

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY PANEL – RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

held in the Council Chamber,
Adam and Eve Street, Market Harborough

23rd June 2011

Present:
Councillor Holyoak (Chairman).

Councillors: Bannister, Dr. Bremner (Ex Officio), Evans,
Johnson, Knowles, Mrs. Page and Smith.

Officers: K. Mehta and E. O'Neill.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Spendlove-Mason.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Hall.

72 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE COUNCIL YEAR 2011/12

It was moved by Councillor Smith and seconded by Councillor Mrs. Page that Councillor Holyoak be elected Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel – Resource Development for the Council year 2011/12.

There being no other nominations, it was RESOLVED that Councillor Holyoak be elected Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel – Resource Development for the Council year 2011/12.

73 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE COUNCIL YEAR 2011/12

It was moved by Councillor Mrs. Page and seconded by Councillor Holyoak that Councillor Bannister be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel – Resource Development for the 2011/12 year.

There being no other nominations, it was RESOLVED that Councillor Bannister be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel – Resource Development for the Council year 2011/12.

74 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTIONS

None were received.

75 MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Panel – Resource Development held on 7th April 2011 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

76 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Smith declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest and remained at the meeting throughout. The nature of the interest was stated to be that he is a member of Seven Locks Housing Board.

77 PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' END-OF-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORTS

One Portfolio Holder reports to the Scrutiny Panel – Resource Development, the Asset Management and Finance Portfolio (Councillor Spendlove-Mason). Having presented the contents of his report, Councillor Spendlove-Mason invited questions from the Panel.

Portfolio Holders' reports contain the following categories: Achievements, Current Work in Progress, Areas of Concern, Key Performance Indicators and Topical Issues.

A summary of the discussion of each Portfolio (this Portfolio was previously two separate Portfolios: the Finance Portfolio and the Asset Management Portfolio) is provided below.

i) Finance

The Panel NOTED that:

- (i) the following sentence appeared under the 'Achievements' section of the end-of-year Finance Portfolio Report:

"Continued work on the e-procurement pilot with the view to widen its use across the Council."

This project was scheduled for completion by 1st April 2011. The pilot had not, at the date of the meeting, been completed. Given this, it would have been more appropriate to make this statement under the 'Work in Progress' section of the report.

- (ii) it receives an annual report on Outstanding Section 106 Invoices. This information is also provided via quarterly revenue and capital reports. Up-to-date Section 106 Invoice information is also available, at any time, by contacting the Council's Planning Policy team.
- (iii) since the introduction of bonding to secure Section 106 payments, no planning applications, which include Section 106 provision, have been received.
- (iv) regarding level of Sundry debt arrears: the target of £0.3m for 2010/11 excluded Section 106 debts. The actual debt figure was £0.34m, a variation of £40, 000.
- (v) The Big Society and the Localism agendas have implications for Council finances and budgets. The exact impact will become clearer as regulations and guidance become available.

The Panel RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) it be provided with an update on the completion of the e-procurement pilot at a future meeting.
- (ii) It continues to receive updates on outstanding Section 106 invoices (next one scheduled for February 2012).

ii) Asset Management

The Panel NOTED that:

- (vi) the Market Hall in Market Harborough is currently only open four days per week. The Executive is investigating the possibility of increasing the number of opening days of the Market Hall.
- (vii) Local Performance Indicator 307 gives an indication of average square metres per employee. This is currently at 27m²/employee. The Deputy Chief Executive is currently assessing the most efficient way of using office floor space.
- (viii) the Council owns 104 Northampton Road, Market Harborough which it was using as a hostel for the homeless. Following an Executive decision, this asset will be disposed of. The property was put to public auction at the beginning of June 2011. Prior to sale the property was subject to a structural survey which revealed no significant defects. The reserve price for the property was not met at the public auction.

- (ix) 51 Adam and Eve Street, Market Harborough continues to be used for providing homeless accommodation. Seven Locks Housing provide similar accommodation in Lutterworth.
- (x) the structural integrity and condition of Council assets is regularly checked and maintained by the Council's Facilities Management Officers.

The Panel RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) it receives regular updates on the letting and occupation figures for the Harborough Innovation Centre (HIC). These updates should include summary financial information on the HIC.

The Meeting ended at 7.35p.m.