

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Minutes of a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 25 April 2018 in the Council Chamber, North Norfolk District Council, Holt Road, Cromer at 9.30 am.

Members Present:

Committee: Cllr K Ward (Chairman)

Cllr V Gay	Cllr R Reynolds
Cllr S Hester	Cllr R Shepherd
Cllr M Knowles	Cllr B Smith
Cllr N Lloyd	Cllr N Smith
Cllr N Pearce	Cllr D Young

Officers in Attendance: The Corporate Director (NB), the Monitoring Officer, the Head of IT and Digital Transformation, the Communications and PR Manager, the Democratic Services Manager and the Democratic Services Officer.

Members in Attendance: Cllr J Lee (Leader), Cllr S Arnold (Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Planning Policy), Cllr R Price (Portfolio Holder for Property and Asset Commercialisation), Cllr N Coppack, Cllr A Fitch-Tillett, Cllr A Green, Cllr J Rest and Cllr R Stevens.

Also in Attendance: Peter Rogers, North Norfolk Radio.

147. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr S Bütikofer, Cllr A Claussen-Reynolds, Cllr H Cox, Cllr J English, Cllr B McGoun and Cllr E Seward.

148. SUBSTITUTES

Cllr R Stevens for Cllr J English, Cllr R Shepherd for Cllr A Claussen-Reynolds, Cllr D Young for Cllr S Bütikofer, Cllr N Lloyd for Cllr E Seward and Cllr N Pearce for Cllr B McGoun.

149. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions were received.

150. MINUTES

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 March 2018 were accepted as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

151. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None

152. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To be taken, if necessary, at the appropriate item on the Agenda.

153. PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None

154. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY A MEMBER

The following items had been submitted by Members of the Council for inclusion on an agenda of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting. The Committee considered how it should respond to such requests and when to schedule them into the work programme:

“Some Members have the App "Docs to Go" installed on their iPads which is used to manage constituency related work such as letters. Members were advised that this was a safe way to store and manage such confidential correspondence and, in addition, would reduce the need to print off and keep hard copies. One member has now lost all of the information stored in ‘Docs to Go’ and has been told that it cannot be retrieved. They have therefore requested that the Committee looks at IT provision and support for Members – with a particular focus on constituency related work and that a response is provided as to why Members were provided with a facility that it is not secure”.

Cllr R Reynolds read a statement from Cllr A Claussen-Reynolds who was unable to attend the meeting. She stated that “Docs to Go” had been installed on her device in the early years of her being a councillor and that this had been a decision of the IT department. She had been happy with the application, found it user-friendly and had used it a lot, and in good faith. When she lost all her documents, she contacted the IT department who were unable to retrieve them. This had caused her great concern and she was disturbed when she was told that Docs to Go was just an app and, as such, was not secure. She appreciated that the Head of IT and Digital Transformation was not in post when the app was installed, but assured him that it was an IT initiative.

The Head of It and Digital Transformation expressed regret at what had happened but confirmed that the app had only been installed on four iPads at specific request. All four Members had been contacted. The decision at that time was to allow installation of apps without validation from IT if it allowed Members to do their work. He emphasised that no data had been lost. It had been a case of data deletion without a back-up and there was no security issue. Lessons had been learned that would be applied when supplying IT equipment to the new intake.

Questions and Discussion

- a) Mr R Reynolds said that the app was on his iPad although he had never requested it. Mr D Young said that, when he was issued with a different iPad,

- it also had Docs to Go installed. The Head of IT and Digital Transformation undertook to investigate these specific cases.
- b) The Chairman said that it would be necessary to check if other Members had Docs to Go installed on their devices.
 - c) Cllr V Gay said that she had been under the misapprehension that everything on the iPads was regularly backed up. She asked if Cllr Claussen-Reynolds' documents had been deleted as part of a system update. The Head of IT and Digital Transformation replied that, although it was a possible explanation, Docs to Go was not part of the Council's software and that the IT section didn't manage updates to it.
 - d) The Chairman asked what Members could expect to be backed up. The Head of IT and Digital Transformation said that everything on the NNDC account was automatically backed up.
 - e) Responding to a question from Cllr R Reynolds, the Head of IT and Digital Transformation said that emails were not routinely held back unless they contained attachments of a certain size or type, in which case they were quarantined. There was a manual process in place for retrieving them at the recipient's request.
 - f) Cllr V Gay expressed concern that documents were deleted after 6 years. The Chairman explained that the Member Development Group had met on 24 April for initial discussion with the Head of IT and Digital transformation regarding current IT provision and provision for the 2019 intake. This topic would be progressed further at the next meeting of MDG and issues, such as those raised by Members today, would be covered.

