

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
 MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
 28 MAY 2015**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR P J O'CONNOR (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors Mrs A M Newton (Vice-Chairman), C J T H Brewis, A Bridges, Mrs J Brockway, M Brookes, P M Dilks, R L Foulkes, A G Hagues, A J Jesson, Mrs M J Overton MBE, N H Pepper, Mrs J M Renshaw, C L Strange and R Wootten.

Added Members

Church Representatives: Mr S C Rudman.

Parent Governor Representatives: Mrs E Olivier-Townrow.

Councillors T M Trollope-Bellew attended the meeting as an observer.

Officers in attendance:-

Simon Evans (Health Scrutiny Officer), David Hair (Team Leader - Scrutiny and Member Support), Cheryl Hall (Democratic Services Officer), Tracy Johnson (Scrutiny Officer), Louise Tyers (Scrutiny Officer) and Richard Wills (Executive Director for Environment and Economy).

1 APOLOGIES/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R J Hunter-Clarke and C E H Marfleet. Apologies for absence were also received from Added Members Mr P Thompson and Mr C V Miller.

It was noted that the Chief Executive, having received notice under Regulation 13 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, had appointed Councillors N H Pepper and Mrs J M Renshaw as replacement members on the Committee in place of Councillors Mrs C A Talbot and R B Parker respectively, for this meeting only.

2 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 30 APRIL 2015

During consideration of the minutes of the Committee held on 30 April 2015, an update was provided regarding the sounding of the terrorist threat alarm and the

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request for a defibrillator to be installed in County Offices. Members were advised that the Executive Councillor for Finance and Property had been made aware of both matters and was currently considering the appropriate action.

Further to this, it was requested that those officers who did not have access to the alarms, for example people who were deaf, as there were no flashing lights, were also given consideration to by the Executive Councillor.

In response to a question, Members were advised that volunteer groups; parish and town councils; and neighbourhood groups/boards could all apply for a grit bin, provided that they met the appropriate criteria.

The Committee was also advised that David Forbes (County Finance Officer) was scheduled to attend the meeting on 30 July 2015 to present an item on 'The Financial Challenges Beyond 2015/16'.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4 CONSIDERATION OF CALL-INS

No Call-Ins had been received.

5 PROPOSAL FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS

There had been no proposals for scrutiny reviews.

6 THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL SCRUTINY IN MAINTAINING STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE

A report by Richard Wills (The Monitoring Officer) was considered, which provided Members with an opportunity to consider the response to the Local Government Association's Consultation on 'Taking Stock – where next with sector-led improvement?' and what lessons there may be for the County Council's approach to Scrutiny.

Attached at Appendix A to the report was a copy of the Local Government Association's Consultation on 'Taking Stock – where next with sector-led improvement?' and a copy of the Committee on Standards in Public Life's response to the Consultation was attached at Appendix B.

To aid discussion, the report invited Members to consider the response through several questions:

- (A) "What is this Committee's view of external challenge?"
- (B) In respect of the response from the Committee on Standards in Public Life:

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- (a) Are there any aspects of it that this Committee would like to draw to the attention of the Scrutiny Review Group;
- (b) Does the Committee have any views on how matters raised may affect the Council's standards regime and its overall culture."

Members were provided with an opportunity to ask questions and make comments. Although the questions were not addressed in order, the resulting comments can be grouped as follows: -

(A) What is this Committee's view of external challenge?

- Members welcomed Peer Reviews;
- It was suggested that a programme of Peer Reviews was put in place; and
- Should consideration of external scrutiny be encompassed within the Scrutiny Review?

(B) In respect of the response from the Committee on Standards in Public Life:
(a) Are there any aspects of it that this Committee would like to draw to the attention of the Scrutiny Review Group?

