

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held in the Council Chamber, The Symington Building,

Adam and Eve Street, Market Harborough

27th November 2014

commencing at 6.30p.m.

Present: Councillor Mrs. Ackerley, Chairman

Councillors: Bannister, Beaty, Bowles, Dewes, Elliott, Evans, Galton, Graves, Holyoak, Johnson, Knowles, McHugo, Mrs Robinson, Mrs Simpson, Tomlin & Mrs Wood.

Executive Portfolio Holders (left after Item 4 with the exception of Dr. P. Bremner who remained present for the full duration of the Meeting): Councillors B. Pain (until 7.39pm), Dr P. Bremner (from 7.33pm), Dann, Hallam, King & Liquorish

Officers: N. Proudfoot, A. Hawkins, K. Cowell & G. Keeping

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Beesley-Reynolds, Brodrick, Mrs Burrell, Dunton, Everett, Golding, Hall, Dr. Hill, Mrs Page, Rook & Spendlove-Mason.

259 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING:

An apology having been received from Cllr Beesley-Reynolds, Cllr Mrs Ackerley was duly elected as Chairman for the meeting.

260 MINUTES

RESOLVED that: the Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Commission held on 4th September 2014 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

261 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Cllr Pain informed the Commission that he was Lead Member for Waste at Leicestershire County Council and would therefore leave the room when this matter came up for discussion.

262 EXECUTIVE PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' HALF-YEAR REPORTS 2014/15

Members received a report on the Council's performance against the 2014/15 Corporate Delivery Plan and Performance Indicators at the half-year position. A Summary of Key Performance Indicators contained the following categories: Key Activities, Status, Progress and Next Steps.

Questions and comments on the Council's performance during the first half of the 2014/15 year were invited. A summary of the subsequent discussion is set out below:

Question/Comment	Response
<p><u>Re KA 01.01 – 01.07</u> Why did the Council not respond to a consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)?</p>	<p>This consultation dealt with one small element of the NPPF relating to time limits for planning decisions. In view of the number of consultations and the short response times, The Council is selective in which it responds to.</p>
<p><u>Re KA 01.02</u> What steps are being taken to ensure that draft Section 106 agreements for larger development schemes are in place before the applications are considered by the Planning Committee? What progress is being made with the review of Planning staff structure?</p>	<p>Officers are aware of this issue and the possibility of introducing a template for Section 106 agreements is being investigated. The Head of Planning post is currently being advertised.</p>
<p><u>Re KA 01.04</u> Is the report on the Five Year Housing Land Supply available yet? Why is the granting of planning permission for 22 dwellings at Westerby Court, Lutterworth specifically identified in the Summary of Performance of Key Indicators? What is the probability of the draft of the new Local Plan being completed by the end of March 2015?</p>	<p>The report will be completed in the next two weeks and taken to the meeting of the Local Planning Executive Advisory panel on 17th December 2014. This may have been included to illustrate the range of permissions given, but officers agreed to check on the reason for its inclusion. This date is no longer achievable due to delays in gathering evidence. A revised timetable was discussed by the Local Planning Executive Advisory Panel at its meeting on 11th November 2014 and will be considered by the Executive in January 2015.</p>
<p><u>Re KA 02.02</u> What steps is the Council taking to recognise the importance of issues relating to Domestic Violence?</p>	<p>A close eye is kept on this by the Council's partners, including the Journey Away from Domestic Abuse (JADA), and through Community Safety Partnership meetings.</p>
<p><u>Re KA 02.03</u> Is a review planned of areas designated under the Antisocial Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act?</p>	<p>Yes, this will be considered by the Community Safety Partnership within the next 6 – 12 months.</p>
<p><u>Re KA 03.01</u> Would the Council consider sending a letter to Westminster to draw attention to the Council's own involvement in Mental Health issues and to welcome the recent announcement regarding steps taken by the Government in this respect?</p>	<p>The request was noted.</p>
<p><u>Re KA 03.04</u> When will the review of signage in the</p>	<p>The review should be complete in early 2015.</p>

Symington Building be complete?	
<p><u>Re KA 04.04</u> Is the current appearance of the Council's website the final, or an interim, version?</p> <p>There may be issues over the width of pages in relation to browser screen widths – could this be investigated?</p>	<p>The website has been redesigned to make it more functional and this may be reflected in the new design, which is now complete.</p> <p>Noted – any comments on the functionality or appearance of the website are welcomed.</p>
<p><u>Re KA 05.02</u> Did any individual District Councils show an interest in pursuing shared services?</p>	<p>No, there was no appetite to pursue this was expressed by any other District Council.</p>
<p><u>Re KA 05.14 & 15</u></p> <p>What steps are being taken to identify options to address the coming loss of funding for green waste collections?</p> <p>What steps are being taken to allow for the decline in market value of recyclates in the procurement of the waste collection service?</p> <p>Are there any plans to reintroduce an Executive Advisory Panel, or other mechanism, to assist with the procurement process?</p>	<p><i>Note: Cllr Pain left the meeting while these items were discussed.</i></p> <p>The extension of the waste contract had been discussed by the Executive a few weeks earlier and that report was available for all members to read.</p> <p>Although it was considered that this question did not relate to historic six-monthly performance, it was noted that officers were aware of this risk.</p> <p>This is being looked into and any decision will be reported back.</p>
<p><u>Re KA 09.04</u> Were any town Members involved in the meeting about the Market Harborough Visitor Interpretation Panels?</p>	<p>Yes, Cllr Dr Hill is a member of the group. A second set of designs has been commissioned. The scheme will proceed once these have been agreed.</p>

263 THE SCRUTINY WORK-PLAN

The Scrutiny Commission RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Work-plan, attached at Appendix A to these Minutes, be approved.

The Scrutiny Commission RECOMMENDED that in future, where the Council is involved in financial outlay and the appointment of consultants, Members should be provided with an estimate of the likely level of expenditure.

The Meeting ended at 8.40p.m.