

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 19 November 2013.

PRESENT: Councillor S J Criswell – Chairman.

Councillors R C Carter, I J Curtis, R Fuller,
Mrs P A Jordan, P Kadewere,
S M Van De Kerkhove, M C Oliver and
J W G Pethard.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors K M Baker, D B Dew and C R Hyams.

60. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were received.

61. 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.

62. FACING THE FUTURE 2013

(Councillors R B Howe and T D Sanderson, Executive Councillors for Healthy and Active Communities and Strategic Economic Development and Legal respectively, were in attendance for this item).

(Councillors G J Bull, Mrs L Kadic, T V Rogers and R J West were also in attendance for this item).

With the assistance of a note which had been prepared by the Scrutiny and Review Manager (a copy of which is appended in the annex to the Minute Book) the Panel was reminded of the process for undertaking Facing the Future service reviews. In doing so, the Chairman commented that the areas for review by the Panel were both non-statutory services.

(a) Economic Development

A copy of the strategic service review template for the Economic Development service was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). The Executive Councillor for Strategic Economic Development and Legal explained the functions performed by the service and the various changes to it that had taken place in recent years. The Corporate Team Manager then informed Members that the service primarily focused on two key areas of work, namely the delivery of the Economic Growth Plan and the provision of support for the Local Enterprise Partnership.

A number of areas were examined in detail by the Panel including what would be the impact on the District if the Council ceased to provide the service, the limitations on the Council's ability to charge recipients of services and of grants obtained on their behalf by the Economic Development Team, the likelihood that the Council would receive funding from the Local Enterprise Partnership in future years and economic development projects undertaken by the Team.

Having been apprised of developments relating to the internal structure of the Council, the Panel stressed the importance of taking an holistic approach to meeting the Council's financial challenges.

The Panel discussed the options presented, which were intended to improve the financial performance of the Economic Development service. Areas where budget savings and efficiencies could be made were noted. Members were of the view that the "Further Efficiencies" theme should be pursued by every service area as a matter of course. The specific suggestions for efficiencies relating to Economic Development were endorsed. They then made additional suggestions for savings for consideration as part of the Facing the Future process.

(b) CCTV

Consideration was given to the strategic service review template for the CCTV service (a copy of which is appended in the annex to the Minute Book). In his introductory remarks, the Executive Councillor for Healthy and Active Communities outlined the changes which had been made to the service over recent years and explained his vision for CCTV to become cost neutral to the authority in the next five years. The Executive Councillor for Healthy and Active Communities offered to share the content of the business plan with Members when it was available.

Members' attention was drawn to the benefits that the service brought to the District. Particular reference was made to its role in increasing public confidence and in preventing crime and anti-social behaviour. Attempts would be made to encourage users to pay for the service in the

future. The Panel welcomed this suggestion.

Other matters discussed included current and future agreements with the Town and Parish Councils covering CCTV. The Panel then discussed in turn each of the themes within the template and concurred with the proposed priorities. Other suggestions for further investigation were noted by the Executive Councillor for Healthy and Active Communities.

Chairman