

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the COUNCIL held in Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 29 April 2015.

PRESENT: Councillor A J Mackender-Lawrence – Chairman.

Councillors J D Ablewhite, M G Baker, K M Baker, Mrs B E Boddington, P L E Bucknell, G J Bull, E R Butler, R C Carter, B S Chapman, Mrs S Conboy, S J Criswell, Mrs A D Curtis, I J Curtis, J W Davies, D B Dew, Mrs A Dickinson, Mrs L A Duffy, R S Farrer, R Fuller, I D Gardener, D A Giles, J A Gray, A Hansard, A J Hardy, R Harrison, D Harty, T Hayward, R B Howe, B Hyland, P Kadewere, Ms L Kadic, Mrs R E Mathews, P G Mitchell, J P Morris, Mrs D C Reynolds, T D Sanderson, M F Shellens, R G Tuplin, D M Tysoe and R J West.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors I C Bates, S Cawley, M Francis, G J Harlock, Mrs P A Jordan, S M Van De Kerkhove, M C Oliver, P D Reeve and P K Ursell.

70. PRAYER

The Reverend A Milton, Vicar of All Saints and St. Mary's, Huntingdon, opened the meeting with prayer.

71. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Having received an account of the events that the Chairman had attended on the Council's behalf since the last meeting, Members' attention particularly was drawn to the Young Enterprise Area Final event at Wyboston, which the Council had been pleased to sponsor. This demonstrated the Council's support for talented young people.

The Chairman then paid tribute to Councillor P G Mitchell who was attending his last meeting of the Council.

72. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 25th February 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

73. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were received.

74. QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

In response to a question from Councillor Ms L A Duffy, Councillor D B Dew agreed to circulate to Town and Parish Councils guidance on how the Community Infrastructure was calculated.

Following a question from Councillor D A Giles about progress of RECAP, Councillor D M Tysoe advised Members that a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) containing a detailed position statement. Councillor Tysoe also undertook to circulate the Minutes of the last RECAP meeting to all Members.

Arising from a question from Councillor K J Churchill about the timescale for responses by Corporate Directors to enquiries by party Group Leaders, the Executive Leader indicated that generally such matters should be addressed through the proper channels and that without more information on the case he could not provide a more detailed response.

In response to a question from Councillor T Hayward on the potential for savings should the Council reconsider its position on the removal of the viaduct in Huntingdon at the Planning Inquiry on the A14, Councillor D B Dew stated that the figures referred to had not been tested, that the County Council was not prepared to adopt the viaduct and that one of the purposes of the new route was to take traffic away from the Town Centre and consequently the Council would continue to support its removal.

Regarding a question from Councillor Ms L A Duffy about the level of rates payable on community halls, Councillor J A Gray concurred that the position was inconsistent and that change was desirable; however, at present this was governed by national legislation. He suggested that an Overview and Scrutiny Panel might investigate the position in the District and the cost of addressing any anomalies.

Councillor J P Morris asked a question about how the Council would achieve its affordable housing targets given changes in Government requirements in this respect. Councillor D B Dew responded that he shared the Councillor's concerns and that the Housing Team was addressing it, which could include making representations to the Government.

In response to a question from Councillor R J West about the powers available to the Council to prevent developers from leaving sites in an unsightly condition following demolition works, Councillor D B Dew undertook to work with Councillor West as Member Champion for Listed Buildings and Heritage on the scope and resources to be devoted to this kind of enforcement.

Arising from a question from Councillor R Fuller about the risks associated with opposition from parish councils to development plans for Houghton and Wyton, Councillor D B Dew confirmed that failure to allocate large sites could risk encouraging speculative development applications on the grounds that the Council did not have an

adequate land supply. He recognised that parishes were entitled to have views, but thought greater efforts to explain the planning position were required.

Councillor Mrs A D Curtis asked whether, given the position of the Local Plan, the Council was well placed to face the future and in response the Executive Leader confirmed that, in his view, the Council was aware of the challenges and risks and was better placed than many other authorities to create opportunities for the District. He shared the Councillor's hopes for a continued Council Tax freeze.

In response to a question from Councillor D A Giles about when he could expect to discuss recycling in flats and graffiti removal at the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being), Councillor D M Tysoe stated that the role of Overview and Scrutiny was to investigate matters that had District-wide significance rather than ward matters and that, in his view, recycling in flats was a matter for the Registered Provider, in which case he would ask those Members who sat on the Registered Provider's Board to take it up. He would reply in writing on the question of graffiti.

75. REPORTS OF THE CABINET AND PANELS

(a) Corporate Governance Panel

Councillor P G Mitchell presented the Report of the meeting of the Corporate Governance Panel held on 25th March 2015.

.....

In connection with Item No. 25 and upon being moved by Councillor Mitchell and seconded by Councillor J D Ablewhite, the recommendation was declared to be CARRIED.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meeting of the Corporate Governance Panel held on 25th March 2015 be received and adopted.

.....

Councillor Mitchell then made a personal statement in which he compared the Council's finances when he first became a Member with the present position. He was now proud to be part of the Council and deemed it to have been an honour and a pleasure to work with both Members and Officers.

Councillor J A Gray responded by referring to the positive influence Councillor Mitchell had exerted on the Executive Portfolio for Resources and the fact that he would be missed

by the Council. Councillor J D Ablewhite added that Councillor Mitchell had set him an example when he first became a Councillor and that he hoped Councillor Mitchell would continue to represent the Council on outside bodies. Councillors M F Shellens, K J Churchill and Mrs B E Boddington similarly commented on Councillor Mitchell's positive contribution to the Council and that he would be greatly missed.

(b) Cabinet

Councillor J D Ablewhite, Executive Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Cabinet, presented the Reports of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 19th March and 23rd April 2015.

.....

In connection with Item No. 46 and in response to a question from Councillor T Hayward, the Executive Leader confirmed that the identification of performance indicators would form part of the next phase of development of the performance management system. Upon being moved by Councillor Ablewhite and seconded by Councillor R B Howe, the recommendation was declared to be CARRIED.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Reports of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 19th March and 23rd April 2015 be received and adopted.

(c) Development Management Panel

Councillor Mrs B E Boddington presented the Report of the meetings of the Development Management Panel held on 16th March and 20th April 2015.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meetings of the Development Management Panel held on 16th March and 20th April 2015 be received and adopted.

(d) Licensing and Protection Panel

Councillor J W Davies presented the Report of the meeting of the Licensing and Protection Panel held on 24th March

2015.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meeting of the Licensing and Protection Panel held on 24th March 2015 be received and adopted.

(e) Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being)

Councillor R Harrision presented the Report of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) held on 5th March and 9th April 2015.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) held on 5th March and 9th April 2015 be received and adopted.

(f) Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being)

Councillor G J Bull presented the Report of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) held on 10th March and 14th April 2015.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) held on 10th March and 14th April 2015 be received and adopted.

(g) Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being)

Councillor S J Criswell presented the Report of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) held on 3rd March and 7th April 2015. While presenting the Report Councillor Criswell provided Members with an update on Hinchingsbrooke Hospital. The Hospital had made significant progress since the Care Quality Commission inspection took place such that 67% of the identified actions had been completed. He would continue to monitor the situation closely in his capacity as a member of the Trust Oversight group.

.....

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Report of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) held on 3rd March and 7th April 2015 be received and adopted.

76. VARIATION TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS, ETC

There were no changes to report.

The meeting concluded at 7.55pm.

Chairman