

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 11 February 2014.

- PRESENT: Councillor G J Bull – Chairman.
- Councillors M G Baker, K M Baker,
Mrs M Banerjee, I C Bates, J W Davies,
R S Farrer, D A Giles, G J Harlock, D Harty
and Ms L Kadic.
- APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Mr D Hopkins.
- IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors R C Carter, S J Criswell, I J Curtis, R Fuller, M C Oliver P G Mitchell, T V Rogers and A Williams.

69. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 14th January 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

70. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were received.

71. 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) which had been prepared by the Executive Leader of the Council for the period 3rd February to 31st May 2014.

72. HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2014-16

(Councillor J D Ablewhite, Executive Leader of the Council, and Councillor N J Guyatt, Deputy Executive Leader, were in attendance for this item).

The Panel gave consideration to the draft Huntingdonshire District Council Corporate Plan 2014-16 (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). The Executive Leader explained that the document contained a vision, strategic themes, aims and outcomes for the Authority. Members were advised that it was an evolving document and mechanisms to monitor delivery of the themes and aims were being developed.

The Panel endorsed the decision to incorporate reference to the people of Huntingdonshire as a key theme running throughout the

Plan. Having queried whether there might be a more appropriate way of describing the Council's approach to homelessness, Members expressed support for the draft Corporate Plan and expressed an interest in receiving performance data in due course.

73. WORK PLAN STUDIES

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 studies being undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Social Well-Being and Economic Well-Being.

74. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENTAL 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.

With regard to the Panel's previous decision not to pursue the study into recycling in flats (Minute No. 13/67 refers), following discussion on whether any potential recommendations on this subject would have District-wide application, it was agreed to ask the Head of Operations for further information before a decision was taken on reinstating it.

In response to a question by Councillor Mrs M Banerjee, the Chairmen explained the process for approving the Community Infrastructure Levy Business Plan.

It was reported that the Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels had discussed whether it would be useful to carry out a study into flood prevention arrangements in the District and the relationship between flooding and various local policy developments. Given recent events it was agreed to undertake a study on this subject.

75. SCRUTINY

The 141st Edition of the Decision Digest was received and noted.

76. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the press and public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to

- (a) the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information); and
- (b) consultation or negotiations in connection with labour relations between the Council and its employees.

77. FACING THE FUTURE

(Councillor J D Ablewhite, Executive Leader of the Council, and Councillor J A Gray, Executive Councillor for Resources, were in attendance for this item).

(Councillors R C Carter, S J Criswell, I J Curtis, R Fuller, M C Oliver P G Mitchell, T V Rogers and A Williams were also in attendance for this item).

With the aid of a report by the Assistant Director for Finance and Resources (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Panel gave consideration to the complete list of suggestions for savings, which had been produced by the Facing the Future process. The report also contained the Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen's recommended approach to managing the work that would result from Facing the Future and their priorities for further research.

Members discussed what the potential implications of the Council's approach to shared services and outsourcing and to individual savings suggestions might be. Some Members questioned whether the Council should pursue options for shared services or outsourcing on the grounds that the Council would lose an element of control of transferred services. However, this had to be weighed against the possible savings that might be achieved. Such a decision would not be taken without a detailed appraisal of all the Council's options.

Having expressed a willingness to assist the Cabinet with specific tasks on Facing the Future proposals, the Panel requested future reports on progress of the overall Facing the Future Project, the effect of the Project on the performance of the Council against the Corporate Plan and on individual savings proposals. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that, subject to amendments, the lists of suggestions appended to the report by the Assistant Director (Finance and Resources) be approved for submission to the Cabinet.

78. MR D HOPKINS

The current meeting would have been the last one that Mr D Hopkins would have been entitled to attend as a Co-Opted Member. The Panel therefore, placed on record its gratitude for the contribution Mr Hopkins had made to its work over the past four years. The Chairman was authorised to write to Mr Hopkins to convey Members' comments to him.

Chairman