

**NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Monday, 9 November 2020**

- COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair), Councillors Tony Ansell, Rufia Ashraf, Janice Duffy, Penny Flavell, Andrew Kilbride, Sam Kilby-Shaw, Emma Roberts, Cathrine Russell and Zoe Smith
- Councillor Stephen Hibbert – Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing
- Officers** Phil Harris, Director of Housing and Wellbeing  
Tracy Tiff, Democratic and Member Services Manager  
Ed Bostock, Democratic Services Officer
- Members of the Public** Robin Burgess – Hope Centre

**Apologies** Councillor Graham Walker (Deputy Chair) Councillors Aziz, G Eales, and Meredith

**1. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

**2. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

Mr Robin Burgess, CEO, Hope Centre, addressed the Scrutiny Panel on agenda item 7 – Scrutiny Panel 1 – Food Poverty.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING)**

There were none.

**4. MONITORING OF ACCEPTED RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED WITHIN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORTS**

**(A) CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)**

Councillor Stephen Hibbert, Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing and Phil Harris, Director of Housing and Wellbeing presented the action plan in relation to the accepted recommendations contained within the Scrutiny report – Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and highlighted the salient points.

It was emphasised that safeguarding training for Members was scheduled next week and Councillors were urged to attend. In response to a query regarding the training for the Board of NPH, Phil Harris suggested that the Board Member proposes such training to the Board as this would be an issue for NPH.

The Chair thanked all those involved in the Scrutiny Review – CSE. He added that once the training had taken place that all recommendations would have been completed and no further monitoring would need to take place.

AGREED: That monitoring on the accepted recommendations contained within the Scrutiny Report – CSE is complete.

## **5. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Performance Monitoring Report and it was suggested that the further information is requested on the following for Scrutiny Performance Monitoring to be undertaken:

MPE02 No of new jobs created on NWEZ

CS14a - %OSS customers with an appointment seen on time – an update regarding what provisions are in place so that it ensured the right people are reached

ESC04 % household waste recycled and composted (NI192)

PP53a % Service Requests responded to within 5 days – Noting that staff had been deployed on a wide range of new duties relating to Covid 19, but an update on business regulation work would be requested.

AGREED: That an update on the above performance measures would be requested to be provided to the next meeting.

## **6. SCRUTINY PANELS**

### **7. SCRUTINY PANEL 1 - FOOD POVERTY**

Mr Robin Burgess, CEO, Hope Centre addressed the Scrutiny Panel. He highlighted that since the work of this Scrutiny Panel and its recommendations the situation had changed in relation to food poverty. Poverty had increased during the Covid19 pandemic. The demand on Food Banks and the support required from Agencies had increased. There had been tremendous collaboration of the Voluntary Sector in relation to a grant of £300,000 from DEFRA that the Voluntary Sector is administering. There is a need to recognise the significant work undertaken by the Voluntary Sector. Mr Burgess concluded that he welcomed the report of the Scrutiny Panel but highlight that it is a fluid time.

Mr Burgess was thanked for his address.

The Chair thanked all those involved in the work of the work of the Scrutiny Panel and recognised the input of the co optees to this review. He thanked Councillor Meredith for chairing this high profile Scrutiny Panel. The Chair then drew the Committee's attention to the recommendations contained within the report, stating that he would present the report to Cabinet at its meeting on 16 December 2020 and would be asked the Cabinet Member to provide an update to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 11 January 2021.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

Councillor were impressed by the recommendations put forward.

A number of issues had taken place since the production of the report, such as the Government now funding school meal vouchers over the school holiday period.

A lot of people are facing eviction and the poor living conditions of some was referred to. It was recognised that the right expert advisors had presented evidence to this Scrutiny Review.

The report references the Living Wage employer and it was noted that some key workers often earn less than this.

It was suggested that the review should be repeated as the situation is very different now to what it was when the review started.

Community support across the town has been fantastic.

AGREED: That the report of the Scrutiny Panel – Food Poverty is approved and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will present the report to Cabinet at its meeting on 16 December 2020.

## **8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP - GANGS AND KNIFE CRIME**

The Chair presented this report to the Committee recognising the work undertaken by Councillor Walker in chairing this Working Group. He then referred the Committee to the recommendations contained within the report.

The Committee made comment, asked questions and heard:

It was noted that the Cabinet Member provides details of some of the activities that are being undertaken but a more detailed report would also be useful.

There appears to be a gap in the knowledge base on what work is being done.

The Chair thanked all those involved in this Scrutiny activity.

AGREED: That the report of the Scrutiny Working Group – Gangs and Knife Crime is approved and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will present the report to Cabinet at its meeting on 16 December 2020.

## **9. POTENTIAL FUTURE PRE DECISION SCRUTINY**

There was none.

At this point the Chair suggested that the Committee might have the need for an additional meeting to be scheduled for it to undertake a health check on its recommendations and whether any were outstanding. A recommendation would be required how they would be taken forward or whether Cabinet would have enacted the recommendations by Vesting Day.

## **10. URGENT ITEMS**

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 6:37 pm

