

Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Forest Heath
District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** held on **Thursday 11 June 2015** at **6.00pm** at the **Council Chamber, District Offices**, College Heath Road, Mildenhall IP28 7EY

Present: **Councillors**

Chairman Simon Cole
Vice Chairman Bill Sadler

Andrew Appleby
Chris Barker
David Bimson
John Bloodworth

Ruth Bowman
Christine Mason
Reg Silvester

21. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lance Stanbury.

22. **Substitutes**

There were no substitutes at the meeting.

23. **Public Participation**

There were no questions/statements from members of the public.

24. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2015 were accepted by the Committee and signed by the Chairman.

25. **Overview and Scrutiny Draft Annual Report 2014-2015**

The Chairman presented Report No: OAS/FH/15/005, which was the tenth annual report on the activity of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which informed Members of the activity of the Committee carried out during the period May 2014 to April 2015.

The Committee considered the Overview and Scrutiny Draft Annual Report and with the vote being unanimous, it was

RECOMMENDED:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2014-2015, attached as Appendix 1 to Report No: OAS/FH/15/005, be recommended to Council for approval.

26. Decisions Plan: July 2015 to May 2016

The Chairman presented Report No: OAS/FH/15/006, which requested that Members peruse the Cabinet Decisions Plan for the period July 2015 to May 2016, for which it would like further information on or which might benefit from the Committee's involvement.

The Committee considered the Decisions Plan in detail and asked a number of questions to which responses were provided. In particular, discussions were held on the West Suffolk Operational Hub and the Local Housing Investment Options. Members felt that both projects might benefit from joint involvement by pre-scrutinising the two projects with St Edmundsbury Borough Council prior to any final decisions being made by Cabinet.

Members also discussed the Mildenhall Hub Project. The Director updated the Committee on the project, and it was suggested that the Committee might also wish to pre-scrutinise the project in January/February 2016.

Finally, Members discussed the Debt Management and Recovery Policy, which had been considered by St Edmundsbury Borough Councils Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Members questioned whether there was a minimum amount to trigger before the Council actioned debt recovery, to which officers agreed to provide a written response.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the following items from the Decisions Plan be considered jointly with St Edmundsbury Borough Councils Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to being considered by Cabinet:
 - i) West Suffolk Operational Hub
 - ii) Local Housing Investment Option
- 2) That the Mildenhall Hub Project be scrutinised by the Committee in January / February 2016 prior to being considered by Cabinet.

27. Work Programme Update, Re-appointments to Task and Finish Group / Suffolk Health Scrutiny Committee

The Chairman presented Report No: OAS/FH/15/007, which updated Members on the current status of its rolling work programme of items for scrutiny during 2015-2016 (Appendix 1).

The report also sought nominations to the New Housing Development Sites Joint Task and Finish Group with St Edmundsbury Borough Council and also

the District Council's nominated representative on the Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee.

Also, members were reminded to complete the Work Programme Suggestion Form when submitting future items for potential scrutiny (Appendix 2). This enabled suggestions received to be considered by the Committee at each meeting.

As in previous years, Suffolk County Council wished a representative to be appointed to its Health Scrutiny Committee from each of the County's District and Borough Councils. As Councillor David Bimson had been the Council's representative for 2014-2015 and was keen to continue, the Committee was in agreement that Councillor David Bimson should be re-appointed as the District Council's nominated representative on the Suffolk Health Scrutiny Committee for 2015-2016.

The Committee then made the following re-appointment/appoints to the existing Task and Finish Group for 2015-2016:

- (a) **New Housing Development Sites Joint Task and Finish Group:** Councillors David Bimson, Ruth Bowman and Bill Sadler.

The Committee then considered its rolling work programme and noted that a report on a Car Parking Review was scheduled to be presented to the Committee on 23 July 2015. The Committee wished to seek clarification on the report to ensure that what was being proposed did not duplicate the work of the Newmarket Vision Group, which officers agreed to follow-up.

Finally, the Committee was advised that as from September 2015, Portfolio Holders would be invited and programmed to attend an Overview and Scrutiny Meeting during the year to give a short presentation on their portfolio. Members would then have the chance to ask questions.

The Committee **noted** the items currently expected to be presented to the Committee during 2015-2016, and with the vote being unanimous, it was:

RECOMMENDED:

That full Council be asked to confirm the appointment of Councillor David Bimson as the District Council's nominated representative on the Suffolk Health Scrutiny Committee for 2015-2016.

RESOLVED:

That for 2015-2016 Councillors David Bimson, Ruth Bowman and Bill Sadler be re-appointed/appointed to the New Housing Development Sites Joint Task and Finish Group.

The Meeting concluded at 6.28 pm

Signed by:

Chairman