

**MINUTES  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Monday 9 December 2013**

Councillor Mike Hope (Chair)

Councillor Gary Gregory	Councillor Paul Hughes
Councillor Steve Ainley	Councillor Stephen Poole
Councillor Patricia Andrews	Councillor Colin Powell
Councillor Emily Bailey	Councillor John Truscott
Councillor Sandra Barnes	Councillor Henry Wheeler

Apologies for absence: Councillor Suzanne Prew-Smith

Officers in Attendance: J Ansell, P Baguley, S Bray, A Gibson, C Mckenzie and D Wakelin

**23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Prew – Smith.

**24 TO APPROVE, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 OCTOBER 2013.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the above meeting, having been circulated, be approved as a correct record.

**25 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

None.

**26 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME REPORT**

**1. Rolling Programme of holding Portfolio Holder to Account.**

The Chair welcomed Councillor Peter Barnes, Portfolio Holder for Environment, who, along with Corporate Directors Dave Wakelin and Stephen Bray, responded to questions on the following areas of his Portfolio:

Waste strategy, energy management and sustainability

**Questions from Members and responses received:**

**a) Please provide a definition and examples of 'Sustainability' in respect of Councillor Barnes' portfolio.**

Councillor Barnes circulated the Council's Sustainability Action Plan, which set out the key priorities and actions for which he is responsible, and highlighted the following initiatives and outcomes:

- **Installation of solar panels on the Civic Centre, Jubilee House and the Richard Herrod Leisure Centre:** Installation costs had been significantly lower than had been anticipated in the capital programme. A total of 58,000 kg of Co2 and cash savings of 27,750 had been achieved so far.

Members requested that the breakdown of achievements be circulated to Scrutiny Members and promoted on the screens at the Civic Centre and Richard Herrod LC.

Members also requested that the Council work with Gedling Homes to install solar panels to rented properties as other Councils had done. Stephen Bray, Corporate Director reported that consideration is being given as to the best approach to this. He confirmed that work has been carried out in Killisick as part of an initiative to tackle fuel poverty, whereby Gedling Homes and Guinness Trust properties in the area had all benefitted from the installation of modern, eco efficient boilers. Additional improvements are planned using the Eco funding strand of the Green Deal to address 'hard to treat' houses with no cavity walls by applying an exterior skin.

The Corporate Director further reported that a similar scheme will be offered to neighbouring owner/occupiers in the area through the Energy Partnership, with residents paying a small proportion of the costs. The process is currently at the tendering stage.

Members requested that the two schemes be carried out simultaneously in order to reduce costs. This was confirmed.

- **Procurement of Electric Car, Eco – Driving training for staff and the purchase of a larger fuel tank at Jubilee House:** This initiative had resulted in savings of around £50,000 and a marked reduction in ongoing fuel bills had been noted.

Members asked that consideration be given to the installation of a noise generator to the electric vehicle to improve public safety.

- **APSE Awards 2013:** The Council's Street Cleansing Team had come first in their category and 2<sup>nd</sup> in two other categories.

The Portfolio Holder and Scrutiny Members congratulated and thanked the team for their achievements.

- **Travel planning:** A partnership officer based at the Civic Centre will deploy funding to improve sustainable travel.
- **Boiler Scheme:** Individual households in the Borough that had met a need - based set of criteria had benefitted from new eco efficient heating systems.

- b) Given the recent news that 'millions of tons' of food items are being dumped, both by the retail trade and the public in general, what plans have GBC made to educate, facilitate, and hopefully help eliminate this wasteful attitude?**

The Portfolio Holder and Service Manager for Waste informed Members of the 'Love Food, Hate Waste Campaign' and shared a range of promotional items aimed at raising awareness of recycling methods and educating the public on eco -friendly shopping and cooking. These had been made possible due to a successful 20k funding bid to Veola, and were being used widely at Community events and festivals and in the Council's media.

The Council is working with local supermarket chains to address industrial food waste and to maximise influence with the retail trade and the public. Issues to address included 'buy one get one free' offers, promoting contributions to the Food Bank and the general distribution of food waste.

Members requested that the potential of anaerobic digestion and other methods of organic food recycling, including Social Enterprise involvement, remain under consideration.

- c) Should our development on future Housing be strongly advocating for example Solar Panels & Rain water/Grey water to be filtered and reused?**

The Portfolio Holder informed Members that this question relates to the Leisure and Development Portfolio and proposed that the question be referred to Councillor Pulk for a response.

As an interim response, Peter Baguley, Service Manager, Planning and Environment, confirmed that the Building Control Regulations are still catching up with the Sustainability agenda. He explained that any condition placed upon planning permission would require evidence in order to justify and minimise the cost to the developer.

## **2. Q2 2013/14 performance.**

Stephen Bray, Corporate Director, gave an overview of Q2 performance and responded to questions from Members.

## **3. 2013/14 Scrutiny work programme.**

Members reviewed the draft project scopes of the 'Homelessness and Hardship' and 'Reducing Unemployment in the Borough' in depth Scrutiny reviews.

A number of minor amendments were proposed and noted for inclusion in the final scopes.

### **RESOLVED:**

- i. To thank the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Corporate Directors and Officers for their attendance.
- ii. To note the Q2 performance report
- iii. Subject to the agreed amendments, to approve the 'Homelessness and Hardship' and 'Reducing Unemployment in the Borough' project scopes.

**27**

## **LOCAL PLANNING DOCUMENT - ISSUES AND OPTIONS**

The Chair invited Members to comment on the Local Planning Document – Issues and Options, which had been referred to Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the formal consultation process. Members were advised that the consultation closes on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

Members made the following points to the Service Manager, Planning and Environment and Planning Policy Manager Alison Gibson:

That the online process for commenting on the document was not user friendly – specifically:

- Maps are in a separate file to the document
- There is a requirement to go through sections sequentially before being able to comment on the section of specific interest to the individual.

The Service Manager, Planning and environment confirmed that similar feedback had been received from other consultees and explained that whilst the Council is restricted to a considerable extent by the statutory regulations for planning consultations, nevertheless the department is in the process of changing its I.T. systems, which will provide the opportunity to improve accessibility.

Members requested clarification on a number of areas in the document and the Service Manager and Planning Policy Officer responded accordingly.

Members expressed the need for greater ongoing Councillor involvement in the development of Planning Policy.

**RESOLVED:**

To recommend to Cabinet that:

- i. the online process of consultation on key Planning Policy Documents is made more accessible
- ii. a cross - party working group with experience of dealing with planning matters is established to consider ongoing items of planning policy that are likely to be of significant impact in the Borough.

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**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LOCALISM, PLANNING AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Chair reminded Members that the final report of the Localism, Planning and Housing Scrutiny Review had been circulated to all Scrutiny Members and members of the working group for comments and the recommendations referred for consideration by Cabinet on 12<sup>th</sup> September.

A response had been requested from the Portfolio Holder, Leisure and Development, which would be tabled at the next committee in March 2014.

**RESOLVED:**

To note the final report and recommendations of the Localism, Planning and Housing Scrutiny Review.

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**REPORTS AND NOTICES RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AS REQUIRED UNDER CONSTITUTIONAL LAW**

Members considered a list of items referred to the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee under the Constitution or Law.

These included:

Items referred to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee under Contract Standing orders and Standing orders for dealing with Land

Notifications received where it has not been possible to obtain 3 quotations for a contract estimated to be between £10,000 and £50,000.

- Contract with Nottinghamshire Housing Advice Service in order to maintain continuity of housing debt advice service to Gedling residents.

**RESOLVED:**

To note the items referred to the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee under the Constitution or Law.

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**ANY OTHER ITEM WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT.**

None.

The meeting finished at 7.10pm

Signed by Chair:

Date: