



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 28 JANUARY 2016

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR P J O'CONNOR (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors Mrs A M Newton (Vice-Chairman), C J T H Brewis, A Bridges, M Brookes, P M Dilks, R L Foulkes, A G Hagues, R J Hunter-Clarke, A J Jesson, C E H Marfleet, Mrs M J Overton MBE, R B Parker, C L Strange and R Wootten.

Added Members

Parent Governor Representatives: Mrs E Olivier-Townrow.

Officers in attendance:-

Simon Evans (Health Scrutiny Officer), David Forbes (County Finance Officer), Michelle Grady (Head of Finance (Communities)), Steve Houchin (Head of Finance (Adult Care)), Phil Hughes (Strategic Planning Policy Manager), Tracy Johnson (Senior Scrutiny Officer), Claire Machej (Head of Finance (Corporate)), Mark Popplewell (Head of Finance, Children's Services), Jasmine Sodhi (Performance and Equalities Manager), Daniel Steel (Scrutiny Officer), Nigel West (Head of Democratic Services) and Catherine Wilman (Democratic Services Officer).

At this stage in the proceedings, it was noted that this would be Mrs E Oliver-Townrow's last meeting. The Committee expressed its thanks for her hard work on the Committee over the last four years.

48 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Mrs J Brockway, Mrs C A Talbot and Added Members Mr P Thompson and Mr C V Miller.

49 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTEREST

Councillor Mrs A M Newton declared an interest in Item 10 on the agenda (Minute no 57) South East Lincolnshire Draft Local Plan as she had acted for land owners involved with the plan.

50 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 DECEMBER 2015

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 December 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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51 CONSIDERATION OF CALL-INS

No Call-Ins had been received.

52 PROPOSAL FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS

There were no proposals for scrutiny reviews.

53 CONSIDERATION OF COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTIONS

No Councillor Call for Actions had been received.

54 REVIEW OF FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

Consideration was given to a report which updated the Committee on the review of the Council's financial risks which took place in November 2014. It considered the outcomes from the financial risk assessment for 2014/15 and updated the risk assessment to help determine an appropriate target level for the Council's general reserves for 2016/17.

The County Finance Officer took the Committee through the risk register and explained how the risk had been calculated, using a scale of 'likelihood' from 1 – very unlikely to 4 – very probable. In addition, it illustrated what value of the general reserve would be used for each risk.

In response to questions from the Committee, the following was confirmed by Officers:

- The Council borrowed money from the Public Works Loan Board, a body within HM Treasury, with an average interest rate of 4.1%. This was a far cheaper way of borrowing money compared to the private sector;
- A report on formal budget monitoring would be brought to the next meeting of the committee in advance of being presented to the Executive. This report would demonstrate how accurate the £10million estimate for the underspend had been for this financial year.

RESOLVED

That the report and comments made be noted.

55 COUNCIL BUDGET 2016/17

Consideration was given to a report which provided the Committee with an opportunity to consider the budget proposals made by the Executive at its meeting on 5 January on the proposed Council Budget for 2016/17.

The Executive would make its final budget proposals at its meeting on 2 February 2016 and comments made by this Committee would be fed back to the Executive for

this meeting. These final proposals would be considered by the meeting of the County Council on 19 February 2016.

The report and budget was discussed and the Committee made the following comments in relation to the overall budget proposals:

- The Committee expressed its dissatisfaction with the government's settlement for 2016/17;
- Concerns were raised about the impact of the budget reductions on the services affected and the wider impact on other council activities. The Committee urged the Executive to take into account the impact of the budget reductions on other Council activities;
- The Committee was informed that an additional £12.5m of funding had been identified over the last month. The Committee urged the Executive to allocate extra funding from the additional £12.5m to the high priority areas outlined in the report.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and comments made be reported to the Executive.

56 DRAFT COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN 2016/17

The Committee considered a report which provided the outcomes and measures incorporated in the draft Council Business Plan 2016/17.

The format and content of the Council Business Plan remained largely unchanged from 2015/16, except for the inclusion of 2016/17 targets. The changes made to the original plan were detailed in the report at Appendix B.

Members felt that the Committee should have considered the Draft Business Plan before discussing the budget.

There were several queries from Members on the performance of some measures. The Performance and Equalities Manager explained that there was a considerable difference to figures in the *Current Target* and *Current Performance* columns because the *Current Performance* only included information from Quarter 2.

It was suggested that an extra column for forecasting be added to the Plan. The Officer agreed to explore this further.

Generally, service areas had been more cautious by setting targets for 2016-17 similar to those targets which applied in the current year.

