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**SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Meeting of Chairmen's Scrutiny Forum**

**Date: Monday, 11th June, 2018**  
**Place: Committee Room 2 - Civic Suite**

**Present:** Councillors B Ayling, M Borton, C Nevin and K Robinson

**In Attendance:** F Abbott, J K Williams and T Row

**Start/End Time:** 6.00 - 7.00 pm

**1 Appointment of Chairman for Municipal Year**

Resolved:-

That Councillor Robinson be appointed Chairman for the Municipal Year.

**2 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mulronev.

**3 Declarations of Interest**

The following interest was made:-

(a) Councillor Nevin – non-pecuniary - 2 children work at MEHT; step sister works at Basildon Hospital; previous association at Southend and MEHT Hospitals; NHS employee in Trust outside area.

**4 Role of Forum**

The Director of Legal & Democratic Services outlined the role and constitution of the Forum.

**5 Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 20th November, 2017**

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2017 be confirmed as a correct record.

**6 Update on in depth projects - 2017/18**

The Scrutiny Officer provided a brief overview of the projects undertaken in 2017/18:-

- (a) People Scrutiny Committee – ‘Connecting communities to avoid isolation’ - final report will be considered at the meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2018.
- (b) Place Scrutiny Committee will conclude its project on ‘Maximizing the use of technology’ shortly.

(c) Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee – ‘Additional enforcement resources for Southend’ – agreed at Committee meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2018 and will be considered at Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

## **7 Discussion on potential in depth scrutiny projects for 2018/19 for Place, People and Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committees**

The Forum discussed potential in depth projects for 2018/19 for the Scrutiny Committees. Each Committee is due to select the topic at the July meetings.

The Forum felt that the in depth projects could usefully focus on the Southend 2050 work as it is a corporate and key priority for the Council. The town centre in particular was mentioned, in context of the vision for Southend 2050 and a joint project (Place & P&R) was also mentioned as a good idea.

It was agreed that the Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice Chairmen should consider the suggestions further.

## **8 Update on Future Legislative Changes for Scrutiny**

The Forum considered a report by the Chief Executive which advised Members about the House of Commons Communities and Local Government enquiry into the ‘*Effectiveness of Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees*’.

The report outlined the key issues from the enquiry, the Government’s response and the Westminster Hall debate which took place on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018. The Government has agreed that it will issue new guidance on scrutiny later in the year.

The Forum felt that the scrutiny system at Southend in the main appears to remain fit for purpose and more or less complies with the Government’s objectives which it will include in the guidance to be published later in the year, for example, Southend already appoints opposition Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs.

Resolved:-

That a further report will be submitted to the Forum when the guidance has been published.

## **9 Scrutiny training**

The Forum noted that a training session for Members had been arranged for 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2018 @ 18.00.

## **10 Any Items from Forum Members**

### Role of public in scrutiny

The Forum discussed how public can be involved in scrutiny so they can have a meaningful input and also the role of the co-opted members on the People Scrutiny Committee. As an example, it was suggested that it would be helpful, at the start of the July Scrutiny Committee meeting, for the new Healthwatch

Southend representative to give a brief overview about Healthwatch Southend / her role in the organisation.

**11 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Forum will be arranged for late November 2018 (date to be confirmed).

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