrutiny meetings

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm