

**DRAFT**

Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON  
TUESDAY, 20 APRIL 2021**

**Councillors Present:** Graham Bridgman, James Cole, Lee Dillon (Vice-Chairman), Lynne Doherty, Gareth Hurley, Alan Law (Chairman), Ross Mackinnon, Thomas Marino, Steve Masters, Garth Simpson, Tony Vickers and Howard Woollaston

**Also Present:** Catalin Bogos (Performance Research Consultation Manager), Nick Carter (Chief Executive), Shannon Coleman-Slaughter (Chief Financial Accountant), Melanie Ellis (Chief Accountant), Donna Fox (Principal Adviser for School Improvement) and Susan Powell (Safer Communities Partnership Team Manager), Zahid Aziz (Thames Valley Police) and Gordon Oliver

**Apologies for inability to attend the meeting:** Councillor Jeff Brooks

**PART I**

**44. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2021 and the Minutes of the special meeting on 9 February 2021 were approved as true and correct records and signed by the Chairman.

**45. Actions from previous Minutes**

There were nine actions followed up from previous Commission meetings:

- 18 – Pending: Report scheduled to come to OSMC in July.
- 25 – Complete
- 28 – Complete
- 31 – Complete
- 32 – Complete
- 33 – Complete
- 34 – Outstanding: Catalin Bogos to investigate and report back
- 35 – Outstanding: Councillor Gareth Hurley to discuss the Terms of Reference with Matt Pearce (Service Director – Communities and Wellbeing)
- 36 – Complete

Councillor Lee Dillon noted that OSMC had asked for the number of Members on the Health Scrutiny Committee to be left blank.

Councillor Graham Bridgman confirmed that the report to full Council proposed a five member committee with three Conservative and two Liberal Democrat members.

**46. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

**47. Petitions**

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There were no petitions to be received at the meeting.

### 48. **Crime and Disorder Committee - Community Safety Update**

Sitting as the Crime and Disorder Committee, the Commission received a presentation (Agenda Item 6) concerning the Building Communities Together Partnership.

Nick Carter explained the history of the partnership, its role, responsibilities, membership and vision. He noted that an Annual Strategic Assessment was carried out to determine the Partnership's priorities and he highlighted the Partnership Plan, which was based around four objectives.

Superintendent Zahid Aziz provided a summary of work undertaken in the previous 12 months around the priority areas of domestic abuse, county drug lines, violence and knife crime, and anti-social behaviour and orders, as well as partnership working.

He highlighted challenges and changes to working practices and changes in crime patterns associated with Covid. He noted that operations were affected by financial cuts, although five new officers had started in West Berkshire in the last year as a result of a national increase of 20,000 officers. He highlighted the strength of the partnership approach in tackling crime.

Nick Carter explained that the Partnership was being reshaped. He indicated that a new Community Alliance would take on / increase community engagement activity and allow the Building Communities Together Partnership to revert to a Community Safety Partnership.

Councillor Tony Vickers noted that there were several Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) in the district. He suggested that these clashed with planning and transport policies, since PSPOs closed routes that were useful for permeability and active travel. He highlighted a recent PSPO application where there had been no involvement of the Council's Transport Public Rights of Way Teams. He indicated that planning policy sought to ensure good access into new developments for pedestrians and cyclists and suggested that discussions on proposed closures should involve the Council's planning and transport officers.

Nick Carter indicated that there were only a few PSPOs in the district and they required extensive consultation. He noted that they were driven by safety concerns. He offered to investigate whether other parties could be involved, or if it was a statutory process dictated by legislation.

**Action: Nick Carter to investigate whether planning and transport officers could be engaged as part of the PSPO process.**

Councillor Lee Dillon noted that the number of reported domestic abuse incidents had fallen, but he was aware that a local support organisation had reported an increase in calls. He wondered if local organisations working in this area could provide intelligence and asked if the decrease in reporting to the Police was due to victims lacking opportunities to make reports. He also asked how ethnically diverse and deprived communities were being engaged. He noted the decrease in violent crime and asked if this was the level that had been expected in lockdown and the closure of the night-time economy. He asked if violent crime figures included domestic abuse crimes. Finally, he asked for some examples of positive outcomes that had been achieved.

