

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) held in the Wren Room, Countryside Centre, Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, Brampton Road, Huntingdon, PE29 6DB on Tuesday, 1 December 2009.

PRESENT: Councillor S J Criswell – Chairman.

Councillors Mrs K E Cooper, S J Criswell,  
J W Davies, J E Garner, P G Mitchell,  
J M Sadler and R J West.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors P H Dakers, Mrs P A Jordan and A Monk.

### **60. MINUTES**

Subject to the deletion of the word “September” and the insertion of “December” in the eighth line of Minute No. 09/56 (a), the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 3rd November 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **61. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

No declarations were received.

### **62. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN**

The Panel considered and noted 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 December 2009 to 31st March 2010. Members requested an opportunity to discuss an item on Improvements to Kerb Side Collection prior to its consideration by the Cabinet.

### **63. AGEING WELL IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE - OLDER PEOPLES' HOUSING STRATEGY**

*(Councillor K J Churchill, Executive Councillor Housing and Public Health, was in attendance for this Item).*

With the aid of a report by the Head of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel reviewed the draft Older Peoples' Housing Strategy entitled 'Ageing Well in Huntingdonshire: Housing and Healthy Ageing for Older People 2009 – 2014' which had been produced in partnership with NHS Cambridgeshire.

The Executive Councillor for Housing and Public Health informed Members of the background to the Strategy, a previous version of which was adopted by the Council in 2005. Having noted predictions regarding the age of the District's residents, Members were advised

that the Strategy aimed to promote healthy ageing and to improve the quality of life for older people in Huntingdonshire. As 72% of individuals in the District aged 65+ years were owner-occupiers of their own homes, the Strategy sought to enable older people to live independently and to remain in their own homes wherever possible.

The Panel's attention has been drawn to the Strategy's objectives, which focused on the four key areas of providing support to older people, undertaking home adaptations, employing more energy efficient measures within homes and providing "extra care" services to the elderly. Members received clarification that the latter referred to sheltered accommodation for older people and included a range of communal facilities and 24 hour nursing care provided by the Primary Care Trust. However, only limited levels of accommodation were available across the District, when compared to the level of demand available. Whilst it was costly, the Panel noted that it was more affordable than other alternatives.

In response to a question by a Member on Occupational Therapists, the Executive Councillor for Housing and Public Health informed the Panel that he was currently discussing with the Primary Care Trust and Cambridgeshire Community Services the level of service available. It was agreed that the Notes of meetings, together with the Terms of Reference for the Working Group established to look at this issue, should be circulated electronically to the Panel for information purposes.

The Panel discussed the figures presented and commented on the affordability of home adaptations. Other matters discussed included the locality of sheltered accommodation and the possibility of increasing the age of individuals covered by the Strategy to 75+ years. Finally, comment was made on the low level of accommodation available to elderly couples. Having been advised that extensive consultation had been carried out on the content of the Strategy and that the Action Plan could be achieved through existing resources, the Panel

#### RESOLVED

that the Older Peoples' Housing Strategy entitled 'Ageing Well in Huntingdonshire: Housing and Healthy Ageing for Older People 2009 – 2014' be endorsed for submission the Cabinet.

#### **64. PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

The Panel considered a report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) containing details of the Council's performance against its priority objectives in the quarter to 30th September 2009. Having endorsed the comments of the Corporate Plan Working Group, particularly with regard to the objectives where targets had not been achieved, Members noted that investigations into the budgets associated with each of the priority objectives were ongoing and that further meetings of the Working Group would be held in January and February 2010.

The Panel discussed trends relating to the "Number of households

living in temporary accommodation” and, in so doing, was advised by the Head of Housing Services that whilst progress towards the target was being made, recent economic trends had placed on the Council considerable demand for housing advice and services. The Head of Housing Services expressed the view that the Council might achieve the annual target if grant became available for new housing in the same way as it did last year. In discussing the development of social housing over the year to date, it was reported that developers had found it difficult to sell affordable homes through the Government’s Shared Ownership scheme. The latter had, in the past, been used to cross-subsidise the cost of social housing and the lower than hoped for sales had meant that fewer social houses had been delivered than might otherwise have been the case.