RESOLVED

That there would be no further discussion by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of IT provision for Members until work being undertaken by the Member Development Group was completed.

155. RESPONSES OF THE COUNCIL OR THE CABINET TO THE COMMITTEE'S REPORTS OR RECOMMENDATIONS

At the meeting of 21st March 2018, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee made the following recommendations regarding Agenda item 17: Enforcement Update:

RESOLVED to recommend to Cabinet:

- a) That the temporary post in the Combined Enforcement Team is made permanent.
- b) To support the use of Reserves to fund the above, if necessary.
- c) To support the early use of Compulsory Purchase Orders.

Cabinet agreed to support the recommendations.

156. BEACH HUTS AND CHALETS TASK & FINISH GROUP

Cllr M Knowles reported that the Group's first meeting, on 11 April 2018, had been very good and that a programme, a draft agenda and terms of reference had been agreed. He commended the Property, Project and Programme Manager for all the work she had done. The Group's work was due to end in October and the timetable would be circulated.

Cllr R Price said that, as Portfolio Holder for Property and Asset Commercialisation, he would welcome the opportunity to attend and would like to receive the minutes.

The Chairman encouraged Members to communicate any good ideas they might have to the Group. The Democratic Services Manager said that the next meeting, on 09 May, was open to all Members, especially local Members. A tour of beach huts on 16 May was also open to other Members. Cllr M Knowles said that the Group encouraged local Members especially to engage as early as possible in the process.

RESOLVED

To approve the Terms of Reference for the Beach Huts and Chalets Task & Finish Group.

157. ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

The Committee was asked to make any recommendations on anything they might want to see done differently. The Chairman explained that the aim was to achieve clarity regarding targets, future targets, variances and reasons for substantial variances and national targets, where applicable.

Discussion

- a) Cllr N Lloyd expressed concern that the Council could not be held to account against the Plan as it was not populated with figures. The Chairman explained that it would be populated when the year-end figures were available.
- b) Cllr D Young suggested a column to show the previous year's targets and Cllr J Rest suggested a variance column.
- c) The Chairman asked that external benchmark figures might be included where appropriate.
- d) Cllr N Coppack, referring to 03B (Protect the wonderful countryside and encourage sustainable access) asked why the targets for 2018/19 were significantly lower. The Chairman suggested that the Committee should ask for a written response.
- e) Referring to Action Points 03 A 01 and 03 A 02, Cllr A Fitch-Tillett asked for more details. The Chairman explained that there would be further details in reports coming forward. The Policy and Performance Management Officer would work more closely with the Democratic Services Manager and the new Scrutiny Officer to ensure that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme was in line with Action Plan priorities.
- f) Cllr N Pearce expressed concern that there were no targets for waste. The Chairman said that the column would be populated when it next came to the Committee. Cllr Pearce also said that there were no targets for Broadband and therefore nothing to set progress against.
- g) Cllr N Lloyd said that the Council should be stretching itself to improve every year. The Chairman said that a target should be extended if it had been met easily but reconsidered if it had been over-challenging.
- h) Cllr S Arnold said that it was important that the Plan was clear and followed a pattern so that it was clear to members of the public. Too many columns would be

confusing. She suggested that targets needed to be realistic, but achievable. It was necessary to understand the difference between targets and ambitions.

