

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS) held in Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Thursday, 6 April 2023.

PRESENT: Councillor J E Kerr – Chairman.

Councillors T Alban, M J Burke,
S Bywater, S J Criswell, J E Harvey,
N J Hunt, M Kadewere, D J Shaw and
G J Welton.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors C Lowe and S R McAdam.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor M A Hassall.

19. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd March 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

20. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Alban declared a Non-Registerable Interest under Minute 22/22 as his daughter, who does not live in his household, works for the NHS.

21. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel received and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which has been appended in the Minute Book) which has been prepared by the Executive Leader for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st July 2023.

22. ADOPTION OF THE UPDATED HDC SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AT RISK OF HARM POLICY

By means of a report by the Lead Safeguarding Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Adoption of the Updated HDC Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk of Harm Policy was presented to the Panel.

Councillor Alban observed that safeguarding training for

Councillors would be desirable and would raise this as a member of the Member Development Group.

Following a question from Councillor Burke, the Panel heard that private events held within Council facilities should have their own safeguarding policy, however, the Council's policy is implemented in the event that this not be the case. It was also clarified that the policy covers all facility users. The Panel were further advised that the wording in section 15.2 would be reviewed to ensure clarity on this.

Councillor Shaw observed that as Councillors the internal link to the log of concerns forms would be inaccessible, after which the Panel were informed that this would be resolved and circulated to Members.

Following an enquiry from Councillor Bywater, it was confirmed that the Interim Managing Director was the Council's representative on the Cambridge and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board.

Councillor Alban questioned the use of photography and filming at events, the Panel were assured that alongside signs on display at facilities, booking forms also contain a statement on the matter.

Councillors Kerr and Bywater praised a well written and thorough report, a sentiment which was echoed by the Panel.

It was thereupon

RESOLVED

that the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel be passed to Cabinet for their consideration when making a decision upon the recommendations contained within the report.

23. HOMES FOR UKRAINE SCHEME

By means of a report and presentation (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book) by the Community Development Officer, the Homes for Ukraine Scheme was presented to the Panel.

The Panel praised the hard work undertaken by and dedication of the team in facilitating the scheme.

Following a question from Councillor Bywater regarding long term plans for Ukrainian guests, the Panel heard that whilst the amount of variables and unknowns made this hard to judge, the team would endeavour to continue to support Ukrainian guests. The Panel requested a further update be brought in 12 months

in order to monitor the situation.

Councillor Shaw enquired whether the changes to host payments had impacted upon the number of sponsors. The Panel were advised that whilst there had not been an increase in hosts, the payments had ensured that the number of hosts remained stable.

Following a question from Councillor Hunt, the Panel heard that funding had been secured for the initial two years of the scheme, however further funding opportunities would be sought to support the continuation of the scheme as long as it was needed in line with the Corporate Plan priorities.

The Panel heard, in response to a question from Councillor Alban, that should a guest relocate outside of the district, the Council would still receive some funding for the work done to support the guest.

The Panel were assured, following a question from Councillor Shaw, that work continued to ensure a ready supply of host families to support guests.

The Panel once again praised the dedication of the Officer and her team in supporting Ukrainian guests throughout the district.

24. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was presented to the Panel.

The Panel discussed potential topics for further investigation including:

Mental Health
Partnership with Youth Organisations
The Burgess Hall.

The Panel also expressed a wish to arrange a visit to The Great Fen Project.

Chair