

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 25 July 2013

PRESENT: Councillor Jamie Lane (Chair): Councillor Brian Sargeant (Deputy Chair), Councillors Tony Ansell, Joy Capstick, Mick Ford, Phil Larratt, Nilesh Parekh, Winston Strachan and Nazim Choudary (substituting for Councillor Elizabeth Gowen)

Councillor Tim Hadland , Cabinet Member – Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning (Agenda Item 5)
Councillor Mary Markham, Cabinet Member – Housing (Agenda Item 6)

Steve Boyes, Director – Planning (Agenda Item 5)
Richard Birchett, Interim Head of Landlord Services (Agenda Item 6)
Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Elizabeth Gowen, Matt Lynch, Lee Mason, Suresh Patel and Sivaramen Subbarayan.

Councillor Nazim Choudary substituted for Councillor Elizabeth Gowen.

2. MINUTES

Subject to the removal of the sentence “He requested that officer recommendation of Enterprise Loan Panel was too restrictive and be changed to Enterprise Funding in general” from the preamble in minute item number 9 (c), the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2013 were signed by the Chair as a true record.

3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING)

Councillor Joy Capstick declared an interest in agenda item 5 – West Northants Development Corporation (WNDC) as a member of the Localisation Programme Board and an interest in agenda item 8(b) – Scrutiny Panel 2 – Management and Regulation of Private Sector Housing (Including HIMOs) as a tenant of a private landlord.

Councillor Brian Sargeant declared an interest in agenda item 8(b) – Scrutiny Panel 2 – Management and Regulation of Private Sector Housing (Including HIMOs) as a landlord of a private property.

Councillor Tim Hadland, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning, declared an interest in agenda item 5 – West Northants Development Corporation (WNDC) as a member of the Localisation Programme Board.

5. WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION(WNDC)

The Committee considered a briefing note detailing the transition from West Northants Development Corporation (WNDC) to Northampton Borough Council (NBC).

Councillor Tim Hadland, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning, elaborated on the key points within the briefing note and responded to the Committee's questions:

- Work is on-going regarding an exemplar closure of WNDC and around securing the future of projects, assets and work streams that affect the borough and Northamptonshire.
- WNDC currently has revenue support from the Government and NBC will require funding to take projects forward. There is a need to secure revenue funding post March 2014.
- Future Government arrangements will be discussed by the Project Board.
- Work is currently on-going regarding specific Projects that are on a partnership basis.
- In response to a query regarding assets, the Cabinet Member confirmed that the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had a preference for a "local home" for assets and this was being investigated by the Project Board.
- It is anticipated that further details regarding the closure of WNDC would be available by the end of October 2013.

The Committee was provided with a brief update on the Projects:

St Johns
Project Angel
Grosvenor/Greyfriars
Avon/Nunn Mills

AGREED: That the Committee receives a further report on West Northants Development Corporation (WNDC) at its meeting on 11 November 2013.

6. NBC OWNED STREET LIGHTING

Councillor Mary Markham, Cabinet Member for Housing, provided the Committee with an update regarding outside lighting that is owned by Northampton Borough Council (NBC).

The main points were highlighted:

- Work is on-going regarding the production of a Corporate Asset Register that will identify the location of street lighting that is owned by NBC. It is envisaged that the assessment will be completed by the autumn 2013.
- Inspections are also taking place that are part of a comprehensive assessment of lighting. It will also establish issues such as which street lights are turned off and who has responsibility for the lights – the Highways Authority or the Housing Authority.
- A member of the Committee highlighted an issue regarding the turning off of an outside light in a sheltered housing complex. Residents had campaigned and the lighting was now left on overnight.
- The Committee provided details of soft outside lighting in other sheltered housing complexes and alley ways.
- It was confirmed that the location of some street lighting was available on the Balfour Beatty website.
- The Cabinet Member apprised that work had commenced on plotting the location of lighting onto NBC's interactive mapping and once the Corporate Asset Register was complete, all lighting would be inputted on to the map.
- In response to a query, the Cabinet Member confirmed that it was not an option to "piggy back" onto Northamptonshire County Council's (NCC) Street Lighting Contract.
- In accordance with the contract, if NCC turns a street light back on, a light must be turned off elsewhere.
- A Review of Sheltered Housing is incorporated into part of Phase 3 of the Decent Homes Standards. As part of the Decent Homes Standards, there is a requirement for an outside light to be fitted outside each property in sheltered housing complexes.

AGREED: That the Cabinet Member for Housing provides further details of NBC owned street lighting to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 November 2013.

7. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Committee considered the 2012-2013 Out-turn Report and Corporate Performance - All Measures Report.

The main points of discussion were:

- **Performance Measure TC005n** – Town Centre Footfall. The Committee confirmed that it would be useful for the Cabinet Member to provide details of how footfall is

calculated and where footfall counters are located. Councillors were also keen to receive further details regarding the trend across the country and how this is calculated.

- **Performance Measure ESC02%** - Missed bins corrected within 24 hours of notification. The Committee confirmed that it would be useful for the Cabinet Member to provide details to the next meeting on why this measure was below target.
- **Performance Measure ESC04%** - Household waste recycled and composted. The Committee confirmed that it would be useful for the Cabinet Member to attend the next meeting to provide further details on this measure and why it was below target.
- **Performance Measure PP09** - Overall Crime Figures for the Period. The Committee noted that all crime had reduced by 2.2% and suggested that the Chair of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) be asked to attend the next meeting to provide a breakdown of the crime figures.
- **Performance Measure CS13** – Percentage of all calls into the Contact Centre answered. The Committee queried resourcing for the Contact Centre and suggested that the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee to provide details of demand to the Contact Centre and resources provided.
- The Committee confirmed that it would monitor, over the next few meetings, the trend of performance measures NI157a % and NI157b% regarding the determination of planning applications.
- The Committee was pleased to note the performance target for re-letting NBC housing.

AGREED: That the relevant Cabinet Members and the Chair of the CSP be asked to attend the next meeting of the Committee to provide an update on the performance measures:

- CS13
- ESC02
- ESC04
- PP09
- TC005n

8. SCRUTINY PANELS

8(A) SCRUTINY PANEL 1 - IMPROVING THE TOWN'S PARKS

The Committee noted the report on the progress of the work of Scrutiny Panel 1 – Improving the Town's Parks.

8(B) SCRUTINY PANEL 2 - MANAGEMENT AND REGULATION OF PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING (INCLUDING HIMOS)

The Committee received a report of the Chair of Scrutiny Panel 2 – Management and Regulation of Private Sector Housing which asked that the scope of the Review is approved.

It was requested that the purpose of the Review be updated to read “To investigate the regulation and management of private lettings, both by landlords and agencies.”

The Committee suggested Eastern European Groups as potential additional witnesses to inform the Review.

AGREED: (1) That the purpose of the Review be updated to read “To investigate the regulation and management of private lettings, both by landlords and agencies.”

(2) That the scope of the Review – Management and Regulation of Private Sector Housing is approved.

9. URGENT ITEMS

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 19:20 hours