

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) held in Civic Suite 0.1B, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 6 March 2012.

PRESENT: Councillor S J Criswell – Chairman.  
Councillors S Akthar, K M Baker, J J Dutton, Mrs P A Jordan, Mrs D C Reynolds and R J West.  
R Coxhead – Co-opted Member.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors I C Bates, Mrs J A Dew and S M Van De Kerkhove and Mrs M Nicholas.

### **105. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 6th March 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **106. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor K M Baker declared a personal interest in Minute No. 109 by virtue of being Vice-Chairman of Huntingdon Shopmobility.

Councillor J J Dutton declared a personal interest in Minute No. 109 by virtue of being a Member of Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations and a Director of the Citizens Advice Bureau.

### **107. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN**

The Panel considered and noted the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which had been prepared by the Executive Leader of the Council for the period 1st March to 30th June 2012.

### **108. CONSULTATION PROCESSES - AN UPDATE**

The Panel received and noted a report by the Corporate Team Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on progress with the implementation of the recommendations made following completion of the study on the Council's consultation and engagement processes. Mrs L Sboui, the Council's Policy and Performance Officer, reported that two of the Panel's recommendations had been completed since the Panel's final report was submitted to the Cabinet in June 2011. Officers were encouraged to utilise the Consultation and Engagement Calendar and Database and a Consultation Forward Plan had been established in July 2011.

A review of the Consultation and Engagement Strategy was shortly due to commence and it was intended that Members of the Panel

would participate in the review process. In light of the forthcoming elections and the possibility that the Panel's Membership might change in the new Municipal Year, it was agreed to defer this work until June 2012. Whereupon, it was

#### RESOLVED

- (a) that the contents of the report now submitted be noted; and
- (b) that the appointment of Panel Members to assist with a review of the Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy be undertaken at the Panel's June 2012 meeting.

### **109. VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING**

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) containing details of a request by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) for the Social Well-Being Panel to examine the proposed future relationship between the Council and the voluntary sector and, in particular, the policies and mechanisms for the distribution of grants to voluntary sector organisations. The request had been endorsed by the Cabinet at its meeting on 16th February 2012.

The Scrutiny and Review Manager provided background to the request. The Economic Well-Being Panel was concerned at the potential resource implications associated with administering the grant schemes and was of the opinion that Overview and Scrutiny should have an input into the process to be employed to determine applications. In concurring with the Economic Well-Being Panel, Members reiterated the view that sound governance arrangements were needed throughout the process, particularly during the determination of applications. The Panel discussed some of the ways in which the grant allocation process might operate.

Members of the Working Group who had investigated the social value of the functions performed by the voluntary organisations that had Service Level Agreements with the Council drew attention to the work they had undertaken to establish criteria for allocating funding, which had been supported by the Cabinet. Members placed on record their wish for continued involvement in this matter and welcomed the opportunity to comment on the grant allocation process that would be employed by the Council in the future.

In noting that a report by the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services on voluntary sector funding would be submitted to the Panel and the Cabinet in June/July 2012, Members agreed to determine how they would proceed once they had sight of the report.

### **110. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS**

With the aid of a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel was informed of the forthcoming election of a Police and Crime

Commissioner, who would be responsible overall for crime and disorder matters across the Cambridgeshire area, and of other related changes that would take place.

Having been apprised of the Commissioner's responsibilities, the Panel was informed that a Police and Crime Panel would be established to scrutinise the role and performance of the Commissioner. Whilst guidance was yet to be issued on Police and Crime Panels, Members were advised that their composition would be determined locally. They would comprise between 10 and 20 elected Members from local authorities across the police force area plus two co-opted members. They would be, as far as was practically reasonable, representative of the political make-up of the area, whilst also having Members who had the skills, knowledge and experience to undertake the Panel's roles. The Panel commented that this would be difficult to achieve given the structure of local government in Cambridgeshire and requested that a copy of the guidance was circulated to them as soon as it was available.

