

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD
HELD ON 19TH DECEMBER 2013 AT 6.00 P.M.**

- P Councillor Pickup (in the Chair)
- P Councillor Bailey
- P Councillor Campion-Smith
- P Councillor Eddy
- P Councillor Goulandris
- A Councillor Hammond
- P Councillor Holland
- A Councillor Kent
- A Councillor Khan
- P Councillor Pearce (substituting for Cllr Khan)
- P Councillor Telford

OSMB

63.12/13

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, SUBSTITUTIONS AND
INTRODUCTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Telford.

OSMB

64.12/13

CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONTIME

The Mayor responded to questions which were asked by councillors at the meeting. (NB: there were no questions submitted in advance)

A summary of actions which were agreed to by the Mayor in response to members questions is appended to these minutes as Annex A.

OSMB

65.12/13

PUBLIC FORUM

The Chair reported that he had received notification of 1 item of public forum business from Janet Williams/BID Clifton Village concerning residents parking. As the statement had already been submitted to the Sustainable Development & Transport Commission taking place this afternoon, and at which, there was

an item on residents parking on the agenda, he was not minded to receive the same statement at this meeting.

OSMB

66.12/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

OSMB

67.12/13 MINUTES – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD – 21ST NOVEMBER 2013

RESOLVED -

- (1) that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on 21st November 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, and**
- (2) that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Board on the arrangements which are being considered for the recording of action which is agreed to at meetings, particularly action to be taken by the Mayor/Cabinet members, and action arising as a result of supplementary public forum questions.**

OSMB

68.12/13 WHIPPING

No whipping was declared.

OSMB

69.12/13 REVENUE BUDGET 2014-17 - SCRUTINY OF THE MAYOR'S BUDGET SAVINGS PROPOSALS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director Neighbourhoods (agenda item no. 8) relating to the scrutiny of the Mayor's budget savings proposals in relation to the Equalities and Safer Bristol functions..

During the ensuing discussion, particular reference was made to ;

- Councillor Champion Smith expressed particular concerns about the impact of reduced budgets on the Council's work around reducing domestic violence. In the absence of a

departmental director to answer questions, she indicated that she would write directly to the Strategic Director, Neighbourhoods on the questions which she had;

- Members expressed their general concerns about the reductions envisaged for Safer Bristol crime reduction projects and in particular for domestic and sexual violence services. They considered that the cuts were short sighted, bearing in mind that at times of economic uncertainty and high unemployment, stress in communities and in families (a potential trigger for incidences of domestic violence), was likely to be considerable. Resolving such problems could potentially be more costly for the Council in the longer term;
- A cut in funding in policy development for licensing and regulatory functions could inhibit the effectiveness of the Council in its role as the licensing authority. Failure to regulate the proliferation of licensed premises and licensing hours effectively would potentially have a harmful effect on the quality of life of constituents who live in the vicinity of such premises;
- Members were concerned that cuts in the budget for pollution control, could prevent the Council from carrying out its statutory duties;
- Members expressed their concerns that there were no representatives at the meeting from departmental management, to discuss the budget proposals with them and answer their questions. They thought that this was discourteous, insulting to the people of Bristol and indicative of the way in which councillors were being treated under mayoral governance. The Chair said that he would take up members concerns with the City Director.

After further discussion, it was:

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the report be noted and that members concerns about the impact of cuts on the services provided by Safer Bristol and the equalities function, be drawn to the attention of the Resources Commission, and**

- (2) That members concerns about the absence of a senior departmental manager to take them through the budget proposals, be taken up with the City Director by the Chair.

OSMB

70.12/13

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Noting that no departmental officers were in attendance to take members through the reports, it was agreed that items 9 and 10 on the agenda should be deferred to the next meeting.

OSMB

71.12/13

SCRUTINY OUTCOMES – SIX MONTHLY MONITORING REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Democratic Services Manager (agenda item no. 11) providing the 6 monthly reports from individual Scrutiny Commissions.

During the ensuing discussion, particular reference was made to ;

- Members noted that the number of meetings of Scrutiny Commissions had been kept to a minimum in line with the Board's requirements, however it had proven difficult in some instances to fit all of the business in commission work programmes within the meeting time available;
- The Select Committee and Inquiry Day models had again proven to be effective; if it was decided to have more of this type of scrutiny meeting in the future then, notwithstanding the budget savings / cuts programme, it would be necessary to ensure that such meetings are properly supported next year;
- An audit of progress with the programmes of work identified following select committee investigations should be undertaken. It was important to ensure that nothing was overlooked or forgotten about if the value of this type of scrutiny work is to be fully realised. Such an approach would also ensure that subsequent scrutiny initiatives to not go over the same ground;
- Under the previous governance arrangements, the outcomes of inquiry days were always reported to Council and Council

was able to monitor the carrying forward of those recommendations into policy. Under the Mayoral system the process was less clear. The current review of scrutiny and governance arrangements should consider and codify the process of how select committee and inquiry day findings and recommendations are adopted into the policy of the Council.

After further discussion it was;

RESOLVED -

That the 6 monthly reports from the individual Scrutiny Commissions be noted and that the comments/concerns of members identified above, be taken into consideration in the review of scrutiny and governance arrangements.

[NB : The Interim Service Director, Safer Bristol, attended the meeting at this point and so it was decided to take Agenda Item No.9 - Progress report on community safety projects, as the next business.]

