
Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being)

**Report of the meetings held on 6th March and 3rd
April 2012**

Matters for Information

61. CONSULTATION PROCESSES – AN UPDATE

The Panel has received an update on progress on its completed study on the Council's consultation and engagement processes. Members are encouraged that Officers are now effectively utilising the Consultation and Engagement Calendar and Database and that a Consultation Forward Plan has been established in July 2011. The Panel will appoint Members to assist with a review of the Council's Consultation and Engagement Strategy at its June 2012 meeting.

62. VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING

At the request of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) the Panel has agreed to examine the proposed future relationship between the Council and the Voluntary Sector. Of particular interest to the Economic Well-Being Panel is the potential resource implications associated with administering the scheme and the decision making process that will be employed to determine future applications for funding. Members of the Social Well-Being Panel will seek to ensure that sound governance arrangements are in place throughout the process, particularly during the determination of applications.

Members of the Working Group who had investigated the social value of the functions performed by the voluntary organisations with Service Level Agreements with the Council have welcomed the opportunity to comment on the grant process to be employed by the Council in the future. Panel Members will decide how to undertake their investigations in June when they receive a report by the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services on voluntary sector funding.

63. POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS

At its meeting in March, the Panel has received information about the role and responsibilities of the Police and Crime Commissioner who will be elected on 15th November 2012. The Commissioner will be responsible overall for crime and disorder matters across the Cambridgeshire area.

A Police and Crime Panel will be established to scrutinise the role and performance of the Commissioner, the composition of which will be determined locally. It is intended that the Police and Crime Panels will, as far as is reasonably practicable, be representative of the political make-up of the area, whilst also having the skills, knowledge and experience to undertake its role. Discussions have commenced between the Police Authority and Cambridgeshire County and Peterborough City Councils on the establishment of the Panel. Members have expressed strong concerns that Scrutiny Members are not being kept informed of these meetings particularly as a number of matters such as membership, rules of procedure and meeting arrangements, are currently under discussion. The Panel is further of the view that representation on the Police and Crime Panel should be drawn from Overview and Scrutiny Members.

The Head of Environmental and Community Health Services has attended the Panel's April meeting to respond to the Panel's concerns. It has been confirmed that all authorities in a police force's area have a statutory duty to collaborate on the establishment of a Police and Crime Panel. Peterborough City Council has agreed to host the Panel and consideration is currently being given to whether representation from each authority should be an Executive or Overview and Scrutiny Member. Members of the Social Well-Being Panel have reiterated the view that representation should be drawn from the latter.

64. NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS WORKING GROUP

The outcome of a recent meeting of the Neighbourhood Forums Working Group has been reported to Members. The Panel has endorsed the Working Group's proposals in respect of revised boundaries, composition, voting and constitutional terms for new Local Joint Committees. The proposed Constitution is intended to be flexible enough to enable each area to act in accordance with local need. Subject to approval by Executive Members, a consultation exercise will be undertaken with Town and Parish Councils, partners and other interested parties.

65. ONE LEISURE WORKING GROUP

The Panel has been updated on the outcome of a meeting of the One Leisure Working Group. The Working Group has split into two Sub-Groups. The Sub-Group comprising Social Well-Being Panel Members will investigate the development of a methodology for the quantification of social value and the Sub-Group of Economic Well-Being Panel Members will investigate the business model One Leisure should employ.

66. MANAGEMENT OF HINCHINGBROOKE HOSPITAL

The Panel has received a presentation from representatives of Circle Healthcare and Hinchingbrooke Hospital on the Hospital's Business Plan for 2012/13. The Plan has been developed because, with effect

from 1st February 2012, Circle has taken over responsibility for the operation of the Hospital through a ten year franchise agreement.

The Head of Business Development for Circle has outlined the activities undertaken by Circle to engage with Hospital staff, GPs and other stakeholders which have helped to inform the Business Plan. The views obtained from staff have also influenced the decision to restructure the Hospital into autonomous clinical units led by Senior Clinicians with administrative, management and nursing support. The Business Plan's aim is for Hinchingsbrooke to become one of the top ten District General Hospitals in the Country. This will be achieved by focussing on objectives relating to patient safety, patient experience, staff engagement and value for money. Each objective is supported by four key initiatives which will lead to their achievement. It is expected that the Business Plan will result in changes that lead Hinchingsbrooke becoming the Hospital of choice for patients inside and beyond its immediate catchment area, whilst also becoming a more attractive place for staff to work. Importantly, the Business Plan addresses the Hospital's historic financial deficit of £40m. £9.2m of efficiency savings have already been identified for 2012/13 and it is hoped that total savings of £10m will have been achieved by the end of the financial year.

The Panel has discussed a number of matters and received a response to each of the questions that have been raised. The matters that have been discussed include the process by which patients are referred between specialists within the Hospital, whether there will be any further loss of services provided following the closure of Acer Ward, when infrastructure works are planned to improve the efficiency of the Hospital's buildings, accident and emergency waiting times, car parking charges, information technology investments and information sharing practices employed between Hospitals. Further questions have been asked on the food provided to patients, improving access to consultants for family members and the means by which Circle's performance will be monitored.

