

ORGANISATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER 2022

Present:

Councillor Stephen Clough (Chair) (in the Chair)

Councillor John Funnell
Councillor Pat Kerry
Councillor Philip Wright

Councillor Maggie Jones
Councillor Diana Ruff

Also Present:

Councillor C Cupit	Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services
K Eastwood	Joint Assistant Director - Environmental Health Service
R Purcell	Assistant Director of Planning
S Gordon	HR & OD Manager
D Stanton	Senior Scrutiny Officer
T Scott	Governance and Scrutiny Officer

OSC/ Apologies for Absence

21/2

2-23 An apology for absence was received from Councillor J Birkin.

OSC/ Declarations of Interest

22/2

2-23 Members were requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest and/or other interest, not already on their register of interests, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

No declarations of interest were declared.

OSC/ Minutes of Last Meeting

23/2

2-23 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the previous meeting of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee held on 19 July 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

OSC/ Annual Report of Human Resources and Organisational Development

24/2

2-23 The HR & OD Manager presented a report on a range of employee related issues pertaining to the 2021/22 financial year.

Members referred to the mentions in the report of mental health and stress issues, and enquired what was in place to help staff suffering from them. The HR & OD Manager explained that before staff go on work related stress leave, HR will speak to them and offer advice. There was also a Mental Health Group in place for general mental health support.

Members referred to the report mentioning that there were 100 leavers during the reporting period, and were concerned that this seemed like a large proportion of the overall number of staff. The HR & OD Manager explained that some of these people were staff moving to other posts within the Council, and advised that Organisation Scrutiny Committee would be discussing staff turnover (and agile working) in detail at the meeting on 15 November 2022.

RESOLVED – That the report was noted.

OSC/ Scrutiny Review 2022/23

25/2

2-23

The Chair explained to Members that this item would include Scoping of the proposed Review (including scene setting) for Environmental Enforcement.

Councillor Charlotte Cupit (Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services) discussed the Planning and Environment Enforcement service with the Committee, as well as potential areas a review could focus on. Councillor Cupit stated that the service was a priority for residents and had been given significant investment, and the maintained scale of activity in the service showed the hard work officers were undertaking.

Councillor Cupit suggested that although Planning and Environment Enforcement officers worked very well with other officers, the review could focus on those relationships and formalise them. The review would thus focus on multi-departmental working and how they work with outside agencies to establish best practice and identify room for improvement.

The Committee asked the officers present (the Assistant Director for Environmental Health and the Assistant Director of Planning) for specific issues they had been aware of with the service. The Assistant Director of Planning explained that Planning officers had to liaise with hundreds of strategy consultees on Planning matters, so if Planning sites raised many issues, officers would have to contact many of them. The Assistant Director for Environmental Health explained that some major agencies can be harder to work with.

The Committee agreed that the review would focus on multi-departmental working within the Council and how they communicated with outside agencies making it easier for Planning and Environment Enforcement officers to deal with major agencies and improving the communication between officers and partners.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer explained that to further the review, a report would be prepared by the Assistant Director for Environmental Health and the Assistant Director of Planning about the Enforcement process and Multi-Agency working for the Committee to consider at the next scheduled Committee meeting. The Assistant Director of Planning would also be requested to provide the Senior Scrutiny Officer with a list of all of the major agencies the Planning Enforcement service has dealt with.

Members raised concerns that officers invited to Planning Committee meetings from the Derbyshire County Council Highways department often did not attend, and they felt it would sometimes be beneficial to hear their perspective on applications that included highways issues. The Assistant Director of Planning

explained that [DCC] highways had received several invites to discuss how highways operated with the Planning Committee, however so far had been unable to attend.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer advised that although a review which included multi-agency working would be useful from an internal organisational perspective, the Committee's influence on the working of outside agencies would be limited, and often it could be difficult inviting them to give evidence at Committee. The Chair explained that he would discuss how to address this concern with the Senior Scrutiny Officer after the meeting.

OSC/ Forward Plan of Executive Decisions

26/2

2-23 RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions be noted.

OSC/ Work Programme

27/2

2-23 RESOLVED – That the work programme be noted.

OSC/ Additional Urgent Items

28/2

2-23 There were no additional urgent items.

OSC/ Date of Next Meeting

29/2

2-23 The next meeting of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 15 November 2022 at 10.00 am.