

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH) held in Drama Studio, Burgess Hall, Westwood Road, St Ives PE27 6WU on Wednesday, 6 October 2021.

PRESENT: Councillor S J Corney – Chairman.

Councillors E R Butler, D B Dew,
M S Grice, M Haines and T D Sanderson.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors B S Chapman, Dr P L R Gaskin, J P Morris, A Roberts, S Wakeford and D J Wells.

28. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1st September 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

30. 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 October 2021 to 31st January 2022.

31. LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

By means of a report and presentation by the Strategic Growth Manager (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book) the Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was presented to the Panel.

The Panel heard that the revised SPD was a much needed update and a serious overhaul to the previous document which had been in use since 2007.

Councillor Grice praised the Officers for a commendable piece of work which would form a great point of reference for the future.

It was reflected by Councillor Dew that the 2007 document greatly needed updating as the world had changed significantly since its adoption. He praised the document as essential in keeping the suite of the Council's planning documents up to date. It was also noted that it is important to engage with town and parish councils on this subject to allow them a platform to build on for the future.

Councillors also praised the focus on townscapes within the document as they felt this was more in keeping with the local area and crucial for proposed and future developments.

Following a question from Councillor Butler over town centre parking in Ramsey, the Planning Policy Team Leader reassured that the suggestion to introduce landscaping to the town centre is in order to reduce the visible impact of town centre parking not to restrict the parking itself.

Councillor Sanderson questioned what the most effective way to provide natural screenings for existing developments would be. He was advised that whilst the report primarily focuses on new developments, town and parish councils were encouraged to work with the district council to provide planting screens on council owned land to reduce the impact of existing developments.

The report was wholeheartedly endorsed by Councillor Corney, who also questioned how the document would be communicated with local councils and public for the consultation. The Panel heard that the document would be available electronically and that it would be interactive to allow residents and councils to focus on specific geographic areas.

The Panel also heard that the public consultation was to be increased to eight weeks from the statutory four weeks as the council recognised the size of the document and aimed to allow sufficient time for residents and local councils to digest and comment upon the proposals.

Having welcomed the report, the Panel thereupon

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be encouraged to endorse the recommendations contained within the report.

32. 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.

Members were advised of the identified workstreams for working groups and were asked to express their interest in being involved.

Chairman

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