Superintendent Aziz acknowledged challenges in victims reporting domestic abuse from the home. He was unable to give a definitive answer as to how this had affected local reporting. However, he highlighted that there had been an increase in reported domestic abuse incidents nationally and also elsewhere in the Thames Valley. He was confident

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that the numbers were a true reflection, but accepted there may have been incidents where victims were unable to contact the Police or disclose incidents to colleagues at work.

He explained that a lot of work was being done to understand where 'hard to reach' communities were and how to engage with them. He stated that TVP was developing a tactical neighbourhood plan that would address this, and confirmed that it would be more of a focus in 2021/22.

He confirmed that domestic abuse crimes were not included in the violent crime statistics.

Councillor Garth Simpson asked why the outcomes from County Drug Lines operations appeared to be modest relative to the scale of the problem.

Superintendent Aziz explained that West Berkshire suffered from an influx of County Drugs Lines from all directions, which operated over very short timeframes. He stated that it was difficult to gather intelligence and execute warrants quickly enough to be able to seize drugs and cash. He noted that other operations had been carried out in the last year, one of which recovered £45,000. He highlighted problems with vulnerable individuals being exploited (i.e. children trafficking the drugs or vulnerable adults whose homes were used). He indicated that where it was not possible to carry out enforcement, the Police would seek to disrupt activity.

Councillor James Cole considered that the reports were very positive. He noted the local trend in domestic abuse incidents was contrary to the national trend and asked if that was due to the effectiveness of the Building Communities Together Partnership.

Superintendent Aziz stated that West Berkshire had a very strong partnership, with strong safeguarding processes, a positive approach to encouraging domestic abuse reporting, and enforcement or help when needed. This meant that people were able to seek support before they became victims. Also, there was a wraparound service for victims to support them and remove them from the environment, so they did not become victims again.

The Chairman reiterated Councillor Dillon's question about examples of positive outcomes.

Superintendent Aziz explained that if there was a positive charging decision at the end of an investigation, that was a positive outcome.

The Chairman indicated that Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs) could be helpful in providing intelligence, but felt that his local NAG had not been as engaged in recent months. He asked if they could be more engaged in future. He also asked what was happening in terms of rural crime, which had been a priority of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Superintendent Aziz reported that crime had been limited over the last year, and Police activity had been restricted due to Covid, with the focus on addressing domestic abuse and safeguarding. He confirmed that a Rural Crime Task Force had been established with one inspector, two sergeants and a team of 18 officers. This would support the larger local Police areas with significant rural crime. This force-wide unit would provide relevant skills and expertise and would tackle cross-boundary offenders with neighbouring forces. In terms of local resources, he confirmed that there were two officers and a PCSO who undertook community engagement work. He reported that some analysis on rural crime had been undertaken and further work had been commissioned. He acknowledged that there were peaks at certain times of year, with repeat crimes at vulnerable locations. He indicated that activity would be significantly increased over the coming year.

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**Resolved that:** the presentation be noted.

### 49. **Traded Services**

OSMC considered a report (Agenda Item 7), which provided further information in respect of the schools traded services.

Andy Sharp introduced the item and noted that additional information could be provided on other commercial activity at a future meeting if required.

Donna Fox presented the item. She noted that Traded Services were under the governance of the Commercialisation Board, which provided comment and challenge.

She highlighted Section 4 of the report, which showed the range of services provided to schools, with information on: trends in actual and forecast income; forecast for surplus / deficits; and information on viability tipping points.

She noted that the service leads were not experts in commercialisation or trading, but training had been commissioned, which would help them to look at tipping points. She indicated that the training would provide the opportunity to formulate some policy statements about the role of traded services for the Council, articulating their identity and what they intended to do.

She noted that the intention was to build the reputation of the Council through the quality of the traded services offered and that ultimately, it was for Education to look at every learner and make sure they had the best possible chance to fulfil their full potential and ambitions.

The Chairman asked about an item on the charts labelled as 'schools self-funding provision'.

Dona Fox noted explained that this was an insurance buy-back service, which schools could choose to take up, or they could source an alternative provider (e.g. DfE risk protection arrangement). She indicated that this was different to the other traded services.

Councillor Garth Simpson noted that there were 20 products within the Schools Traded Services portfolio, which were different in character and required different inputs from Council staff and external providers. He acknowledged that some services were in decline, but pointed out that there was no discussion of the unique selling proposition to schools. He recognised that service leads were not commercial experts, but suggested that marketing was common sense. He accepted that some schools converted to academies, which were more aggressively run, but highlighted the knowledge within the Education service. He noted the compromises made with respect to pricing policy, which he assumed related to smaller schools. He asked if there were account managers looking after specific schools, and if there were product specialisms. He also suggested running a Pareto analysis to see which services could be dropped where they added little value to allow other, higher value services to be introduced.

