

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH) held in Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 3 November 2021.

PRESENT: Councillor S J Corney – Chairman.  
Councillors E R Butler, B S Chapman,  
D B Dew, Dr P L R Gaskin, M Haines,  
J P Morris, A Roberts and S Wakeford.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors M S Grice, T D Sanderson and D J Wells.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors J Gray and J Neish.

### **33. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **34. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillors B Chapman and S Corney declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in relation to Minute Number 38 by virtue of being Town Councillors.

### **35. 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 December 2021 to 31st March 2022.

### **36. HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

The Housing Strategy Action Plan Update was withdrawn from the agenda prior to the meeting and deferred to a future meeting of the Panel.

### **37. GRAFHAM & ELLINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING REFERENDUM**

By means of a report by the Strategic Growth Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Grafham and Ellington Neighbourhood Planning Referendum was presented to the Panel.

In response to a question by Councillor Roberts, the Panel heard that entry level sites were classified differently to rural exception sites.

Councillor Chapman praised the report and how far Neighbourhood

Planning Referendums have developed over time having been involved in the first neighbourhood planning referendum.

Executive Councillor Neish expressed praise for the report and wished to record his thanks to all involved in producing such a fine document.

Having welcomed the report, the Panel thereupon

RESOLVED

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

### **38. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY GOVERNANCE**

With the aid of a report by the Service Manager Growth (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Community Infrastructure Levy Governance report was presented to the Panel.

The Panel heard that the next round of applications was expected in the new year. In response to a question from Councillor Chapman, the Panel heard that the amount of CIL raised in each period cannot be projected due to the amount of variables involved.

Councillor Chapman addressed the Panel and stated that the St Neots museum had applied for CIL funding in order to apply for matched funding from other organisations. Councillor Chapman suggested that an agreement of funding in principle be applied to this application rather than it being declined to allow for other funding applications by the museum to be progressed.

The Panel heard that the reasons for declining the application were clearly detailed within the report and that the museum would be able to apply for funding again in future funding rounds.

The Panel were informed that applications were considered in line with other funding and investment already committed to by the Council to ensure a fair distribution of funds across the district. It was brought to the Panel's attention that in excess of £5 million CIL funding was being invested in St Neots under the Future High Streets Fund and the St Neots Riverside Park.

In response to a question from Councillor Morris, the Panel heard that an annual return, the Infrastructure Funding Statement, was available which detailed CIL funding to date.

Following a question from Councillor Wakeford, it was confirmed that any organisation is able to apply for CIL funding.

The Panel heard that the project at Godmanchester Mill Weir detailed in Appendix 1, had a funding shortfall but that the project continued to be delivered and the shortfall has been addressed.

Councillor Morris informed the Panel of potential delays to the Buckden to Brampton cycleway due to the pandemic.

Whereupon, having welcomed the report, the Panel

RESOLVED

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

*19:43 Councillor Dew entered the meeting.*

**39. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021/22 (QUARTER 2)**

By means of a report by the Chief Financial Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Financial Performance Report 2021/22 (Quarter 2) was presented to the Panel.

In response to a question from Councillor Roberts, the Panel heard that the Council had been unsuccessful in its bid for Parish Councils to adopt closed churchyards within their parish and to pay the District Council for the maintenance currently carried out free of charge. Alternative proposals are being drawn up.

It was queried by Councillor Wakeford whether the increased spend on temporary staffing for Development Management was anticipated to continue. The Panel heard that long term solutions were being implemented including recruitment to the team. The forecast for the next annual budget will reflect this.

The Panel heard that pre-application planning advice remained unavailable at present but that it is planned to reinstate this in the future.

Having welcomed the report, the Panel thereupon

RESOLVED

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

**40. TREASURY MANAGEMENT - SIX MONTH REVIEW**

By means of a report by the Chief Financial Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Treasury Management - Six Month Review report was presented to the Panel.

In response to a question from Councillor Chapman regarding empty units at the Rowley Arts Centre, the Panel heard that the CIS was exceeding its budgeted income targets and that the team were working hard to fill vacant units with sustainable options which would benefit both the local community and local economy.

Following a question from Councillor Wakeford, the Panel heard that environmental impact is very much considered as part of the Councils work and future planning.

Whereupon the Panel

RESOLVED

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

**41. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021/22(QUARTER 2)**

By means of a report by the Business Intelligence and Performance Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Corporate Performance Report 2021/22 (Quarter 2) report was presented to the Panel.

In response to a question from Councillor Chapman, the Panel heard that homelessness cases were at expected levels and that preparations had been made should any spikes in cases occur.

Councillor Roberts praised the report but felt that some amber indicators did not convey the positive work done as they fell into the adjacent indicator by a minimal amount. The Panel heard that although in some cases only a minimal figure affected the difference between an amber and green indicator, a line had to be drawn somewhere.

Councillor Dew praised the positive report and especially the positive returns made within the Leisure Centres.

Having welcomed the report, the Panel thereupon

RESOLVED

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

**42. 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.

Following the Cabinets recent decision to move to paperless agenda, the Panel pledged to move to paperless agendas for future meetings.

Chairman