
Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being)

**Report of the meetings held on 6th January and
3rd February 2015**

Matters for Information

37. THE OCTAGON, STATION ROAD, ST IVES

Pursuant to Item No. 26 of the Report to the Meeting of the Council held on 17th December 2014, the Panel has been acquainted with the options for the future use of the Octagon, Station Road, St Ives and on the issues raised by the petition relating to the building.

It has been reported that the Council is in the process of reviewing its estate and that three proposals have been received relating to the Octagon but no decision has yet been made. The decision will be based on the business cases submitted and the Council will have to be satisfied that the successful bidder's proposal is financially viable.

It is generally agreed that the Council should base the decision on what the building should be used for and what is in the interests of the whole District. St Ives already has a number of community facilities.

It has been confirmed that the Council is not seeking to dispose of the freehold of the building. The potential areas for negotiation and terms for an agreement have been noted.

The Panel concluded that it is satisfied with the process that the Council has established to determine the use to which the Octagon will be put in the future. Members have stressed that they support bringing the building into public use and the principle that it should provide good value for the tax-payer. In the circumstances, it has been decided to take no further action in respect of the petition relating to the Octagon, Station Road, St Ives. The organiser of the petition has been formally notified of the Panel's decision.

38. THE HEALTH ECONOMY

The Panel has reviewed the scope and potential priorities for its work on the local health economy. It is intended that the deliberations will inform the forthcoming Away Day on Overview and Scrutiny. It is intended to make work in this area more effective by broadening the debate on health matters. A primary concern is the way health related services respond to the growth in the population. Various themes have been considered for investigation. The Panel has

discussed extensively community engagement and the role of Members.

Financial austerity is expected to continue with local government having to accept a significant proportion of the cuts. The District Council will have to cease some of its activities and it is hoped to establish a new relationship with residents to enable them to identify what is important for them and how they will respond. Councillors are to be integral to this process, which will promote community resilience. In order to encourage public participation, it will be necessary to make the process relevant to residents. The Communications Section is in the process of carrying out research on the best ways of engaging communities. The Panel's view is that the District Council's activities should form part of a single conversation involving all levels of local government.

Having considered other suggestions for inclusion in the Panel's work programme, it has been agreed to receive reports:

- ◆ on the current state of Neighbourhood Planning within the Council and how it is likely to develop and how it might promote community resilience;
- ◆ on community engagement, including examples of good practice;
- ◆ on the impact of Welfare Reforms, including fuel poverty and how it is defined;
- ◆ reviewing the Council's Equalities Impact Assessment arrangements; and
- ◆ on the impact of growth on GP surgeries, school places and hospital capacity.

The Panel has taken into consideration how the diverse range of service areas that contribute to the health agenda is co-ordinated through the Corporate Plan.

39. CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH CLINICAL COMMISSIONING ROUP

The Panel has been acquainted with the way hospitals are held accountable for the services they provide. The general context is as follows:

- ◆ non-foundation trust hospitals are accountable to the Trust Development Authority;
- ◆ foundation trust hospitals are accountable to Monitor;
- ◆ the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is accountable to NHS England; and
- ◆ the Care Quality Commission (CQC) is accountable to the Secretary of State for Health.

The Panel has paid particular attention to recent events at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and whether evidence of the problems identified during the recent inspection by the CQC should have been identified and reported earlier by the CCG. Members have been

informed that deterioration in some areas was detected in Spring/Summer 2014. The CCG reported these trends upwards and to the CCG and it was these reports that partly prompted the CQC inspection. The Panel has questioned whether the CCG should have made elected Members aware of their concerns but it has been pointed out that the CQC has significantly more resources than the CCG and was able to undertake an intensive and detailed inspection. The CCG accepts the CQC's findings but has been surprised by the severity of them. The CCG has no evidence that contradicts the CQC's findings.

In considering the future of the Hospital, the Panel has been advised that the Hospital is now in special measures. It has been advised what steps it needs to take to improve services and it has been allocated significant extra resources and support from relevant organisations to do this. There is already evidence that improvements have been made and the CQC is due to carry out a re-inspection. The CCG has expressed the view that future growth in the local population is likely to mean that a hospital facility will continue to be provided on the Hinchingsbrooke site. This area is currently the 11th most challenged health system in the Country.

Having been acquainted with the way the CCG pays Hinchingsbrooke, the Panel has received a detailed explanation of the Hospital's performance against indicators collated by the CCG.

40. HUNTINGDONSHIRE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP GROUP

The Panel has received an update on the work of the Children and Young People Group. Members have been advised that the County Council is under a statutory obligation to ensure work takes place but there are no detailed requirements in terms of creating structures. The Group reports to the Children's Trust, but the Trust currently is undergoing a review.