Donna Fox stated that there were individual financial managers within Melanie Ellis's team and there was one business trading account manager in School Improvement who worked with other services. This account manager worked with external groups from other local authorities and her expertise had been used across the Education service to look forensically at what traded services could do. She explained that traded services represented a small part of service leads' roles and reiterated the potential benefits of the planned commercialisation training.

Councillor James Cole noted that the Council was operating on the basis of cost plus 10 percent, but other industries operated to higher profit margins. He asked if this was the

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limit of what the market would bear. He also asked about the self-funded schools service and why this was not comparable. He noted the decline and asked if the Council was offering less or if fewer schools were taking up the offer. Finally, he asked if the Council offered its services to the private sector.

Regarding margins, Donna Fox noted that there was a decision as to whether to maximise profit or operate at a tolerable level where schools would continue to buy back services. She highlighted the work of the School Improvement Team where the aim was for schools to achieve good Ofsted grades and noted that each service had to consider the reputation of the Council and the reputation of the schools. She stated that a range of services were provided and it was difficult to compare them. She noted that there had been discussions about whether some services were able to make the 10 percent profit, since schools would be likely to go somewhere else. However, bespoke services represented an opportunity to pursue increased margins. Regarding services offered to the private sector, she confirmed that buy-backs were secured from independent schools and a Berkshire multi-academy trust that was not part of the West Berkshire group. On the issue of insurance buy-backs, she observed that these were bought in for a nominal fee and were therefore different from the other services offered. She suggested that the reduction in buy-backs had been as a result of schools looking to the private market and finding deals that were better suited to their needs.

Councillor Cole asked if the Council was acting as a broker for insurance. Donna Fox did not think that it was.

Councillor Lee Dillon suggested that OSMC needed to look at the wider issue of commercialisation across the Council. He agreed with Councillor Simpson's comments relating to thinking about business models and strategies and suggested that Councillors would expect this to happen across all commercialisation centres, underpinned by a common strategy. In relation to the tipping point and viability for school services, he asked how many academies would the Council need to lose before it would have issues in sustaining a particular service. He also asked if services were looking likely to meet end of year forecasts. Finally, he asked about how projected income would be used (i.e. kept within the Education service or used to support other Council key performance indicators).

Donna Fox explained that tipping points varied according to the service offered. For example, Payroll looked at the number of buy-backs it received by the cut-off date and the cost charged to those schools divided by the number of staff. However, the School Improvement service had a flexible service where they used headteachers as school improvement officers that could be brought in as required. In the case of HR, if several schools were lost, this caused problems in providing sufficient work for staff. She explained that relationships with academies had been positive in recent months and traded services were offered to every school in West Berkshire. She emphasised that she believed in children rather than labels, so any school could buy back services and this had been attractive for academies. The Service had worked with all West Berkshire's academies in the last 18 months, which had not been the case previously. She observed that academies tended to pick and choose services, but they were present in meetings with headteachers, which was positive. In terms of projected income, she acknowledged that some forecasts would not be achieved due to Covid, and some services were being focused on Covid recovery. She noted that £30,000 for school improvement was funding two pupil premium champions.

Councillor Dillon asked what the remainder of the £250,000 surplus would be spent on. Also, he noted that service leads did not have specialist commercial knowledge. He suggested that Members would support recruitment of people with these skills.

**Resolved that:** the report be noted.

## 50. Covid-19 Income Risks

OSMC considered a report (Agenda Item 8), which outlined the risks and associated mitigation strategies associated with changes to parking revenues and other income streams as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Melanie Ellis introduced the report. She confirmed that Central Government had provided three main sources of Covid funding:

- £9.6 million of non-ringfenced funding, which had been allocated to the Covid response;
- Specific Covid-19 grant funding;
- An income compensation scheme to provide support to Council where there had been losses due to Covid-19 (the Council had lost £4.4 million, but were expecting to secure £2.2 million of reimbursements).

She highlighted the main areas where income had been lost, with car parking being the most significant. She indicated that the Council was not allowed to claim for commercial income losses.