Members questioned the level of budget available to the Leisure Centres for promotional and marketing purposes and, in response, they were advised that the Leisure Centres employed a Promotions and Marketing Officer who was responsible for all their marketing.

Attention was drawn to an amendment to the actual performance levels achieved in respect of the throughput of people experiencing arts interventions from 14,827 to 13,383 people. The revised figure still represented a significant achievement when compared to the cumulative quarterly target of 4,250 people.

**65. NHS CONSULTATION: THE FUTURE OF PRIMARY CARE OUT-OF-HOURS SERVICES FOR RESIDENTS IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

With the aid of a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel was acquainted with details of a consultation exercise being undertaken by NHS Cambridgeshire on the future of primary care out-of-hours services for residents in Cambridgeshire. In noting that comments were required by 21st December 2009, the Panel agreed that Members should submit their own individual response to the consultation.

**66. FUTURE GOVERNANCE OF HINCHINGBROOKE HOSPITAL**

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Panel was acquainted with the contents of the first edition of “Next Steps News”, a newsletter which had been designed to encourage the public to become involved in shaping the future of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital.

As the District Council’s representative on the Hospital’s future governance Stakeholder Panel, Councillor S J Criswell confirmed that details of the car parking management contract would be included within the franchise and that the Chairman of the Stakeholder Panel and the District Council’s Chief Executive, Mr D Monks, had been asked if the Stakeholder Panel could consider the franchise bids in a private session. Members then reiterated their concern that the Strategic Health Authority might select the franchisee that undertook to pay off the largest proportion of the Hospital’s debt rather than the one that would provide the best health care.

Having had their attention drawn to the opportunity being offered to the public to comment on the proposals, Members questioned whether the public would be able to influence the process given the type of questions being posed within the newsletter. In that light, Members agreed that they would submit their own comments to the Stakeholder Panel.

**67. CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Councillor R J West delivered an update on matters currently being considered by the Cambridgeshire Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee. In so doing, it was reported that the Committee had appointed a Working Group to consider issues surrounding the future governance of Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, to which Councillor West had been appointed. The Working Group would next be meeting on 8th December 2009.

**68. WORKPLAN STUDIES**

The Panel considered and noted a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) reviewing the Panel's programme of studies and informing Members of studies being undertaken by the other Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

**69. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) - PROGRESS**

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Democratic and Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of actions taken in response to recent discussions and decisions. Members were advised that an update on the Disability Access study would be submitted to the Panel's January meeting, together with a report on the outcome of a meeting between Councillor R J West and a representative of the Care Quality Commission. In addition, it was noted that a meeting of the Play Facilities Working Group would be held on 16th December 2009.

Having regard to the Monitoring of Section 106 Agreements, the Panel noted that the Development Management Panel had formally requested the Social Well-Being Panel to undertake regular reviews of allocated schemes and those developments where funding had been received for future maintenance of facilities. Members requested that a representative of the Operations Division should be in attendance at future meetings when the quarterly monitoring reports were considered.

In respect of the Panel's study into car parking at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Members were advised that the Hospital were currently undertaking their own review of parking arrangements. In that light, the Scrutiny and Review Manager was requested to invite a representative of the Hospital to a future meeting to discuss this matter.

The Panel was advised that Fenland and South Cambridgeshire District Councils had made known their reluctance to use the focus

groups to investigate in detail matters raised by The Place Survey. Members placed on record their wish to see that steps were being taken to address those areas identified as most needing improvement in Huntingdonshire.

Members were informed that the Council would shortly be launching a new website and that it would include a facility to consult local residents on matters affecting the District.

The Panel was advised that the petition concerning Hill Rise Park, St Ives had been referred to the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership on 26th November 2009, and that a response from the Community Safety Team and the Police to the issues raised would be submitted to the Panel's February meeting. It was also reported that the Chairman of the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership would be writing to all those concerned to invite them to the St Ives Neighbourhood Forum, which was scheduled to take place on 6th January 2010, when issues could be suggested for action by the police.

Having been apprised of details of a consultation being undertaken by NHS Cambridgeshire proposing new patient rights for inclusion within the NHS Constitution, it was agreed that details should be circulated electronically to Members and that the matter should be raised at the Panel's meeting in January 2010.

## **70. SCRUTINY**

The 99th Edition of the Digest of Decisions was received and noted.

Chairman