The Committee wished to extend the discussion beyond the response by the Committee on Standards in Public Life:

- Scrutiny should be seen as a means of improving decision and decision takers should not be afraid of criticism;
- Are scrutiny committees encouraged only to scrutinise what they are given?
- It was suggested that all customer feedback, including any comments given directly to service areas, should filter through to the relevant scrutiny committee;
- The benefits of a committee style of governance were discussed, arguing that all councillors could feel more involved in decision-making;
- There was a need to embrace compliments and complaints, as they could help improve services;
- It was also suggested that Members of scrutiny should be given an opportunity to 'dip sample', without warning, within a service area;
- Officers would review the Councillor Induction Programme and processes prior to the next County Council Election in 2017. It was commented that there was too much information given in such a short period of time, and it was therefore suggested that certain training was repeated six months in and robust feedback mechanisms were implemented;
- It was also suggested that 'World Class Customer Service Training' was given to all Members;
- It was felt that the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, as the overarching scrutiny committee, was that of driving the work programmes forward for the council's remaining scrutiny committees; and
- It was commented that neither the Executive nor Executive Councillors provide any feedback on why the views of a scrutiny committee had not been taken into consideration.

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(b) Does the Committee have any views on how matters raised may affect the Council's standards regime and overall culture?

- There was a general discussion regarding culture within organisations and how the leadership of any organisation could determine how the whole of that organisation behaved; and
- With regards to Ethical Standards, a number of Members felt that there was a need to strengthen sanctions, both in scrutiny and personal standards of behaviour.

In responding to the comments, the Monitoring Officer noted that good scrutiny relied on councillors finding the right questions to ask. Further consideration would need to be given on how officers could support scrutiny councillors to achieve this. Councillor Induction and Development would need to be reviewed, particularly in light of a council where half of the council's members were new. In those circumstances, the natural mechanism for induction whereby experienced councillors could encourage and give examples to new councillors, could not be as effective. Scrutiny feedback to the Executive would need to reflect the richness and diversity of the debate to act as the context for any specific resolution.

The comments of the Monitoring Officer were broadly accepted by the Committee. It was suggested that those and the other comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on this topic were presented to the Scrutiny Review Group.

RESOLVED

That the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on the Role of External Scrutiny in Maintaining Standards and Performance be presented to the Scrutiny Review Group, for consideration.

7 APPOINTMENT OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN/CARE LEAVER REPRESENTATIVE

Consideration was given to a report by Tracy Johnson (Scrutiny Officer), which invited the Committee to appoint a Looked After Children/Care Leaver Representative for the Committee, following approval of the Corporate Parenting Panel at the meeting of County Council on 19 December 2014.

The role of the Looked After Children/Care Leaver Representative would be to make sure that the Committee actively considered the potential impact upon Looked After Children and Care Leavers of any policy, strategy or action carried out by the Committee and to seek further advice from the relevant officer, the Assistant Director of Children's Safeguarding, where this was unclear or unsure.

Further to this, Councillor P M Dilks volunteered to undertake this role for the Committee.

RESOLVED

That Councillor P M Dilks be appointed as the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee's Looked After Children/Care Leaver Representative.

8 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report by David Hair (Team Leader – Scrutiny and Member Support), which provided the Committee with an opportunity to consider its work programme and the work programmes of the Council's other Scrutiny Committees. Copies of the individual work programmes were appended to the report and the following updates were received: -

i) Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Further to Minute 67, the Committee was reminded that David Forbes (County Finance Officer) was scheduled to attend the meeting on 30 July 2015 to present an item on 'The Financial Challenges Beyond 2015/16'.

It was queried whether the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee could consider a report on the possibility of undertaking a task and finish group review on Suicide Prevention in Lincolnshire. In response to this, Members were advised that the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire had considered a report from Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT) on the 'Review of Suicides and Self Harm with Intent to Die' at its meeting on 20 May 2015 and an update report from LPFT would be considered on 22 July 2015 by the Committee. It was also noted that the Adults Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to consider a report on 8 July 2015 on 'Reducing Suicide and Self-Harm in Lincolnshire', which is a report by Public Health.

ii) Adults Scrutiny Committee

There were no changes to report.

iii) Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

The Vice-Chairman advised that there were no amendments to the work programme.

