

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 26 September 2016

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair), Councillor Brian Sargeant (Deputy Chair), Councillors Tony Ansell, Mohammed Aziz, Vicky Culbard, Janice Duffy, Terrie Eales, Gareth Eales, Elizabeth Gowen, Phil Larratt, Dennis Meredith, Zoe Smith and Graham Walker

Sergeant Martin O'Connell, Northants Police, item 6
Councillor Anna King, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement – Item 7
Julie Seddon, Director for Customers and Communities – Item 7
Tracy Tiff Scrutiny Officer

Councillor Jonathan Nunn - Observing

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rufia Ashraf (Councillor Gareth Eales – substitute) and Councillor John Caswell.

2. MINUTES

Subject to the correct spelling of Councillor Walker's surname the minutes of the Call In Hearing held on 11 August 2016 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

Subject to the inclusion of Councillor Elizabeth Gowen to the list of attendees, the minutes of the meeting held on 15 August 2016 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING)

Councillors Jamie Lane and Elizabeth Gowen declared a personal interest as members of the Planning Committee in agenda item 8(b) – Scrutiny Panel 3.

5. UNITARY STATUS

Consideration of this item was deferred to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 November 2016.

6. PRESENTATION ON DRUGS - THE LAW, PREVENTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Sergeant Martin O'Connell gave the Overview and Scrutiny Committee a comprehensive presentation on Drugs – the Law, Prevention and General Information.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

- In response to a query regarding pubs turning off drinking water, Sergeant O'Donnell confirmed that there is no legislation in this respect but drinking water should be made available.
- Sergeant O'Connell confirmed that malicious accusations are not a circumstance that he has come across.
- Sergeant O'Connell provided details of how pubs should log, destroy and report drug use and suspecting dealing.
- Councillors commended events such as Nightsafe, highlighting the value.
- In answer to a query regarding nitrous oxide, Sergeant O'Connell confirmed that there needs to be case law before a decision can be made whether this substance and psychoactive substances.
- The Committee suggested that details of the link to website "Frank" that details drugs and what they look like etc. are circulated to all Councillors.

Sergeant O'Connell was thanked for giving the presentation to the Committee.

7. CUSTOMER SERVICES

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a briefing note on progress on the Customer Services Task and Finish Group report. This review had taken place back in 2012.

Julie Seddon, Director of Customers and Communities highlighted the salient points contained within the briefing note.

AGREED: That the information is noted.

8. SCRUTINY PANELS

9. SCRUTINY PANEL 1

The written update report from the Chair of Scrutiny Panel 1 – CSE was noted.

10. SCRUTINY PANEL 3

The written update report from the Chair of Scrutiny Panel 3 – Homelessness was noted.

(A) SCRUTINY PANEL 4

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was asked to elect a Chair for the Scrutiny Review – Emissions Strategy (Action Plan.)

AGREED: That Councillor Samuel Shaw is elected Chair of Scrutiny Panel 4 – Emissions Strategy (Action Plan.) and Councillor Gareth Eales, Deputy Chair.

11. REPORT BACK FROM NBC'S REPRESENTATIVE TO NCC'S HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The update from NBC's representative to NCC's Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee was noted.

12. POTENTIAL FUTURE PRE DECISION SCRUTINY

Councillors reported concerns regarding a number of problems with the town's cemeteries and suggested that Overview and Scrutiny looks into this. It was suggested that Councillors Larratt and Walker meet with the Scrutiny Officer to put together a list of questions around these concerns to the Cabinet Member and the Cabinet Member for

Environment and Director is then asked to attend the meeting of the Committee in November. A briefing would also be provided.

The Committee discussed Council Tax arrears and requested that information regarding this is presented to the next meeting of the Committee. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Director would be asked to attend to provide a briefing.

13. URGENT ITEMS

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 19:25 hours