- i) Cllr S Hester agreed that there should be data in the Action Plan. He asked if, under Coast and Countryside, the challenges facing rural businesses could be considered and possibly added to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme.
- j) Health and Wellbeing (04 A 01) Develop community support initiatives in anticipation of the reduction of external funding sources: Cllr R Reynolds asked that more information should be reported to Members. The Chairman advised that this was scheduled into the Committee's Work Programme. Cllr N Smith referred to a scheme at Norfolk County Council which he believed had been awarded significant funding to help sufferers from depression. The Chairman reminded the Committee that recent training had suggested the introduction of Member briefings and that this was probably a suitable case for such an approach.
- k) Cllr R Price reported that he and Cllr A Claussen-Reynolds had attended a meeting at Norfolk County Council about the number of people in the community with learning difficulties. North Norfolk was one of the best districts for provision but he was concerned about how much information was being disseminated by doctors' surgeries. Cllr A Claussen-Reynolds would be able to report back to Members.
- l) Referring to the Kelling Hospital complex, Cllr D Young asked what the Council's interests were. Cllr R Price said he believed that we were engaging with our partners to protect the Council's interests. He later confirmed that the Council didn't hold any assets on the complex but was supporting a healthcare initiative.

The Committee's recommendations would be forwarded to Cabinet. The Action Plan would come back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED:

To recommend to Cabinet that the Plan should include the following:

- 1. Clear outcome-based targets, where appropriate.**
- 2. Outcome-related results for areas that are "ambitions" rather than numerical targets.**
- 3. Clarity about previous performance.**
- 4. A narrative report attached to explain significant variances.**
- 5. Benchmark figures (when an authority of similar size and location is providing the same service)**

158. MARKET TOWNS INITIATIVE

The Committee was requested to consider the recommendations and to establish a politically balance working group, with appointments delegated to Group Leaders. The Chairman had discussed the governance arrangements with the Monitoring Officer. There were 16 local Members representing 4 market towns. It was essential that they should all act as ambassadors for the initiative, but it would be impractical for them to sit on the working group because of the amount of funding to be granted. The working group would be set up with the support of David McGrath, who would be coming into the office on 01 May.

Questions and Discussion

- a) Cllr R Reynolds said that Fakenham was well up to speed with the Initiative. A working party had been set up and terms of reference agreed. He said that it was important that the initiative wasn't taken away from the towns. The Chairman explained that each market town would agree its own governance arrangements and reminded Cllr Reynolds that the Committee, at this stage, was essentially looking at the governance process of the working group.
- b) Cllr N Lloyd asked how Fakenham was already working on this. The Chairman said that she believed this was in response to a smaller initiative, but that she would check this. Cllr V Gay said that North Walsham had not been aware of the Initiative, so had no lead-in time.
- c) In response to a question from Cllr D Young, it was confirmed that it was the Market Towns (plural) Initiative. Cllr Young also suggested that paragraph 1.3 (page 43) should be broken into two sentences. He stressed that it should be made clear that the Initiative was for North Walsham, Stalham, Holt and Fakenham.
- d) Question 2. What is your preferred engagement and delivery mechanism? Cllr Young asked that this should be re-phrased in plain English.
- e) Cllr Young asked if it was practical for the work to be completed in 2018. The Chairman explained that it was the intention for the work to be completed in the municipal year 2018/2019. One of the criteria for the projects was that they should be suitable for quick completion.
- f) Cllr V Gay said that she agreed with the political balance and thought that governance should rest with the Council. She suggested that the funding should reflect that Fakenham and North Walsham were the growth towns, and asked if the panel would make decisions. The Democratic Services Manager explained that local Members would have opportunities to present projects from their towns. The panel would then make recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Meetings would be timed so that recommendations from the panel came to the following meeting of Overview and Scrutiny. The Chairman said that the intention was for local Members to be widely involved. The Democratic Services Manager told Members that it wasn't a requirement for panel members to be on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, but that it would be chaired by a Member of the Committee.
- g) Cllr N Smith asked what would happen if a town council proposed a plan that the panel didn't approve. The Chairman responded that it was a piece of work still to be done when criteria were defined. The criteria would be clearly communicated back to the towns.
- h) Cllr S Hester expressed concern that superficial remedies should not be applied as a quick fix to longer term need. The Chairman suggested that this could be considered in the context of setting the Work Programme.
- i) The Leader said that the Market Towns Initiative was essentially about local residents and communities. It had to be led by the communities, not just the town councils. The Chairman added that this needed to be made clear and that the Initiative was not just for tourism. All community groups needed to be included.
- j) Cllr V Gay said that all varieties of scheme should be considered.
- k) Cllr B Smith expressed concern about empty shops. He believed the Initiative would help to get new businesses into towns. Cllr R Reynolds agreed, saying that some of our towns didn't look attractive. The Chairman said that empty shops were a national issue as more people shopped online.
- l) Cllr R Stevens said that Stalham had no empty shops but that its appearance was an issue. He suggested landscaping with trees. The Chairman advised that Stalham could propose this and that there were no pre-conceived ideas. Cllr S Arnold commended the beautiful appearance of Guernsey and how it was achieved by flowers maintained by a watering system.