However, it was noted that at the next meeting of the Committee scheduled for 5 June 2015 consideration would be given to a report on 'Review of the Council's Home to School Transport Policy in Relation to Discretionary Grammar School Transport – Proposal for a Scrutiny Review'. If the proposal was agreed by the Committee, a report would then be presented to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 18 June 2015, for approval.

iv) Community and Public Safety Scrutiny Committee

The Chairman advised Members that at the meeting of the Committee scheduled for 3 June 2015, David Ramscar (Chief Fire Officer) would be giving an update on his

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recent work in Nepal, leading the United Kingdom's International Search and Rescue Team.

Also, on 25 July 2015, there would be two additional reports on 'Heritage Project' and 'Archives Relocation Project'.

It was noted that the Committee was scheduled to consider an urgent item on 'Sexual Health and HIV Treatment and Care Commissioning Section 75 Agreement' at its meeting on 3 June 2015.

In response to a question, Members were advised that the Committee was scheduled to consider a report on 'Libraries Procurement' at its meeting on 3 June 2015 and a copy of this report would be emailed by the Chairman to Councillor P M Dilks, for his information.

v) Economic Scrutiny Committee

The Chairman advised Members that a report on 'Impact of Transportation on Maximising Economic Growth Scrutiny Review – Specific Actions' had been added to the work programme for consideration at its meeting on 21 July 2015.

It was noted that as part of the quarterly theme performance reports, the Committee considers the number of complaints or compliments received by Economic Development. Those comments are based on direct contact from members of the public through the Customer Service Centre and do not include any feedback given directly to officers in Economic Development. Therefore, the Chairman has asked that the Committee refines how it considers customer feedback, and a report on 'Customer Satisfaction' would be brought to the meeting scheduled to be held on 8 September 2015 on this subject.

vi) Environmental Scrutiny Committee / Flood and Drainage Management Scrutiny Committee

The Chairman advised that there was an addition to the work programme for the Committee's meeting scheduled to be held on 12 June 2015. A pre-decision scrutiny item would now be considered on the 'Awarding of the Dry Recyclables Contract', prior to a final decision being taken on 24 June 2015.

It was noted that the Committee would also programme, at an appropriate time, the items which were identified at the last meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on the 'Decline of Bees' and a presentation on the 'Agri-food Industry'.

The Chairman also advised that there were no changes to the work programme of the Flood and Drainage Management Scrutiny Committee.

vii) Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire

The Vice-Chairman highlighted the following items: -

Updates on the Issues Raised in the Minutes

- *Winter Maintenance* – The Chairman of the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire was continuing to pursue the issue of seeking a contribution from Clinical Commissioning Groups to the County Council's funding for winter maintenance.
- *Psychologist Provision* – The Chairman had received confirmation from South West Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group (the commissioner) and Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (the provider) that there were no plans to reduce the funding for psychology services. However, LPFT had been undertaking some internal restructuring of those services to help improve their efficiency and quality.
- *Access to Pain Treatments* – An item on hospital pharmacy services at United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust would be added to the Committee's work programme.

Changes to the Work Programme

An update from Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust on the 'Review of Suicides and Self Harm with Intent to Die' would be added to the Committee's work programme for 22 July 2015.

Further to the above item, it was requested that clarity was sought from South West Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust on what the 'internal restructuring' consisted of, and in particular whether any Senior Psychologist positions were being cut.

viii) Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee

The Chairman advised Members that the Committee would receive an introductory report on 'Parking Permit Waivers' at its meeting on 13 July 2015.

It was suggested that consideration should also be given to the Council's Policy on the Residents Parking Scheme, as part of the item on 'Parking Permit Waivers'.

Further to Minute 67 and in response to a question, Members were advised that volunteer groups; parish and town councils; and neighbourhood groups/boards could all apply for a grit bin, provided that they met the criteria.

ix) Value for Money Scrutiny Committee

There were no changes to report.

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RESOLVED

- (1) That the content of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee work programme, as detailed at Appendix A to the report, be approved.
- (2) That the work programmes from the Council's other Overview and Scrutiny Committees, as detailed at Appendix B to the report, be approved.
- (3) That the Working Group activity, as detailed at Appendix C to the report, be noted.
- (4) That the Forward Plan of Key Decisions from 1 June 2015, as detailed at Appendix D to the report, be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.00 pm.