It was suggested that a new measure, assessing the costs associated with the problems arising from the Serco contract, be added.

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RESOLVED

That the report and comments made be noted.

57 SOUTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

It was noted that, at this point in the proceedings, Councillor Mrs A M Newton left the meeting pursuant to Minute 49.

The Committee considered a report which updated Members on the progress of the South East Lincolnshire Draft Local Plan and its implications for the County Council. Comments made at the Committee would be forwarded to the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan Team for their consideration.

The Plan was a statutory planning document currently being prepared by the South East Lincolnshire Joint Policy Unit (JPU) on behalf of the South East Lincolnshire Joint Planning Committee. The Council was a statutory partner, with representation on the committee and provided officer time to support the work of the JPU.

The Local Plan would guide development and the use of land in south East Lincolnshire from the 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2036 and would help to shape how the area would change over this period.

This Draft Local Plan was currently out for public consultation, which would come to an end on 19 February 2016. Following this there were three further stages which culminated in the adoption of the Local Plan in February 2017. It was reported that there was financial risk if the plan was not adopted by the specified date.

During discussion of the Draft Plan, the following was confirmed by the Officer:

- The main service areas of any new development (infrastructure and defences) would be paid for by the developers and would be managed with an infrastructure delivery plan;
- An additional 1,350 – 2,000 new houses were planned in Holbeach. The pressure of new homes on the local area had an impact on improving existing services;
- It was an ambitious plan but Officers were confident it was deliverable;
- Central Government was promoting cleaner vehicles on the road and air pollution was being measured by Boston Borough and South Holland District Council's Environmental Health officers;

There were concerns from some Councillors that the number of planned dwellings was too dense for the area concerned and felt that a scattering of smaller settlements would be better. The Officer countered that the development would be phased in and not built all at once. In addition, it was explained that a more urban concentration of dwellings provided a better balance of houses for the money.

Members felt there was not enough information in the report about infrastructure, especially public transport.

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It was felt that additional housing could also be acquired by converting disused buildings, however the Officer could not comment on how much of the development would use green or brown field sites.

RESOLVED

That the report and comments made be noted.

58 REVIEW OF SCRUTINY

The Committee considered a report which sought to summarise the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee when it considered the independent report following a review of scrutiny at Lincolnshire County Council. The review provided a framework for delivering improvements.

The report recommended that the Committee set up a working group to consider the recommendations in the independent report in detail and report back to the Committee on the options for delivery. The following Councillors volunteered to be members:

Councillors C L Strange, R B Parker, Mrs M J Overton MBE, A J Jesson, C J T H Brewis, R L Foulkes, Mrs A M Newton.

The timescales for the working group and draft terms of reference were included with the report.

It was suggested that the working group report back to Committee at its April 2016 meeting.

RESOLVED

1. That the progress already made on the recommended changes to scrutiny at Lincolnshire County Council be noted;
2. That a working group to consider the recommendations in detail and report back to the Committee on the options for delivery, in accordance with the terms of reference attached as Appendix A, be established;
3. That the membership of the working group and timescales for the group to report back to the committee be agreed.

59 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered its own work programme and the scrutiny committee work programmes for 2016.

It was suggested that a standing item, to be included on each agenda, detailing feedback from the Executive, be added to the work programme.

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There were no changes to the work programme.

ii) Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee

There were no changes to the work programme.

iii) Community and Public Safety Scrutiny Committee

There were no changes to the work programme. It was reported that the Community Engagement Strategy Revision scheduled for the meeting on 9 March would be considered by the Council Meeting in May 2016.

iv) Economic Scrutiny Committee

There were no changes to the Committee's work programme.

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

There were no changes to the work programme.

It was reported that the Chairman wished to re-designate two forthcoming Environmental Scrutiny Committee meetings as meetings of the Flood and Drainage Management Scrutiny Committee, in the light of the increasing workload of the latter Committee.

vi) Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire

There were no changes to the work programme.

It was reported that there was now an intention for the Lincolnshire Health and Care (LHAC) programme public consultation to commence after 1 July 2016, but it was noted that the consultation on LHAC had been delayed several times previously and this intended date should be treated with caution.

vii) Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee

There were no changes to the work programme.

viii) Value for Money Scrutiny Committee

It was reported that, in addition to the draft work programme in the report, the following reports would be added to the agenda for the meeting on 22 February 2016:

- Treasury Management Quarter 3 Performance Report;
- One Public Estate

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 February 2016, as detailed at Appendix D to the report, be noted.

The meeting closed at 1.45 pm.

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