

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held at the Three Swans Hotel, High Street, Market Harborough

28th November 2013

Commencing at 6.30p.m.

Present:

Councillor Mrs. Ackerley, Chairman.

Councillors: Bannister, Beaty, Beesley-Reynolds, Bowles, Mrs. Burrell, Elliott, Evans, Galton, Holyoak, Johnson, Mrs. Page, Rook, Mrs. Simpson, Spendlove-Mason, Mrs. Wood.

Executive Members: Councillors Dr. Bremner, Dann, Hallam, King, Liquorish and Pain.

Officers: A. Graves, A.M. Hawkins, B. Jolly, R. Marriott, E. O'Neill and N. Proudfoot.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Brodrick, Dewes, Dunton, Everett, Golding, Graves, Hall, Knowles, McHugo and Mrs. Robinson.

326 MINUTES

Meeting of the Scrutiny Commission held on 5th September 2013

RESOLVED that: the Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Commission held on 5th September 2013 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

Meeting of the Scrutiny Task Group held on 17th October 2013 (Paper-light Working)

RESOLVED that: the Minutes of the Scrutiny Task Group held on 17th October 2013 be received (attached at appendix A to these Minutes).

Meeting of the Scrutiny Task Group held on 7th November 2013 (Charities and Voluntary Organisations)

RESOLVED that: the Minutes of the Scrutiny Task Group held on 7th November 2013 be received (attached at appendix B to these Minutes).

327 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None received.

328 PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' HALF-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Scrutiny Commission was joined by the Executive Members who presented half-year performance information and invited questions.

The half-year performance reports contained the following information:

- Critical Activities Dashboard
- A status update on the performance of each of the Council's key activities.
- The Council's Strategic Performance Dashboard.

The Executive Portfolio Holders answered questions from the Members of the Scrutiny Commission. A summary of the questions and comments is shown below:

Question/ Comment	Response
Some of the key activities are listed as having an 'amber' status. Is this a cause for concern?	An 'amber' status indicates that actions to mitigate concerns have been put in place.
Re. KA 1.03 (Enforcement): Will the Council's review of Planning services include the enforcement function?	Yes.
Re. KA 1.01 (Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning documents): How can Members contribute to these discussions?	The Local Planning Executive Advisory Panel meet to discuss these issues. All Members are welcome to attend these Meetings.
Re. KA 4.04 (Activities and events on open spaces): the Council should be congratulated on the healthy status of the priority.	The health of this priority can, in part, be attributed to the legacy of the 2012 Olympics.
Re. KA 02.01 (Allocate a choice of housing sites): when will the relevant planning applications come before the Planning Committee?	Members will be briefed on this before the end of w/e 29 th November 2013.
Re. KA 05.03 (Consider and develop costed options for the development of Welland Park Café): this project is delayed. What is the cause of the delay.	Further surveys are being carried out to determine the fitness of the building fabric.
Re. KA 05.04 (Support organisations to provide a co-ordinated range of activities): is an update on this available?	At present the Council is seeking funding to make progress. Further information will be provided to Members once it becomes available.
Re. KA 07.02 (Continue to improve Contact Centre Services): complaints have been received about call waiting times and the ability to make payments via phone/ internet.	The Council is considering recruiting more staff to accommodate the high volumes of telephone traffic that it receives. The Council has a fully-functioning, automated payments system.
Re. KA 07.05 (Continue to implement Channel Shift): what does 'Channel Shift' Mean?	This is the process of moving customer interactions and transactions on to modern facilities (e.g. online forms and automated payment systems).
Re. KA 08.01 (Implement a Document Management System): how is this project processing?	The Council has installed and is now operating a document management system. Work is on-going to fully integrate the Council's back-office systems with the document management system.
How is the Council's recycling service performing?	The Council is placed second in the country for its recycling rates. At the time of the Meeting the Council's recycling rate was 60.83%.
Re. KA 15.01 and KA 15.02 (Harborough Innovation Centre): how well is occupancy performing against targets?	Occupancy rates are ahead of target.
Re. KA 15.01 and KA 15.02 (Harborough	The office space is at the Harborough Innovation

Innovation Centre): Some office space is being provided as part of the Spark@ Harborough competition. Where is this office space?	Centre.
Re. KA 16.01 (Ensure demand for broadband in Harborough is fully recognised by funders and potential suppliers): has the Council already committed its investment to one future potential supplier?	No.
Re. KA 19.01 (Supporting Leicestershire Families): How are vulnerable families monitored?	The Supporting Leicestershire Families Service is run by three staff members. These Officers monitor vulnerable families.

The Scrutiny Commission thanked the Executive Members for their attendance and contribution to the Meeting.

The Chairman stated that the scrutiny of the 2014/15 budget meeting would take the form of a Meeting of the Resource and Performance Scrutiny Panel. The Chairman stated that all Councillors were invited to attend this Meeting.

329 THE SCRUTINY WORK-PLAN

The Scrutiny Commission RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Work-plan for November 2013 to March 2014, attached at Appendix C to these Minutes, be approved.

330 MATTERS OF URGENCY

None reported.

The Meeting ended at 8.30p.m.

Appendices not included with this despatch