

# **NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**7 June 2010**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor Christopher Malpas (Chair), Councillor John Yates (Deputy- Chair), and Councillors Ifty Choudary, Penny Flavell, David Garlick, Brendan Glynane, Jane Hollis, Irene Markham, Lee Mason, Richard Matthews, Kevin Reeve and Pam Varnsvery.

Councillor Trini Crake - Portfolio Holder – Environment - observing

Julie Seddon, Director of Environment and Culture - Items 7A & 7B

Kathy Brooks, Performance Team Leader - Item 8

Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer

Chris Cassidy, Administrative Support

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tony Clarke, Judith Lill and Dennis Meredith.

### **2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee held on 29 March 2010, Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2010 and Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2010 were signed by the Chair as true record.

Approval of the minutes of the meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2 of 18<sup>th</sup> May 2010 was deferred to the next meeting.

### **3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

None.

### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING)**

Councillor David Garlick expressed a personal and non-prejudicial interest in agenda item no 5 – Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/2011 -, as a Trustee of the Northampton Football Club.

### **5. WORK PROGRAMME 2010/2011**

At this point the Chair advised that, following guidance, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can entitle the Scrutiny Panels suitably and does not have to abide by the titles: Environment, Housing and Planning and Regeneration, if the issue under review does not fit. He suggested that Scrutiny Panels be renamed Scrutiny Panel E, Scrutiny Panel H and Scrutiny Panel P&R.

The Committee considered the proposed Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/2011 as suggested by the previous Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

The Committee nominated Chairs for the on-going Reviews and elected Chairs for Scrutiny Panel E, H and R&P.

The Committee supported the continuation of the work of the Reporting and Monitoring Working Group and its membership of Councillor Tim Hadland (Chair); Councillors Keith Davies, Jane Hollis, Jamie Lane and John Yates. Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer, advised that this form of budget scrutiny had been recognised as best practice.

The Committee supported the request for the Overview and Scrutiny Private Sector Housing Appreciative Inquiry to reconvene for one further meeting. Membership comprises Councillor David Garlick (Chair); Councillors Tess Scott and John Yates.

A request for a Scrutiny Review of the lease between NBC, Northampton Football Club and the Athletics Club, to be included on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/2011 was considered. The proposed rationale for the review was to review the operation of the lease that Northampton Borough Council has with Northampton Football Club and the Athletics Club and make recommendations for improvement, as appropriate. The Committee agreed that this Review should be added to the work programme. Membership from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was agreed: Councillor John Yates (Chair) and Councillor Richard Matthews.

- AGREED:**
- (1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/2011 be agreed as attached at Annex 1.
  - (2) That Scrutiny Panels be entitled Scrutiny Panel E, Scrutiny Panel H and Scrutiny Panel P&R.
  - (3) That the work of the Reporting and Monitoring Working Group be continued. Membership to comprise: Councillor Tim Hadland (Chair); Councillors Keith Davies, Jane Hollis, Jamie Lane and John Yates.
  - (4) That the work of the Private Sector Housing Appreciative Inquiry be continued. Membership to comprise Councillor David Garlick (Chair); Councillors Tess Scott and John Yates.
  - (5) That Councillor Dennis Meredith, Chair, Billing Waste Water Appreciative Inquiry report the findings of this Group to the Committee at its next meeting on 20 September 2010.
  - (6) That a review of the lease between NBC, Northampton Football Club and the Athletics Club, be included on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/2011. Membership from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to comprise: Councillor John Yates (Chair) and Councillor Richard Matthews.

## **6. SCRUTINY PANELS**

Following on from the agreement of the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2010/2011, the three in-depth Scrutiny Reviews that would commence imminently were agreed:-

### **Scrutiny Panel H – Northants Alcohol Strategy –**

Membership from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to comprise: Councillor Brendan Glynane (Chair); Councillors Richard Matthews and John Yates. The first meeting of this Panel was set for 21 June 2010.

The rationale for this review is to review the local delivery of the Northamptonshire Alcohol Strategy in Northampton.

### **Scrutiny Panel E – Commissioning Framework for the Third Sector**

Membership from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to comprise: Councillor David Garlick (Chair) and Councillor Penny Flavell. The first meeting of this Panel was set for 22 July 2010.

NB: Since production of these minutes this date has changed to 16 July 2010.

The rationale for this review is to investigate the development of a Commissioning Framework for the Third Sector.

### **Scrutiny Panel R&P – Absence Management**

Membership from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to comprise: Councillor Jane Hollis (Chair). The first meeting of this Panel was set for 7<sup>th</sup> July 2010.

The rationale for this review is: -

- To evaluate the impact that staff absence has upon service delivery
- To review how health and wellbeing policies can have a positive impact in reducing sickness absence
- To ensure absence management systems are robust

The Chair confirmed that he would contact all non-Executives inviting Councillors to partake in these comprehensive Scrutiny Reviews.

## **7. REPORT BACK FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY APPRECIATIVE INQUIRIES**

### **(a) PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY: PROCUREMENT (MARKET TESTING) OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

Julie Seddon, Director of Environment and Culture, advised that that this was a joint procurement project, with Daventry District Council, to the value of £200 million.

The current process is testing the market to see if the service could be delivered at a lower cost for a better standard, i.e. significantly better value, should this be the case it would be recommended that the service is outsourced.

A lot of responses to the invitation to tender have been received. Over twenty expressed an interest. Two bidders, that best meet the Council's needs to take the process into the final stages will be shortlisted

A brief was circulated that detailed each stage of the process.

