

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 9 July 2015.

PRESENT: Councillor G J Bull – Chairman.

Councillors T D Alban, P L E Bucknell, R S Farrer, L George, D Harty, J M Palmer and J E White.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors E R Butler and Mrs A D Curtis.

IN ATTENDANCE: J Slatter, Councillors J Gray, J Ablewhite, and D Dew.

17. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

18. MEMBER'S INTERESTS

Councillor T Alban raised an interest regarding Item 4 on the Agenda due to occasional work on a freelance basis for BBC Radio Cambridgeshire.

19. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel considered and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book).

20. BUDGET MONITORING 2015/15 (REVENUE & CAPITAL)

The Accountancy Manager presented a report to the Panel on the Budget Monitoring 2015/16 (Revenue and Capital).

The report's key points concentrated on:

- Revenue Forecast Outturn
- Capital Forecast Outturn
- General Fund Reserve
- New Homes Bonus

Feedback on the report was positive, with discussion focusing on the progress made since the previous report that was noted by the Panel in 2015.

Members recommended that the report be approved by Cabinet.

21. MARKETING STRATEGY AND BRANDING FOR HUNTINGDONSHIRE

The Panel considered a report by the Economic Development manager on the Marketing Strategy and Branding for Huntingdonshire. The Panel were informed that the Strategy document is for the team to work from, rather than external facing marketing material and is a follow-up to the overarching report that was presented in June 2015.

Members of the Panel queried timescales for the Marketing Strategy implementation, and were informed that the external work will be starting immediately following approval from Cabinet.

Members noted the report and recommend it to Cabinet for approval, with additional recommendations:

- Progress on the implementation of the Marketing Strategy to be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Economic Well-Being Panel at six monthly intervals.
- An annual report on the impact of the Marketing work programme to be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Economic Well-Being Panel.

22. SHARED SERVICES

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) considered a report presented by the Corporate Director for Services. The primary subjects for discussions were as follows:

- Lead Authority Model
- Head of Shared service position
- Robust governance; joint committee
- Business plan
- Intelligent Client function
- Identity for Shared Services (branding etc.)
- Sovereignty guarantee

Members raised questions regarding the effects of Shared Services on Councillors; the Panel were informed that Shared Services will lead to a more robust service, and that these improvements will create extra resilience for HDC, SCDC and CCC.

In terms of Scrutiny, there may be instances where joint Scrutiny Panels may be appropriate with each Council reporting their findings from the Shared Service implementation.

It was agreed that strong communication channels between officers and members need to be developed and upheld to maintain clarity and understanding of the areas for improvement within each separate

Council.

The Panel provided positive feedback on the work achieved so far, and recommended that the reports should be approved by Cabinet.

23. LEGAL SHARED SERVICES BUSINESS CASE

The Panel received a report by the Managing Director, presenting the business case for the proposed Legal shared service and including details of the financial savings expected.

The Head of Operations explained the Scope for the future legal service as included in the report. Members were informed of the key points of the report:

- There are expected disaggregation issues for participating Councils; these issues are in hand within the respective Councils.
- Work relating to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA), the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Data Protection Act (DPA), Assets of Community Value (ACV) and similar areas will remain within the participating Councils who will commission legal advice and support as appropriate from the Practice.
- Each authority will take a decision on its required Monitoring Officer arrangements separately from this project.
- The Practice business case is based on the need to create resilience, improve the quality of service to clients, become more efficient and increase capacity within the Practice in order to reduce expenditure on external legal support and increase external fee earning opportunities.

The Panel concluded that the report clearly showed the benefits of a shared Legal service between the three Councils. Members have approved this report for Cabinet.

24. ICT SHARED SERVICES BUSINESS CASE

The Panel received a report by the Managing Director, presenting the business case for the proposed ICT shared service and including details of the financial savings expected.

The Head of Operations summarised the report and talked the Members through the benefits and outcomes of the proposed ICT shared service including:

- An ICT service that has the capability and capacity to meet the future demands of the Councils
- Greater efficiency and reduced duplication in ICT services
- Better access to and sharing information for performance management and benchmarking
- Increased customer self-service for straightforward interactions

- Continuity and resilience of service
- Raising quality and adding value to existing services
- Securing cost savings and sustainable efficiencies
- Releasing staff time for more customer facing activities
- Improving system scalability
- Ensuring improved and more up-to-date systems
- Ability to offer otherwise unsustainable services
- Levering transformation.

The Panel concluded that the report clearly showed the benefits of a shared ICT service between the three Councils. Members have approved this report for Cabinet.

25. WORKPLAN STUDIES

The Panel received and noted a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of studies being undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Social Well-Being and Environmental Well-Being.

26. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROGRESS

With the aid of a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel reviewed the progress of its activities since the last meeting.

27. SCRUTINY

The 156th Edition of the Decision Digest was received and noted.

Chairman