The Scrutiny and Review Manager reported that discussion on the establishment of the Police and Crime Panel had commenced between Cambridgeshire County and Peterborough City Councils. The Panel was of the view that Huntingdonshire District Council should be represented at any meetings on the Police and Crime Panel, particularly as a number of matters such as Panel membership, rules of procedure and meeting arrangements were currently under discussion. Furthermore, the Panel expressed a strong view that representation on the Panel should be drawn from Overview and Scrutiny Members. Given the concerns expressed, the Panel requested that the relevant Executive Member was invited to provide an update on the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Police and Crime Panel at its next meeting. Whereupon, it was

#### RESOLVED

- (a) that the Executive Councillor for Healthy and Active Communities be invited to attend the Panel's April 2012 meeting to discuss progress with establishing local arrangements in respect of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Police and Crime Panel; and
- (b) that guidance on the Police and Crime Panels be circulated to the Panel as soon as it becomes available.

#### **111. NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS WORKING GROUP**

The Panel received and noted a report by the Neighbourhood Forums Working Group on its meeting on 27th February 2012 (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). In introducing the report, Councillor S J Criswell reported that the Working Group had spent a significant amount of time reviewing the boundaries for the proposed Local Joint Committees (LJCs) in Huntingdonshire. During its work the Group had considered elected Member representation for each area, constitutional terms for the LJCs and the localism concept.

The Scrutiny and Review Manager drew the Panel's attention to the

proposed constitution for the LJs, which was intended to be flexible enough to enable each area to act in accordance with local need. Reference was made to the various voting and decision making options considered by the Working Group and the Panel noted the conclusions which had been reached. Particular mention was made of the proposal for Members who were both the relevant District Councillor and County Councillor to receive a vote in each capacity when decisions were being taken.

Having considered and commented on the proposed boundaries, composition, voting and constitution for the LJs and in acknowledging the need to consult with Town and Parish Councils and Partners on them, the Panel endorsed the Working Group's proposals for submission to Executive Councillors.

#### **112. ONE LEISURE WORKING GROUP**

With the aid of a report by the One Leisure Working Group (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel was acquainted with the outcome of the Working Group's meeting on 28th February 2012. The Working Group had split into two sub-groups to investigate the business model to be employed by One Leisure and the development of a methodology for the quantification of social value. The latter work would be undertaken by the Members appointed by the Social Well-Being Panel. Having noted the intention of the sub-group looking at the business model to co-opt another Member who had experience of outsourced or managed services, the Panel expressed the view that the sub-group should be politically balanced.

Councillor J J Dutton drew the Panel's attention to a recent meeting of the One Leisure Huntingdon Sports Centre Joint Committee which had been held on 23rd February 2012 and the matters that had been discussed.

#### **113. CAMBRIDGESHIRE ADULTS, WELLBEING AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Panel received and noted the Minutes of the meetings of the Cambridgeshire Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 9th December 2011 and 11th January 2012 (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book). Members' attention was drawn to a meeting of the Committee held on 8th February 2012 where consideration was given to the budget for Adult Social Care in the County Council's Integrated Plan for 2012/13.

#### **114. WORK PLAN STUDIES**

The Panel received and noted the content of a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of studies being undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Economic Well-Being and for Environmental Well-Being. In so doing, Councillor R J West delivered a brief update on the outcome of a recent site visit by the Environmental Well-Being Panel's Design Principles for Future Developments Working Group at Loves Farm, St Neots.

**115. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) - PROGRESS**

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of actions taken in response to recent discussions and decisions. In light of the forthcoming departure of the Head of Housing Services, Members requested the relevant Executive Councillors to attend their next meeting to discuss future provision of housing services. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Executive Councillors for Customer Services and for Strategic Planning and Housing be invited to attend the Panel's April 2012 meeting to discuss the future of housing services.

**116. SCRUTINY**

The 122nd Edition of the Decision Digest was received and noted.

Chairman