In terms of mitigations, she noted that non-ringfenced funding for Covid response had been made available for 2021/22. She explained that the Council had been allocated sufficient funds to mitigate against all losses.

She explained that within the Medium Term Financial Strategy, provision had been made in future years in case Covid income stream losses became more permanent, including £900,000 for car parking.

She noted that the third mitigation was through individual services with car parking and leisure services being most affected.

She highlighted that demand for some services had been suppressed as a result of Covid, which would be financially beneficial.

Councillor James Cole noted that West Berkshire Council appeared to be worse affected than other unitary authorities and asked if it was more dependent on parking revenues.

Melanie Ellis was unable to provide detail on individual income streams for other local authorities, but offered to investigate further.

**Action: Melanie Ellis to provide further analysis of Covid income losses for other unitary authorities.**

Councillor Lee Dillon noted the £900,000 set aside to off-set forecast parking losses and asked if a flat rate had been applied across all car parks or if different rates were applied at different sites. He also observed that Appendix A showed how losses would impact on services areas right across the Council.

Jon Winstanley noted that the car parking mitigation had been primarily informed by what was happening in the town centres, which accounted for the bulk of the Council's parking income. He acknowledged that there would be differences between car parks. He undertook to share the calculations.

**Action: Jon Winstanley to provide further detail on calculations for forecast car park income losses.**

Councillor Garth Simpson asked if there were assumptions about the move to online shopping and declining retail footfall on car parking and business rates, since there was a strong inter-relationship.

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Melanie Ellis stated that the Council was not that advanced in their forecasts at this point, since the UK was just starting to come out of Covid lockdown, but this would be looked at in future.

The Chairman noted that the Council was relying heavily on Central Government to cover shortfalls and highlighted the risk that this support would not be provided indefinitely.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon acknowledged that Central Government support had been extensive and had made the financial position of the Council much more benign. He highlighted that £3.2 million of non-ringfenced funding had been provided and indicated that he expected support to continue in the coming year.

**Resolved that:** the report be noted.

### 51. Leisure Strategy Task and Finish Group

OSMC considered a report (Agenda Item 9), which presented the scope for the Task and Finish Group to be set up to review the Leisure Strategy.

Gordon Oliver presented the report. He highlighted the terms of reference in Appendix A and noted that the Task Group would act as a 'critical friend', reviewing the draft strategy in the light of current guidance and best practice, as well as local evidence.

He flagged the following key focus areas for the task group:

- Ensuring that consultation and engagement had been sufficiently wide ranging;
- Ensuring there was good evidence about provision and demand for facilities locally, for different leisure services;
- Ensuring the strategy identified and addressed barriers faced by different groups wishing to access leisure services;
- Ensuring a clear rationale for any major investments in local leisure facilities.

He noted that the draft strategy may not be available for review until the summer, and so the group may not be able to report back its findings until the autumn.

The Chairman asked who was leading on the strategy.

Councillor Howard Woollaston confirmed that it was Matt Pearce (Service Director – Communities and Wellbeing).

The Chairman stated that Councillor Gareth Hurley had agreed to chair the Task and Finish Group. He asked if Councillor Hurley if he was happy with the terms of reference.

Councillor Hurley noted that the Council had a duty to ensure that leisure facilities were accessible to all, and the Task Group should consider if there were any locations where provision was significantly lower than in other areas.

The Chairman stated that the other Members of the Task Group would include Councillor Erik Pattenden (Liberal Democrat) and Councillor Steve Masters (Green). He indicated that a second Conservative Member would be allocated shortly. He confirmed that membership could be from outside OSMC and could include people co-opted from outside the Council.

**Action: Chairman to confirm the fourth member of the Leisure Strategy Task and Finish Group.**

The Chairman proposed that Councillor Hurley would meet with Councillor Woollaston and Matt Pearce to agree how they would work together.

**Action: Councillor Hurley to meet with Councillor Woollaston and Matt Pearce.**

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Councillor Woollaston indicated that he welcomed the task group's involvement, since there was a lot happening with leisure at the current time. He agreed that the east of the district was under-provided in terms of leisure facilities compared to the west, and this was a priority to be addressed.

Councillor Tony Vickers queried whether the Appendix represented a Terms of Reference, but he agreed with the questions to be answered. He stated that he was a member of the Local Access Forum, which had discussed the strategy and concluded that it was very commercially focused. Although there was mention of the rights of way network, several activities weren't mentioned. He asked if there was potential for the terms of reference to be amended to allow other individuals / groups to feed into the review.