At the conclusion of the Panel's discussions, Councillor S J Criswell posed a question which had previously been raised at full Council concerning Circle's ability to meet the financial demands arising from the Private Finance Initiative Agreement undertaken to provide for the construction of the Hospital's treatment centre. The Head of Business Development has confirmed that this has been included within Circle's financial plans.

67. HUNTINGDONSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REVIEW

Under the Police and Criminal Justice Act 2006, the Panel is required to scrutinise the work of the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership. For this purpose, Members have examined the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Plan 2011-2014, the Strategic Assessment of community safety issues 2011 and the Crime Update for Quarter 3 of 2011-2012.

Members' attention has been drawn to the level of funding awarded to the Partnership for the 2012/13 financial year which, at £29,000, represents a significant reduction compared to previous years. The funding will assist with sustaining the Community Safety Team which, with effect from 1st April 2012, has been transformed into a multi-disciplinary team and now includes three members of staff from Cambridgeshire Constabulary: a Police Constable and two PCSOs. This arrangement is unique and it is hoped that it will attract future funding. This change has been made in advance of the election of the Police and Crime Commissioner on 15th November 2012. The Commissioner will be responsible for the overall budgets relating to the Police and anti-social behaviour with effect from the 2013/14 financial year. This means that the Partnership will have to bid for future funding to the Commissioner.

The Panel has acknowledged the complexity of the way in which the Partnership is required to operate to meet the challenges faced by the District and has concluded that, on the basis of the data presented in the Strategic Assessment, it is effective in its work. The Strategic Assessment is conducted each year to inform the priorities that are included within the Community Safety Plan. This is an independent assessment undertaken by the Research and Performance Team of Local Government Shared Services. The Panel is satisfied that the priorities identified for 2012/13 are appropriate given the level of funding it has been awarded and its likely future financial constraints. In addition to the annual Strategic Assessment, a monitoring report analysing the Partnership's performance against its priorities is submitted to the Partnership on a quarterly basis.

Members have discussed a number of matters including the means by which the Partnership monitors the recording of accident and emergency data for alcohol related admissions at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, trends in crime data, correlations between domestic violence and other types of anti-social behaviour, the benefits of establishing a multi-disciplinary Community Safety Team and various projects/initiatives such as the Nightwatch and Pubwatch schemes and the Huntingdonshire Diversity Forum. Other matters discussed include partner interventions in cases of perpetrators of crime who have been diagnosed with mental health disorders and the activities of the Rural Crime Action Team. Officers have been requested to make enquiries into the status of the latter to confirm whether the Team is operational.

In concluding their discussions, the Panel has supported the priorities contained in the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Plan 2011-2014 and has expressed its satisfaction that the Partnership has appropriate monitoring and accountability mechanisms in place.

68. FUTURE OF HOUSING SERVICES

Arising from a request by Members for information on the future delivery of housing services following the retirement of the Head of Housing Services, and the subsequent restructure of the service, the Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships and Projects) has

attended the Panel's April meeting to explain the changes that will be made. He has reminded Members that the Council's Medium Term Plan identifies savings through a reduction in the Council's senior management structure. Following a period of consultation with staff within Housing Services, a decision has been made by the Senior Officers' Panel to make the post of Head of Housing Services redundant. Given the underlying synergies that exist, different aspects of the service will in future report to the Heads of Planning Services and of Customer Services. Assurances have been delivered to the Panel that the changes will not have an impact upon the delivery of front line services.

Members have expressed the view that they should have been informed of the proposed changes and consulted before a decision was made.

69. CAMBRIDGESHIRE ADULTS WELLBEING AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Panel has been informed of the matters discussed at recent meetings of the Cambridgeshire Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. They include the budget for Adult Social Care in the County Council's Integrated Plan for 2012/13, Hinchingsbrooke Hospital's Business Plan 2012/13, the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and membership of the proposed Regional Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee on liver metastases. The Committee has also established a Working Group to investigate early discharges and delayed discharges at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital. The investigations will commence in May 2012.

Other Matters of Interest

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

The Panel has reviewed its programme of studies at each of its meetings.

71. WORK PLAN STUDIES

The Panel has received details of studies being undertaken by the other Overview and Scrutiny Panels. In particular, an update has been delivered on the outcome of a recent site visit by the Environmental Well-Being Panel's Design Principles for Future Developments Working Group at Loves Farm, St Neots.

72. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 – FORWARD PLAN

The Panel has been acquainted with the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions at each of its meetings. Members have been invited to attend the April meeting of the Economic Well-Being Panel when

consideration is given to a report on the Outcome of a Tender Exercise for One Leisure, St Ives.

73. SCRUTINY

The Panel has considered the latest editions of the Decision Digest and discussed matters contained therein.

S J Criswell
Chairman