The Group does not have a budget and so operates through partnership working. Its approach is to undertake joint planning to add value to existing services and it endeavors to avoid duplication. The Group takes a pragmatic approach to selecting projects for inclusion in its plan. Projects are largely focused on the County Council but other suggestions are welcomed. The Panel will consider this at the Overview and Scrutiny Away Day.

The Group's priorities are:

- ◆ promoting emotional wellbeing and supporting young people with emerging mental health problems;
- ◆ reducing the impact of Child Poverty in Huntingdonshire;
- ◆ increasing employability of young people and reducing the number of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET);
- ◆ increasing awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation; and
- ◆ supporting new communities.

The Panel has discussed in detail the Group's work on NEETs. Particular attention has been paid to the way NEETs are identified. Members will be provided with data on local trends in comparison with those at regional and national levels.

The Group finds its links with District Council representatives to be extremely valuable. Update reports will be submitted to the Panel following Group meetings on a quarterly basis and the Panel will consider how it might have greater involvement in this area of work in the future.

The Group makes available a small amount of money to fund independent groups. Information on how to apply has been circulated to Members.

41. HUNTINGDONSHIRE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING PARTNERSHIP

The Panel has been informed of recent changes in the way the Health and Well-Being Thematic Group is organised and operates. The District Council's Head of Leisure and Health now is the Chairman of the Group. She has overseen a change to the Group's structure and to the way it works. Analysis has been undertaken of the issues facing the District and priority areas have been identified, as follows:

- ◆ Excess Weight (including Obesity) – Children and Adults;
- ◆ Mental Health – Children and Adults; and
- ◆ Delivering Services for Older people to enable them to live independently, safely and well.

A Working Group has been established to progress this work. Like the Children and Young People Group, the intention is to add value to existing services and to avoid duplication. Work is co-ordinated by the Head of Leisure and Health.

The Panel has suggested that the Group should take care to ensure all local voluntary groups are factored into the services to be provided by the Uniting Care Partnership. Although the Chief Executive of the Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations is the Vice-Chairman of the Group, it has been pointed out that not all voluntary organisations are affiliated to the Forum.

Generally, the Council is reviewing its involvement in Partnership working. Once this work is complete, a report will be submitted to the Panel.

42. REVIEW OF SAFER HOMES SCHEME FUNDING

The Panel has reviewed the Council's options for the Safer Homes Scheme. Members are of the view that the Safer Homes Scheme may well have an important role in reducing demand for Disabled Facilities Grants, which can be significantly more costly and so could have a beneficial effect on the Council's overall budget position.

Members have questioned whether this effect might be extended by at least maintaining the current level of funding but it is accepted that there currently is no evidence to support this. The Panel has, therefore, recommended the Cabinet to commission jointly with partners a new countywide service and to review the District Council's funding position during 2016/17 to consider whether to continue with the funding after the end of the contract. The District Council's investment in 2015/16 would be £25k and £10.4k from 2016/17 onwards. The timing of the review will give the Council the opportunity to collate the necessary evidence and to identify alternatives.

43. CORPORATE PLAN (PERFORMANCE REPORT)

In conjunction with the Panels for Economic and Environmental Well-Being, the Panel has received an update on progress achieved against key activities identified in the Council's Corporate Plan in the period 1st October to 31st December 2014. Members have reviewed the key actions under the Working with Our Communities strategic theme.

The Panel has noted that the review of the Council's partnerships is likely to take longer than expected but has not otherwise identified any issues with performance that it considers need to be brought to the attention of the Cabinet. Members have, however, reiterated the point that the allocation of indicators between the Panels needs to be reviewed to make them consistent with their remits. It has been suggested that the Corporate Plan Working Group should be involved in this process.

The Panel's attention has been drawn to the fact that recycling or composting rates have remained consistent despite a reduction in compostable waste being collected during winter months. This positive trend should be recognised.

44. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMIC WELL-BEING) - PROJECT MANAGEMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

At the request of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) the Panel has appointed together with Councillors R C Carter and P Kadewere to replace two of its nominees to the Select Committee on Project Management.

45. CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH COMMITTEE

Councillor R Carter, the Panel's appointed representative, has reported to the Panel on recent meetings of the Cambridgeshire Health Committee. Members intend to invite the Uniting Care Partnership to their meeting in June 2015 to discuss its approach to the provision of older people's healthcare and adult community services in Huntingdonshire.

Other Matters of Interest

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

The Panel has reviewed its work programme at each of its meetings. Given recent events, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Hinchingbrooke Hospital will attend the next meeting to present his Action Plan for short term service delivery. Questions have been invited from the public to put to the CEO. An update also will be received on local mental health services.

47. WORK PLAN STUDIES

The Panel has received details of studies being undertaken by the other Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

48. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel has been acquainted with the contents of the Notices of Key Executive Decisions.

49. SCRUTINY

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

S J Criswell
Chairman