- m) Cllr R Price informed the Committee that he had met with the Leader and the Corporate Director (SB) to update the North Walsham Members on Weatherspoon's. He said that he welcomed the Initiative but feared local opposition to potential change.

RESOLVED

1. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee supports the Market Town Initiative.
2. That a politically-balanced working group should be formed to lead the work.
3. That local members for the market towns should not sit on the working group, to enable them to act as advocates for their communities during the bidding process.
4. To delegate appointments to the working group to Group Leaders

159. THE CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED

- a) The Democratic Services Manager reported that there was a light agenda for May and that she would be discussing this with the Leader.
- b) Community Governance would now be coming to the June meeting.
- c) The Democratic Services Manager would clarify the date of the June meeting.

To note the upcoming Cabinet Work Programme.

160. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND UPDATE

The Chairman reported that all 3 sessions of the recent Overview and Scrutiny training had been positively received. The Committee had come together for another session and had worked in mixed groups.

RESOLVED

To note the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme.

161. WORK PROGRAMME SETTING – 2018/19

- a) The Committee had agreed on 3 Working Groups – Beach Huts, Asset Management and the Market Towns Initiative. David McGrath had advised that this was enough. Terms of Reference would be agreed for the Market Towns Initiative group.
- b) The training had highlighted that Member briefings should replace presentations for information, and that specific questions should be asked of officers. If something came to Overview and Scrutiny it should be because it had cross-cutting consequences. Discussion should be more succinct and outcome-focussed. A request would be made to officers that reports should include the reason for coming to Overview and Scrutiny and that they should not be just updates. Some items, e.g. Treasury Management, must be statutorily received but they didn't need to come to the Committee so often.
- c) Three topics had been identified for Scrutiny in a Day and the agreement of Members was sought to add them to the Work Programme:

- Local Plan
- Recycling
- Housing

The Local Plan would be looked at first. The purpose of looking at these topics was to identify what was ongoing. If Members agreed, they would be scheduled into the Work Programme after further work between the Leader, the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny and the Democratic Services Manager. Portfolio holders would be notified of the relevant dates.

The first Scrutiny in a Day session would be supported by David McGrath, so that Members could ensure it was set up for success.

Questions and Discussion

- a) Cllr M Knowles suggested that single use plastics should be included in the review of recycling. He also suggested rural transport as a topic, but this came under the Big Society. Cllr Knowles made a further suggestion about looking at flooding/surface water flooding, but this was reminded that this was an element of the Local Plan.
- b) Cllr D Young reminded the Committee that specific training on scrutiny of the Budget had been agreed. The Democratic Services Manager advised that the budget-setting process would begin in September. Training for all Members would be delivered by the Finance Team and someone from David McGrath's team would deliver specific training for scrutiny of the budget-setting process.
- c) Cllr S Arnold expressed concern regarding the value of scrutinising the Local Plan, especially in a day. The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny explained that this exercise would enable Members to have a better understanding of the Local Plan.

The Chairman reminded Members that they could continue suggesting topics under Agenda Item 8. The Leader was thanked for being present throughout the meeting.

RESOLVED

That the following topics be added to the Work Programme for Scrutiny in a Day:

- 1. Local Plan, to include challenges to rural business and improvement of market towns.**
- 2. Recycling.**
- 3. Housing.**

The meeting ended at 11.15 am

Chairman