

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee held on
Thursday, 3 July 2014 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Roger Hickford – Chairman
Councillor Jose Hales – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: David Bard Kevin Cuffley
Alison Elcox Lynda Harford
Philippa Hart Bunty Waters

Councillors Simon Edwards and David Whiteman-Downes were in attendance, by invitation.

Officers: Alex Colyer Executive Director, Corporate Services
Jean Hunter Chief Executive
Tracy Mann Development Officer
Richard May Policy and Performance Manager
Victoria Wallace Democratic Services Officer
Graham Watts Democratic Services Team Leader

1. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Douglas de Lacey. It was also reported that Councillor Kevin Cuffley was in attendance as a substitute for Councillor David Morgan.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2014 were **AGREED** as a correct record.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No questions had been received.

5. 2013-2014 YEAR END POSITION STATEMENT ON FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee considered a report which provided a statement on the Council's position with regard to its General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, capital expenditure and requests for budget rollovers from 2013-14 to 2014-15. The report also presented the Council's year-end position with regard to its corporate objectives and performance indicators.

The report, together with any specific comments from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, was due to be considered at the meeting of Cabinet on 10 July 2014.

Councillor Simon Edwards, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Staffing, presented the report and discussion ensued as follows:

- concerns regarding vacancies in the ICT department were raised, along with concerns over the implications for project delivery due to this. Members were informed that all posts had either been recruited to or were in the process of being advertised;
- the lack of Corporate and Customer Services Portfolio Holder meetings was queried. Councillor David Whiteman-Downes informed Members that much of the business previously considered at his Portfolio Holder Meetings had been referred to Cabinet for consideration, such as items on performance monitoring and the Council's risk registers;
- the percentage of household waste for reuse, recycling and composting as set out in the report, was queried and discussed. Members were informed that:
 - there would be a reduction in household waste collection rounds and that crews' hours would be annualised;
 - service users would see no difference in service provision for blue and black bin collections, as annualised hours would be averaged out;
 - any posts lost from the service would either be posts that were already vacant or came from natural wastage;
- expenses reclaimed from the elections, as outlined in Appendix B of the report, were queried. The Committee was informed that these expenses came from the European Elections;
- the total rental income from external users of South Cambridgeshire Hall was queried and subsequently noted as totalling approximately £54,000 per annum;
- the provision of additional car parking was discussed and Members were informed that a report on the remodelling of the car park at South Cambridgeshire Hall would be submitted to the Council's Executive Management Team for consideration in July or August 2014. Through remodelling the car park, it was anticipated that an additional 20 to 30 parking spaces could be created. Members were reminded, however, that the same number of people currently worked in the offices as they did in 2009, despite the increase in external users of the building;
- the winding up costs of the Pest Control Service were queried. The Executive Director informed the Committee that these costs were from two early retirements which would pay for themselves within one year and result in savings from then on;
- costs for the purchase of uniforms for Contact Centre staff, as outlined in Appendix C of the report, were queried. The Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Customer Services clarified that the uniforms would present a corporate image to anyone visiting the Council offices. Members were also informed that a phase of recruitment to the Contact Centre had begun, with an extra six staff members being recruited. There would be a total of 15 to 16 members of staff in the Contact Centre at the end of the recruitment phase. The cost for the uniforms set out in the report was for all of these staff members;
- the staff survey was discussed and it was noted that the format of the survey had not yet been finalised. Members of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee suggested that the survey should be anonymous and facilitated by an external company if possible. All options would be considered as to the undertaking of the survey and Members requested an update on its format at the Committee's next meeting. The Committee was keen to be involved with its development and Councillor Simon Edwards agreed to refer this request to Cabinet for consideration on 10 July. Councillor Lynda Harford volunteered to lead any input from the Committee in respect of the staff survey;
- a question was raised regarding the assessment of the Local Plan and whether there was a procedure allowing Members to participate in the incorporation of changes. This issue would be referred to the Portfolio Holder for Planning.

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee **SUPPORTED** the recommendations to Cabinet contained within the report, scheduled to be considered at the meeting of Cabinet on 10 July 2014.

6. CITY DEAL UPDATE

Alex Colyer, Executive Director (Corporate Services), provided a brief update on the Greater Cambridge City Deal, which had recently been signed.

The Corporate Governance Committee would be meeting on 3 September 2014 to discuss the governance arrangements for the City Deal. Members of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and the Partnerships Review Committee would be invited to attend this meeting.

A joint Member workshop would take place towards the end of September 2014, for Members from all three Councils involved in the City Deal.

7. ORCHARD PARK - REVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Graham Watts, Democratic Services Team Leader, presented the background to this item which had been suggested at the meeting of full Council in June 2014 as an area for potential scrutiny.

Tracy Mann, Development Officer, provided some background on the in-depth review of Orchard Park, which had been undertaken by a Task and Finish Group of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee in 2007.

Tracy Mann proposed that a Member/Officer working group be established to investigate what the Council was doing to ensure that the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group were being incorporated, and how any achievements, lessons learnt and good practice were being embedded into other new developments, such as Northstowe.

Section 106 funding for Northstowe was discussed. Tracy Mann informed the Committee that a Community Development Worker had been appointed and that Phase 1 of Northstowe did include a primary school. She also confirmed that a Road Adoption Strategy for Northstowe had been written.

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee **AGREED** that a working group would be set up consisting of Councillors David Bard, Alison Elcox, Jose Hales, Lynda Harford and relevant officers. It was also suggested that a member of the Youth Council should be invited to be a member of the group.

8. WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15

Graham Watts, Democratic Services Team Leader, presented the Scrutiny and Overview Committee's proposed work programme, which was then discussed. The following items would be added to the work programme:

- Working Group (lessons learnt from Orchard Park working group) – update;
- the staff survey;
- Mears – it was suggested that the Scrutiny and Overview Committee should write to Mears regarding how it had reviewed its complaints procedure following consideration of this issue at a previous meeting of the Committee;
- ICT.

The work programme would also note the dates of meetings and workshops regarding the Greater Cambridge City Deal, namely the Corporate Governance Committee meeting on 3 September 2014 and a joint Member workshop at the end of September 2014.

9. APPOINTMENT OF SCRUTINY MONITORS AND MONITORING THE EXECUTIVE

Scrutiny Monitors were appointed as follows:

Description and/or Portfolio	Scrutiny Monitor
Leader	Cllr Lynda Harford
Deputy Leader Finance & Staffing	Cllr Roger Hickford
Corporate and Customer Services	Cllr Jose Hales
Economic Development	Cllr Philippa Hart
Environmental Services	Cllr David Bard
Housing	Cllr Bunty Waters
Planning	Cllr Kevin Cuffley
Strategic Planning and Transportation	Cllr Alison Elcox Cllr Jose Hales Cllr Lynda Harford

10. TO NOTE THE DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members noted the next scheduled meeting dates:

- Thursday 4 September 2014, 6pm
- Thursday 6 November 2014, 6pm

The Meeting ended at 7.25 p.m.