The Chairman recommended that Councillor Vickers should brief Councillor Pattenden about his concerns.

Councillor Lee Dillon agreed with Councillor Hurley about gaps in provision. He also suggested that in addition to looking at provision of facilities, the Task Group should look to see if sports could be delivered (e.g. programmes to train coaches).

**Action: Gordon Oliver to amend the Task Group's terms of reference to reflect point raised by Councillors Dillon and Hurley.**

**Resolved that:** the scope and terms of reference for the Leisure Strategy Task and Finish Group be approved, subject to the proposed amendments being incorporated.

### 52. Revenue Financial Performance Report - Quarter 3 of 2021/22

The Commission considered a report (Agenda Item 10) concerning the latest revenue financial performance of the Council in Quarter 3 of 2020/21.

Melanie Ellis presented the report. She stated that the Quarter 3 forecast was a £3.4 million underspend, which took account of the Central Government support received.

She noted that nearly all of the underspend was in the People Directorate, with the largest changes being in demand services, particularly Adult Social Care, which was as a result of Covid-19.

Councillor Lee Dillon indicated that he would not be commenting on this or the next two items, since he had already commented at the Executive meetings and so his views were already on public record.

The Chairman noted that OSMC had previously requested that any changes to the budget in the last quarter should be highlighted and explained.

Melanie Ellis explained that the Quarter 3 report had already been prepared when the recommendation was made. However, she had made a note to do this for subsequent reports.

The Chairman noted that he would liaise with Councillor Dillon and revise the dates of OSMC so they were better aligned with Executive.

**Action: The Chairman and Vice Chairman to review future meeting dates to better align with Executive meetings.**

Councillor James Cole highlighted an issue on the Y axis of the chart entitled: 'Annualised clients for ASC Long Term Services'.

Melanie Ellis confirmed that this was an error and it should refer to client numbers rather than months.



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Councillor Cole also asked how the Council could have an under-spend in garden waste subscriptions given that this was an income stream.

Melanie Ellis confirmed that this was an over-achievement of income.

**Resolved that:** the report be noted.

### 53. **Capital Financial Performance Report - Quarter 3 2020/21**

The Commission considered a report (Agenda Item 11) concerning the latest capital financial performance of the Council in Quarter 3 of 2020/21.

Shannon Coleman-Slaughter presented the report. She stated that the forecast position was for just over £5.3 million underspend at Quarter 3. She confirmed that this was after £7.3 million of reprofiling at Quarter 2 into the 2021/22 budget build process.

She then outlined the positions for each Directorate:

- People – The Education Service had experienced delays on feasibility studies and projects;
- Place – The Development and Planning Service had experienced delays with the Four Houses Corner project;
- Resources – There were underspends in ICT relating to the Superfast Broadband project, and in Finance relating to the Corporate Maintenance budgets.

Councillor Tony Vickers asked if the delays to Four Houses Corner were related to the Covid pandemic.

Shannon Coleman-Slaughter stated that the underspend was due to historical issues with the project rather than Covid.

**Resolved that:** the report be noted.

### 54. **2020/21 Performance Report - Quarter 3**

The Commission considered a report (Agenda Item 12) concerning the performance in delivering the Council Strategy in Quarter 3.

Catalin Bogos introduced the report and highlighted four key areas:

#### 1. External context:

- Covid-19 continued to dominate, but the district had low rates of infections and deaths compared with other local authorities (lowest quartile).
- Work with communities continued to support vulnerable residents, with the Community Hub playing a key role.
- It was important to follow measures and restrictions to maintain this relatively good position.
- Data up to Quarter 2 showed that the local economy was resilient. The Council was monitoring the impact on town centres and employment amongst young people, with work placements being secured.
- There had been a reduction in demand for Social Care and a reduction in safeguarding inquiries for Adult Social Care compared to equivalent quarters in previous years.
- The focus of Social Care Services was to ensure that safeguarding issues were not hidden as a result of lockdown.

#### 2. Performance against core business component of the Council Strategy:

- Performance remained strong.