OSMB

72.12/13

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PROJECTS FUNDED THROUGH THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S (PCC) COMMUNITY SAFETY GRANT 2013/14

The Board considered a report from the Interim Service Director, Safer Bristol (agenda item no. 9) providing background information on current projects funded through the PCC Community Safety Grant 2013/14 and progress made to date.

During discussion, reference was made to the following matters;

- The Service Director indicated that, in relation to PCC funding for 2014/15 projects, whilst the position had not been finalised, it was anticipated that overall funding would be similar to the current year;
- The Service Director indicated that the schemes taken forward as recommendations for funding were based on the Safer Bristol Partnership Plan priorities and the outcome of the annual crime needs assessment. A particular priority at the current time were schemes aimed at combatting

domestic and sexual violence and hate crime, where there was known to be a high level of under reporting;

- There was general agreement that in times of economic stress and pressure on communities, work on reducing the incidence of domestic violence must continue to be a priority. Members reiterated the concerns expressed during their consideration of the budget proposals for Safer Bristol, about the impact of a £100K cut in the budget for crime reduction projects.

The Service Director indicated that the planned reduction for 2014/15 would not take money away from community focussed domestic and sexual violence projects. Certain initiatives such as commissioning work around reducing street conflict had not demonstrated good value for money so the funding would be redirected. There also remained money in the budget for maintaining the Council's commitment for PCSO's – the initiative had been overfunded so again, moneys would be redirected to maintaining support for domestic and sexual violence prevention work. She acknowledged that work to offset the impact of the further budget reduction identified for 2016/17 had yet to be undertaken;

- In response to concerns expressed by a member about the future of PCSO funding, the Service Director confirmed that part of the Bristol contribution would continue to be drawn from the HRA so no change in level of support for PCSO's was envisaged in 2014/15;
- The Chair expressed concern that some of the 2013/14 initiatives had taken time to set up and get going and he wondered whether one year was sufficient time in which to assess the effectiveness of a project; a 2-3 year funding term would provide greater security and allow a project to realise its full potential. The Service Director indicated that this was a matter which would be discussed with the PCC in setting up the 2014/15 initiatives although it was likely that longer term commitments to funding could not be guaranteed and any schemes planned for a 2/3 year life span would have to be caveated by "subject to budget";
- The Chair noted that work on FGM research had been completed but expressed concern that there appeared to be

no commitment in the 2014/15 programme at this stage to fund project work which was based on the research. The Service Director explained that the research was being analysed by a multi-agency group. That work needed to be completed in the first instance in order that the extent of FGM in Bristol could be identified. Once this had been done then proposals for a work programme could be drawn up and put forward for funding;

- A member enquired as to the extent to which Safer Bristol was working with other agencies in drawing up and putting forward proposals for grant funding, particularly in relation to projects such as (b) the Violence Against Women and Girls Campaign and (e) the Drugs and Young People's Project. The Service Director explained there was close working with other agencies; in (b) for instance the campaign work was being used in the "Bristol Ideal" materials for school aged young people and in (e) the initiative was being led by Public Health. She undertook to provide Cllr Campion-Smith with more detailed answers to the issues which she had raised outside the meeting;
- A member made reference to the commissioning process for community safety projects in 2013/14 and the fact that a number of smaller community groups with specialist skills, (for instance, in drugs and alcohol abuse and domestic violence) had not had the opportunity to bid. It was pointed out that larger providers of services often at remote sites were not always accessible to local people. Local people also had greater trust of services that were provided by people within their own community.

The Service Director indicated that the service commissioning process had been a learning exercise for officers; the need to recognise social value when commissioning services was recognised and would be taken into account in the next round of commissioning.

After further discussion, it was:

RESOLVED -

That the report be noted and that the views and comments of members expressed during the discussion be taken into account by the Service Director.

**OSMB
73.12/13**

**SCRUTINY OUTCOMES – 6 MONTHLY MONITORING REPORT
AND OSM BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board considered a report of the Service Manager, Democratic Services (agenda item no. 11) on the 6 monthly reports from individual Scrutiny Commissions concerning progress with their respective work programmes and an update on the OSM Board work programme (agenda item 12).

The Chair commented that he had written to the Mayor and Cabinet members seeking their ideas on forthcoming policy and other issues which might be included in next year's scrutiny work programme. To date, he had not received a response. He undertook to write again in this regard.

After further discussion it was;

RESOLVED -

That the 6 monthly reports from the individual Scrutiny Commissions and progress with the Board's work programme be noted.

**OSMB
74.12/13**

MAYOR'S FORWARD PLAN

On consideration,

RESOLVED -

That the Mayor's Forward Plan be noted.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chair wished everyone in attendance, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

(The meeting ended at 8.00 pm)

CHAIR

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER/ MAYOR QUESTION TIME –
SUMMARY OF ACTIONS**

Councillor	Action agreed by the Mayor
Leaman	Parks capital funding - Mayor to confirm and advise Councillor Leaman that the £3.5M identified for parks capital funding and currently unspent, remains in the budget. In particular, that the sum of £80k identified for a small park adjacent to Lawrence Weston School is still available.
Campion-Smith	Arena development : jobs creation –Mayor to advise Councillor Campion-Smith as soon as information is available, about the jobs creation potential of the development – how many jobs and in particular, an estimate of the number of each type of job that is likely to be created.
Pickup	Role of scrutiny in work of the Mayor – Mayor welcomed scrutiny involvement in policy development work (ie pre decision scrutiny) and agreed to provide details of particular pieces of work that he would like the scrutiny function to focus on when setting its 2014/15 work programme.