

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 30 April 2019

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair), Councillor Graham Walker (Deputy Chair); Councillors Jane Birch, Alan Bottwood, Gareth Eales, Paul Joyce, Dennis Meredith, Cathrine Russell and Brian Sargeant

Councillor Anna King, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety

Councillor Mike Hallam, Cabinet Member for Environment

Marion Goodman, Head of Customers and Communities

Vicki Rockall, Community Engagement and Safety Manager

Tracy Tiff, Democratic and Member Services Manager

Press

James Averill, Democracy Reporter

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ashraf, Graystone, Kilby-Shaw and Smith.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2019 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING)

There were none.

5. CSP PERFORMANCE

Councillor Anna King, Chair, Community Safety Partnership, and Vicki Rockall, Community Engagement and Community Safety Manager presented the report – CSP Performance highlighting the salient points.

AGREED: That the report is noted.

6. MONITORING OF O&S REPORTS

(A) DEMENTIA FRIENDLY TOWN

Councillor King, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety, presented the action plan that detailed work to date on the accepted recommendations contained within the Overview and Scrutiny report – Dementia Friendly Town. She put on record her thanks to the Call Care Manager who had gone over and beyond her role in implementing these recommendations. The actions to date were highlighted.

Councillor Russell, as Chair of the Scrutiny Panel that undertook the Review gave a short precis of the importance of the Panel's work to the town.

AGREED: That the action plan is noted and a further update is presented to the Committee at its meeting in September 2019.

(B) HOMELESSNESS (PRE DECISION SCRUTINY)

Consideration of this item was deferred to the next meeting.

(C) CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Consideration of this item was deferred to the next meeting.

7. CEMETERIES

Councillor Hallam, Cabinet Member for Environment, presented the action plan that detailed work to date on the accepted recommendations contained within the Overview and Scrutiny report – Cemeteries. The actions to date were highlighted.

The Committee asked questions, made comment and heard:

- It was confirmed that a seven day a week service is offered for cemeteries and burials within 24 hours have been offered where required.
- In answer to a question about green burials, it was commented that this could be investigated as part of the working being undertaken by the Strategic Working Group that will be looking at a potential new larger crematorium and cemetery for the town.
- In response to a comment regarding the proposed extension of Dallington Cemetery and whether the allotment holders had been notified; the Committee heard they would be communicated with. Two Cemetery Working Group have been established; one of which that is looking at issues that include future burial requirements and space.

AGREED: That the action plan is noted and a further update is presented to the Committee at its meeting in September 2019.

8. CULTURE AND TOURISM

Councillor King, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety, and Marion Goodman, Head of Customers and Cultural Services, presented the action plan that detailed work to date on the accepted recommendations contained within the Overview and Scrutiny report – Culture and Tourism. The actions to date were highlighted.

The Chair conveyed his thanks to the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Safety, and the Head of Customers and Cultural Services for their hard work on implementing the accepted recommendations. It was suggested the Leader of the Council is asked to attend the next meeting of the Committee in June 2019 to give an update on the work that he is leading on on Culture and Heritage; particularly regarding the aspiration for Northampton to be a City of Culture by 2025.

The Chair suggested a pop up Museum in empty shops in the town would be an excellent idea and there could also be a pop up Tourist Information Centre.

AGREED: (1) That the Leader of the Council is asked to attend the next meeting of the Committee in June 2019 to give an update on the work that he is leading on on Culture and Heritage; particularly regarding the aspiration for Northampton to be a City of Culture by 2025.

(2) That the action plan is noted and a further update is presented to the Committee at its meeting in November 2019.

9. REPROVISION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES CONTRACT

Councillor Hallam, Cabinet Member for Environment, gave the Committee an update on the Environmental Services Contract.

Key points:

- The Contract is stable and is working well; currently going into year two.
- Recycling is up by 4%
- Flytipping is down by 10%
- Positive feedback has been received from the clear sack trial

AGREED: That the update is noted.