It was highlighted that the process needs to be dealt with confidentially. The process needs to be followed to get the best possible outcome. The next meeting of the Appreciative Inquiry is set for 15<sup>th</sup> July 2010.

The Committee supported the continuation of this Appreciative Inquiry, highlighting that it is a good example of scrutiny involvement at an early stage of a process.

**AGREED:** That the work of the Pre-decision Scrutiny: Procurement (Market Testing) of Environmental Services be continued. Membership comprises Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair); Councillors Keith Davies, David Garlick, Jane Hollis, Brendan Glynane and Councillor Anne Carter, Daventry District Council (co optee).

### **(b) LEISURE STRATEGIC BUSINESS REVIEW**

Julie Seddon, Director of Environment and Culture, advised that the Leisure Strategic Business Review is ongoing and Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 had set up an Appreciative Inquiry to provide scrutiny input into this issue. Membership of the Appreciative Inquiry comprises Councillors Judith Lill, Keith Davies, Lee Mason and Jenny Conroy.

Julie Seddon apprised that the Leisure Services Strategic Business Review is carefully set up and each part of the project is agreed, step-by-step. A site visit to a best practice Leisure Trust will be organised shortly. It is expected that the Group will visit Trafford. In addition, Service user focus groups have been set up to establish the specific needs of service users. A staff focus group has also been established to ascertain staff's concerns. Each stage of the process has to be checked thoroughly in order that financial and legal risks are minimised.

**AGREED:** That on the work of the Leisure Services Strategic Business Review Appreciative Inquiry be continued and membership comprise Councillor Keith Davies (Lead), Councillors Judith Lill, Lee Mason and Jenny Conroy.

### **(c) BILLING WASTE WATER APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was advised that a site visit has taken place, the main purpose of which was for the Appreciative Inquiry to have sight of the odour control measures and procedures that have been implemented by Anglian Water Limited. It was requested that the work of this Group be continued and that it report its final findings to the next meeting of this Committee.

Membership comprises Councillor Dennis Meredith (Chair); Councillors Phil Larratt, Richard Matthews and Pam Varnsberry.

**AGREED:** That the work of the Billing Waste Water Appreciative Inquiry be continued. Membership to comprise: Councillor Dennis Meredith (Chair); Councillors Phil Larratt, Richard Matthews and Pam Varnsberry.

## **8 BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

Kathy Brooks, Performance Team Leader, advised of the new Performance Reporting Mechanism and the rationale for the performance monitoring report.

The Committee expressed concerns regarding Performance Indicator: LL105 (ELPI 5) - Percentage of fly tips removed within two working days. It was suggested that this performance indicator be scrutinised in depth at the next meeting of the Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

The Chair reminded the Committee that the Performance data was circulated towards the end of each month and asked Councillors to forward any specific concerns to him and Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer, in order that these could be programmed onto future Overview and Scrutiny Committee agendas as appropriate.

**AGREED:** That Performance Indicator: LL105 (ELPI 5) - Percentage of fly tips removed within two working days be scrutinised in depth at the next meeting of the Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

## **9. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TRAINING CHAMPION 2010/2011**

The Committee was asked to nominate the Overview and Scrutiny Training Champion for 2010/2011.

It was proposed by Councillor Christopher Malpas and seconded by Councillor John Yates that Councillor Richard Mathews be elected Overview and Scrutiny Training Champion for 2010/2011.

**AGREED:** That Councillor Richard Mathews be elected the Overview and Scrutiny Training Champion for 2010/2011.

## **10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MONITORING WORK PROGRAMME 2010/2011**

The Overview and Scrutiny Monitoring Work Programme 2010/2011 was noted.

## **11. REPORT BACK FROM NBC'S REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTYWIDE SCRUTINY BOARD**

Councillor John Yates apprised that the Northamptonshire Countywide Scrutiny Board had cancelled a recent meeting, however, this had now been rescheduled. He advised that South Northants Council had not approved the terms of reference for the Board. Dialogue between Councillor Christopher Long, Chair, Northants Countywide Scrutiny Board and South Northants Council was taking place.

Councillor John Yates advised that the Northants Countywide Scrutiny Board had the following issues included on its work programme: -

- Gritting issues
- Ex-servicemen returning to Northamptonshire
- Drug Rehabilitation

A further role of the Northants Countywide Scrutiny Board is to hold the Public Service Board to account.

It was noted that Councillor Ifty Choudary and Councillor John Yates were this Council's representatives to the Board. The Committee felt that there was a need for formal substitutes to be elected should the two nominees be unable to attend a Board meeting. It was suggested that Councillors Jane Hollis, Kevin Reeve and Lee Mason be elected substitutes.

**AGREED:** (1) That the update be noted.

(2) That Councillors Jane Hollis, Lee Mason and Kevin Reeve be elected substitute members for the Northants Countywide Scrutiny Board.

## **12. FORWARD PLAN**

The Forward Plan for the period 1 June 2010 to 30 September 2010 was noted.

The Committee discussed issues surrounding the disposal of land. It was suggested that the relevant Portfolio Holder and Head of Service be asked to attend the meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2010 to apprise the Committee of the Council's Disposal of Land Policy.

The Chair reminded the meeting that a special meeting had been arranged for 16 June 2010 for the Committee to carry out pre-decision scrutiny of the Delapre Abbey Options Appraisal.

**AGREED:** That the relevant Portfolio Holder and Head of Service be asked to attend the meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2010 to apprise the Committee of the Council's Disposal of Land Policy.

## **12 URGENT ITEMS**

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 8.06pm.