

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE DELIVERY) held in the Council Chamber, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 2 September 2008.

PRESENT: Councillor S J Criswell – Chairman.

Councillors J D Ablewhite, Mrs M Banerjee, Mrs K E Cooper, J E Garner, P Godley, Mrs P A Jordan, J M Sadler, M F Shellens and J S Watt.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors E R Butler, Mrs J A Dew, P G Mitchell, Ms M J Thomas and P K Ursell.

24. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 1st July 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

26. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN

The Panel considered the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which had been prepared by the Leader of the Council for the period 1st September to 31st December 2008. In so doing, Members were reminded that the Sub-Regional Housing Strategy item would be considered at the Panel's October meeting. In addition, the Panel were informed that they would receive a copy of the report on Community Engagement when it became available.

27. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS TO ST IVES TOWN CENTRE

(Councillor P L E Bucknell, Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport, was in attendance for this item).

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Environmental Management (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) proposing that public consultation was undertaken on a range of options for Phase 2 of the environmental improvements to the Market Hill and Bridge Street areas of St Ives.

By way of background, Members were advised that the options had been subject to scrutiny by an Advisory Group comprising County, District and Town Councillors together with Panel representatives and

representatives from local consultative groups such as the Town Partnership, the Access Group and the Civic Society. The Panel also was reminded that its role in the process was to ensure that the Environmental Improvements Protocol previously approved by the Cabinet had been adhered to.

In noting the public consultation proposed on the options identified, the Panel expressed the view that extensive publicity for the consultation process should be undertaken. In that light, it was reported that a number of methods of engaging with the public would be employed during the consultation process. Discussion then ensued on bus services operating within the town centre. In so doing, the Panel were advised that access for buses would not be affected by any of the proposed options.

Having expressed satisfaction that the Environmental Improvements Protocol had been adhered to, the Panel

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be recommended

- (a) to note the progress of the scheme and consultation to date;
- (b) to approve the principle of the scheme and to take the necessary public consultation to identify the preferred option; and
- (c) to receive feedback at a future meeting.

**28. CUSTOMER SERVICE QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT:
APRIL - JUNE 2008**

(Councillor L M Simpson, Executive Councillor for Customer Services and Information Technology, was in attendance for this item).

Consideration was given to the Customer Service Quarterly Performance Report for the period April to June 2008 (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). In introducing the report, the Customer Service Manager reported that, following the formation of a new Customer Services Team in February 2008, quarterly performance reports would now be produced that covered all services within the Team.

Having noted the performance of individual services in the period covered, the Panel received clarification on a number of activities referred to within the report. In so doing, the Panel requested that additional information relating to the number of unanswered telephone calls received by the Call Centre, together with the number of enquiries in areas that were not the responsibility of the District Council, be incorporated into future performance reports.

29. ADOPTION OF LOCAL STANDARDS FOR THE PROVISION OF CORE SPORTS FACILITIES IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE

(Councillor Mrs D C Reynolds, Executive Councillor for Housing and Public Health was in attendance for this item).

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel were acquainted with a proposal to adopt local standards for the provision of core sports facilities in Huntingdonshire. The standards would help to achieve an appropriate range of sports facilities to meet future need.

It was reported that, in light of the preparations for the forthcoming Olympics, the adoption of local standards was timely. In response to concerns raised by the Chairman, the Panel were assured that the adoption of standards would not result in the creation of new facilities that would compete with existing Council facilities. In addition, the Council would not be responsible for future operating and maintenance costs of new facilities.

The Panel was informed that whilst the proposal was for five specified types of sports facilities, an emerging Leisure Facilities Strategy would incorporate other facilities. In recognising that the adoption of local standards was being encouraged by Sport England, the Panel

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet be recommended to adopt the local standards for the provision of core sports facilities in Huntingdonshire as outlined within Table 1 of the report now submitted.

30. CHEWING GUM LITTER REDUCTION TRIAL

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Operations (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the outcome of the chewing gum litter reduction trial, which took place between August 2007 to August 2008. The report also contained details of a proposal to extend the scheme to St Neots.

The Panel noted that the removal of chewing gum from pavements in town centres cost the Council £17,000 per year. In response to a question by a Member regarding the level of savings achieved since the introduction of the scheme, it was reported that as the scheme was still in its early stages, the level of savings achieved had not yet been identified. Having suggested that details of the scheme be forwarded on to Parish Councils, the Panel

RESOLVED

- (a) that the outcome of the chewing gum litter reduction trial in the period August 2007 to August 2008 be noted;
- (b) that the intention to extend the scheme to St Neots be noted; and

- (c) that Parish Councils be provided with details of the scheme.

31. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE DELIVERY) - STUDIES

The Panel considered a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of actions taken in response to recent discussions and decisions.

Further to Minute No. 08/20, Members were advised that the Cabinet would consider the Panel's report on Enhanced Cleansing Services at their meeting on 4th September 2008. Having been reminded of previous requests made by the Cabinet for Panel Members to present the Panel's reports, Councillor J D Ablewhite was nominated to attend the Cabinet meeting.

Councillor M F Shellens reported that he was still pursuing his investigations into the new A14 proposals and the impact that they would have on air quality and noise pollution.

32. SCRUTINY

The 86th Edition of the Decision Digest was received and noted.

Chairman