

APPROVED MINUTES
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

17 December 2018

(2.00 - 2.40 pm)

Meeting held: Committee Room, Civic Centre, Newcastle, NE1 8QH

Minutes

Present:

Chair: Councillor G Roughead

Councillors S Fairlie, A Lower, L Wright, M Hall, G Bell, G Stewart, G Davey and S Cox

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Monitoring Officer welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were provided.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Graham with Cllr Cox in attendance as substitute.

2 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2018/19

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that Cabinet had given delegated authority to the scrutiny committee to elect its Chair and Vice-Chair, with legislation requiring the appointment of Chair to be a party other than that of the interim Mayor.

In discussion it was **RESOLVED** that –

- i) Cllr Roughead be appointed as Chair.
- ii) Cllr Wright be appointed as Vice-Chair.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

The Chair reminded members to return their annual declarations of interest.

4 **OVERVIEW OF THE AUTHORITY'S SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS**

Submitted: Report of the Monitoring Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to the official minutes).

John Softly presented the report which highlighted the relevant sections of the constitution that apply to the scrutiny committee.

RESOLVED – that the report be received and noted.

5 **FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Submitted: Report of the Monitoring Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to the official minutes).

John Softly presented the report which invited the committee to agree the procedure for determining its work programme for the municipal year 2018/19.

To assist the committee discussion, Tom Warburton provided a presentation on the combined authority and its objectives. The following additional points were noted:

- The election of Mayor will take place in May 2019. The Mayor will Chair the combined authority Cabinet meetings and will oversee an investment programme of £20m a year over 30 years.
- The governance structure includes: two statutory committees, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit and Standards Committee; two informal advisory boards; and an Investment Panel to review and report into Cabinet on major investment proposals.
- The governance arrangements include an Assurance framework, designed to ensure that investment decisions are taken within a mechanism that is appropriate for the appraisal and monitoring of projects that are supported with public resources.
- The ambitions of the combined authority include economic development, developing talent and creating employment opportunities for residents.
- A number of emerging priorities for investment have been identified by Cabinet and are being worked up, but no investment has been agreed to date.
- Cabinet have agreed that limited investment decisions will be taken before the election of the Mayor. The Mayor will have the right to review decisions taken prior to their appointment, where they are not legally binding.
- Development work is underway on proposals that involve all three authorities, including: the coordination of an ESF bid to support council tenants who are out of work; the development of an inward investment fund; and the coordination of an ERDF bid to support the roll-out of fibre internet.

Members discussed development of the scrutiny work programme, making the following points:

- It was felt that, alongside the budget papers, a summary of the elements included in the devolution deal would be helpful, including information on how far work has progressed.
- That the budget proposals, outlining use of resources, will provide some helpful information for the committee on areas of decision making.
- That scrutiny may wish to focus on those areas that are further developed or that involve all three authorities to some extent.
- That it may be helpful to focus the time remaining in the current municipal year on one or two areas of the devolution deal.

In summing up the Chair confirmed that the budget proposals would be discussed at the February meeting, alongside a more in-depth information on each policy area. This information could then be used to determine the work programme for the remainder of the year.

RESOLVED – that:

- i) The report and presentation be received and noted.
- ii) The February meeting agenda to include items on the proposed budget and a detailed overview of each area of the devolution deal.

6 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The Monitoring Officer advised that an alternative date is necessary, and members will be contacted as soon as possible. The meeting will still be held in North Tyneside.

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