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- Benchmarking data showed top quartile performance.
  - Additional comparative data would be included in the Quarter 4 report.
  - Tax collection was below target as a result of supporting residents and businesses during Covid.
3. Performance against the Council Strategy priorities for improvement
- Key achievements included the accommodation offer for all rough sleepers and adoption of the Communication and Engagement Strategy.
  - Data for some performance measures was not available for Quarter 3 (e.g. exams did not taking place and traffic data was not available).
  - Where possible, services continued to provide support (e.g. keeping schools open for vulnerable pupils and children of key workers and remote learning for others).
  - Areas RAG rated as red included:
    - a. Affordable homes completions – this was dependent on developers and the Council’s requirements were above national guidance. There were 900 units with planning permission.
    - b. Rural afforestation and urban tree planting – this would be reprioritised as part of the Environment Strategy Delivery Plan
  - Exception reports were provided where measures were behind schedule. The maximum delay was 12 months, but most were 3-6 months.
4. Internal context
- There was a budget underspend as outlined in the previous agenda item.
  - The workforce was stable with reduced sickness levels.

The Chairman acknowledged that it was a difficult time to collect data.

Councillor Tony Vickers observed that the shortfall in affordable housing completions appeared to be a high proportion and asked if developers were building these units last, and was there a risk that they would seek to negotiate a reduction in affordable units. He also noted the shortfall of planning applications determined within the target dates. He stated that West Berkshire had not been as badly affected by Covid as the rest of the UK and wondered about the underlying cause.

Catalin Bogos indicated that delivery of affordable homes was dependent on when developers decided to start building. He acknowledged that, in some cases, developers would leave affordable homes until the end of their construction, but he could not confirm that they were refusing to build them. In terms of planning applications, historic benchmarking data showed that performance was below comparator groups, but the Planning and Development Service had subsequently revised its targets and procedures and recent performance was significantly better. The latest benchmarking data would be incorporated into the report once it had been released.

Councillor Lee Dillon noted that the Community Engagement Strategy and some other strategies had slipped. He acknowledged that this may be due to staff being redeployed. He asked for a one-page briefing note on all of the Council’s strategies and dates for when they would be produced / refreshed, which would go beyond the Forward Plan.

Catalin Bogos confirmed that the Community Engagement Strategy was being co-produced with partners in the community and the Council was dependent on its partners. He noted that most of the strategies had been delivered and details were provided on the Council’s website: <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/policies>. He undertook to produce a summary of when the remaining strategies would be produced / updated.

**Action: Catalin Bogos to produce a summary of when remaining strategies will be produced / updated.**

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**Resolved that:** the progress made in delivering the Council Strategy be noted.

**55. West Berkshire Council Forward Plan 15 April to 31 July 2021**

The Commission considered the West Berkshire Forward Plan (Agenda Item 13) for the period covering 15 April to 31 July 2021.

The Chairman invited Members to contact him if they would like to review any of the items on the Forward Plan.

Councillor Tony Vickers noted that the Local Plan was shown as coming to Council in May, but queried if it had been delayed.

Councillor Lynne Doherty indicated that it would come to the July meeting of Council.

**Resolved that** the Forward Plan be noted.

**56. Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Work Programme**

The Commission considered its work programme and the following changes were proposed:

- In the event that the Leisure Strategy was delayed, this would require the Task Group report to slip to a later meeting.
- The new Health Scrutiny Committee should consider the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and report back to OSMC.
- The Economic Development Strategy would be updated to take account of the effects of Covid and a review would be pushed back to 12 months post-adoption.
- The Equalities and Diversity Strategy would be reviewed in lieu of a separate report on inequalities.

Councillor Lee Dillon asked if the Equalities and Diversity Strategy was internal to the Council or considered wider inequalities in West Berkshire.

Nick Carter confirmed that the strategy would look internally and externally. He suggested that this would avoid unnecessary duplication.

Councillor Dillon stated that he had been discussing the scrutiny programme with a member of the public who had expressed concern that Adult Social Care was not mentioned and had not been considered in the previous year. He noted that the work programme could change to respond to events, and the Covid review would be comprehensive and would include Adult Social Care issues.

The Chairman agreed and noted that OSMC had undertaken an in-depth review of Adult Social Care about 18 months ago. This had previously been earmarked for review at this time, but Covid had meant it was not the right time to do this.

Councillor Tony Vickers suggested that the Health Scrutiny Committee might be better placed to scrutinise Adult Social Care issues.

**Resolved that:** work programme be approved subject to the changes discussed.

*(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.34 pm)*

**CHAIRMAN** .....

**Date of Signature** .....

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