10. SCRUTINY PANELS

SCRUTINY PANEL 1

Councillor Russell advised the Committee that this Scrutiny Panel had now concluded its evidence gathering and she would present the final report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 10 June 2019.

The Committee heard that the East Midlands Scrutiny Network had received a presentation on the work of the Scrutiny Panel that had been very well received. It was noted that South Northants Council is currently undertaking a Scrutiny Review into homelessness and the Chair confirmed a copy of the final report would be sent to South Northants when the report is approved.

AGREED: That the update is noted.

SCRUTINY PANEL 2

Councillor Walker presented the final report of the Impact of the move of the University Scrutiny Panel to the Committee. It was highlighted that a lot of public had attended meetings of this Scrutiny Panel and a number had relayed details of their concerns. Councillor Walker thanked Members of the Panel, the co optee, Officers and members of the public for their input into the Review.

AGREED: That the update is noted.

SCRUTINY PANEL 3

Councillor Sargeant advised the Committee that this Scrutiny Panel had now concluded its evidence gathering and he would present the final report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 10 June 2019.

AGREED: That the update is noted.

SCRUTINY PANEL 4

Councillor Smith advised the Committee that this Scrutiny Panel had now concluded its evidence gathering and she would present the final report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 10 June 2019.

AGREED: That the update is noted.

11 O&S EVALUATION OF REPORTS WORKING GROUP

Councillor Lane advised the Committee that the Working had now concluded its evidence gathering and he would present the final report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 10 June 2019.

AGREED: That the update is noted.

12 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2019/2020

The Chair confirmed that as a result of the Work Programme event a number of topics had been identified for Scrutiny review in 2019/2020. He reminded the Committee of the priority order of these reviews.

The Committee was asked to prioritise the reviews and also indicate whether they wished to serve on the Scrutiny Panels. The Chair advised the Committee that other non-Executive Members would then be asked if they wished to serve on any of the Panels.

AGREED :-

That two Scrutiny reviews for 2019/2020 be as follows:

Scrutiny Panel 1 - Food Poverty

Membership of the Panel would comprise:

Chair Councillor Dennis Meredith

Deputy Chair Councillor Cathrine Russell

Further members would be invited to join the Panel.

Working Group – Gangs and Knife Crime

Membership of the Working Group would comprise:

Chair Councillor Graham Walker

Deputy Chair Councillor Jane Birch

Further members would be invited to join the Working Group. The Chair clarified that only Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can be members of the Working Group.

The Chair advised that he would ask for reports and briefing papers regarding:

- Facilities for students
- How Northampton Borough Council promotes information to the public
- Public Transport usage – including buses, trains and parking
- Protecting the wildlife in the borough (parks and building focus)
- Effectiveness of the transfer of Community Centres
- Monitoring of the Environmental Services Contract

The Chair referred to the motion that had been carried at full Council of 11 March 2019:

“In preparation for the transition to Unitary we call upon NBC to produce a Sports Strategy for the people of Northampton that draws on the Sports Strategy for West Northamptonshire of 2009.

The purpose of this strategy, as well as reviewing current facilities, would be to identify gaps, reflect current user preferences and requirements.

Only by doing this can we protect the assets in Northampton for the people of the town.”

It was suggested that the Leader of the Council be asked to provide an update to the next

meeting of this Committee.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee further **AGREED:**

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees its Work Programme for 2019/2020 from the issues suggested by the recent Work Programming event.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee invites other non-Executives, who are not a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to join the membership of the Scrutiny Panel – Food Poverty.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee communicates details of the Work Programme 2019/2020 with all Councillors, and Directors.

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2019/2020 is published on the Overview and Scrutiny page of the Council's webpage.

The Leader is asked to provide an update on the carried motion to full Council of 11 March 2020 on a Sports Strategy.

16. POTENTIAL FUTURE PRE DECISION SCRUTINY

There were none.

17. URGENT ITEMS

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 7:31 pm