

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Commission held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 27 February 2008.

PRESENT

Dr. M. O'Callaghan CC (in the Chair)

Mr. D. R. Bown CC
Mr. R. Fraser CC
Mr. S. J. Galton CC
Mr. G. A. Hart CC
Mr. D. W. Houseman CC

Mr. P. G. Lewis CC
Mr. S. D. Sheahan CC
Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC
Mr. E. D. Snartt CC
Mr. R. M. Wilson CC

78. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th February 2008 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

79. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been asked under Standing Order 35.

80. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

81. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items.

82. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

The following members declared personal non prejudicial interests in the report on performance on LAA Targets as members of District Councils:-

Mr Galton, Mr Hart, Mr Shepherd, Mr Snartt and Mr Lewis.

83. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

There were no declarations made under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

84. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 36.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 36.

85. Combined Performance Report - Quarter 3.

The Commission considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources concerning issues on both the revenue budget and key performance indicators at the end of the third quarter where performance was below target. A copy of the report, marked 'B', is filed with these minutes.

The Commission was advised as follows:

- (i) the underspends now reported did not include the financial arrangements with the Primary Care Trust. This would increase the underspend to approximately £10 million. The possible use of LAA grant to fund eligible mainstream expenditure so as to avoid loss of resources due to limits on carry forward of LAA grant, would also increase the underspend;
- (ii) the approach to and reporting of performance management data would be further developed in response to the new national performance regime and Comprehensive Area Assessment. These changes would also seek to ensure that assessment of performance included data on user satisfaction of the service provided.
- (iii) that for a further period of one year the current LAA reward targets would be included in LAA2 and reported accordingly. With regard to LAA2 discussions were on-going on the issue of reward targets though initial indications were the reward levels would be lower and applied to the whole of the LAA rather than specific indicators.

The Chairman advised the Commission that as a result of a request from Mr Hart CC an officer from the Adult Social Care and Health Service was in attendance to answer questions on the under performance in increasing benefit take-up amongst older people. In response to questions on this issue the Commission was advised as follows:

- (i) The partners involved included the Department of Works and Pensions, District Councils, Age Concern and the Citizen Advice Bureaux.
- (ii) Part of the under performance was due to issues around target setting as the target figure did not include drop off rates, particularly in relation to Attendance Allowance.
- (iii) The Operations Group responsible for this area of activity was due to meet to agree a detailed action plan which would include amongst other things:-
 - looking at best practice elsewhere to learn lessons
 - project management and operational capacity
 - new promotional techniques to increase awareness of benefit

- entitlement
 - closer working with the NHS particularly GPs and District Nurses on raising awareness
 - targeting of resources to particular communities or deprived areas.
- (iv) Leicestershire Together and the Cabinet had agreed to invest an additional £100,000 to help achieve this target as part of a review of all reward targets.

The Chairman then invited Members of the Commission to raise issues on the remainder of the report having regard to the fact that, given the report covered performance across all of the County Council's Departments, it may not be possible for officers present to provide detailed answers. The Chairman suggested that any issues raised could be taken up by the Chairman and Spokesmen of the relevant scrutiny committees. In the ensuing discussion the following issues were raised and officers were requested to submit briefing notes to the Chairmen and Spokesmen of the Committees and/or individual members identified below:-

• Work with partners to ensure that overall crime levels are reduced in high crime areas.	Scrutiny Commission
• Action Plan to increase benefit take-up by Older People	Adult Social Care and Health
• Support to Loughborough University in relation to the 2012 Olympics and Sub-regional Plan.	Community Services
• Progress on Implementation of Action Plan on improving public satisfaction with the Council.	Scrutiny Commission
• Operation of the new Customer Service Centre and lessons learnt for future roll out.	Environment
• Parish Councils – Unopposed Seats	Community Engagement
• Equality Issues:- Measuring levels of disability and problems of self declaration.	Mr Lewis CC
• Progress on Loughborough Town Centre Improvement.	Mr Shepherd CC

RESOLVED

- a) That the progress being made in relation to the targets be noted.

- b) That the report and appropriate briefing notes be drawn to the attention of the Chairmen and Spokesmen of Scrutiny Committees inviting them to raise any further issues with the relevant Chief Officers.

86. Date of next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the Commission be held at 2.00pm on Wednesday 2nd April 2008.

2.00 pm - 3.45 pm
27 February 2008

CHAIRMAN