

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Commission held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 8 June 2011.

PRESENT

(in the Chair)

Mr. G. A. Boulter CC	Mr. Max Hunt CC
Mrs. R. Camamile CC	Mr. A. M. Kershaw CC
Mr. J. G. Coxon CC	Mrs. R. Page CC
Dr. R. K. A Feltham CC	Mrs. P. Posnett CC
Mr. S. J. Galton CC	Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC
Mr. T. Gillard CC	Mr. D. Slater CC
Dr. S. Hill CC	

In Attendance:

Mr. J. T. Orson JP CC, Cabinet Lead Member for Community Safety (For Minute 198)

Mr. I. D. Ould CC (For Minute 196)

188. Appointment of Chairman.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. S. J. Galton CC be appointed Chairman for the period ending with the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2012.

189. Election of Deputy Chairman.

RESOLVED:

That Dr. R. K. A. Feltham CC be appointed Deputy Chairman for the period ending with the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2012.

190. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2010 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

191. Question Time.

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

192. Questions asked by Members.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under

Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

193. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

194. Declarations of Interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

Dr. S. Hill CC and Mr. J. T. Orson JP CC each declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in respect of item 11 as members of the Leicestershire Police Authority (Minute 198 refers).

195. Declarations of the Party Whip.

There were no declarations of the party whip.

196. Presentation of Petition: Bus Service No. 7 - Request for increased frequency of service.

A petition submitted by Dr. David Hickey, Chairman of Witherley Parish Council, signed by 247 local residents was presented to the by the local member, Mr. I. D. Ould CC requesting that the Council revisit the recent changes to the number 7 bus route through Witherley Parish with a view to improving the frequency of service.

A briefing note of the Director of Environment and Transport summarising the situation relating to the petition was considered by the Commission. A copy of this report, marked 'B', is filed with these minutes.

With the consent of the Chairman, Mr. Ould addressed the Commission and stated that, whilst he accepted that the future of the Service would be considered as part of an upcoming Scrutiny Review of the bus network policy, he felt that it may be appropriate for the Review to take account of a report published by De Montfort University on the additional cost of living in rural areas.

The Director of Environment and Transport addressed the Commission and stressed that the reduction to the number 7 bus route was compliant with Council policy and that the service currently cost the Council in the region of £120,000 per year to run. The Director confirmed that key stakeholders would be consulted as part of the Scrutiny Review.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That it be noted that the policy for the support of Local Bus Services is to be the subject of a forthcoming Scrutiny Review Panel in the Autumn;
- (b) That Bus Service No. 7 will be assessed against the policy emerging from that review process.

197. Leicestershire Rural Framework 2011-14.

The Commission considered a report of the Chief Executive concerning the draft Leicestershire Rural Framework 2011-14. A copy of the report, marked 'C', is filed with these minutes.

It was reported that around £530 million had been made available by the Government to support broadband network upgrade projects in rural areas. The funding would be administered by Broadband Delivery UK. Any proposals for the funding put forward by the County Council would require the approval of the Cabinet.

Arising from discussion of the draft Framework, members of the Commission made the following points about the document:

- The document would benefit from fewer and measurable 'deliverables'. This would enable members to easily revisit the document and assess progress made against targets;
- There was little promotion of Community Forums, which were now viewed as a key consultation mechanism for the Council. There should also be more focus given to the Big Society and the proposals for community led planning as part of the Localism Bill;
- Promotion of the document would be key to its success. Engagement with district and parish councils would be carried out via the Rural Partnership Board.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted and that the comments made be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 26 July;
- (b) That the work the Council is currently engaged in to improve broadband connectivity be the subject of a report to a future meeting of the Commission.

198. Safer Communities Agreement 2011-13.

The Commission considered a report of the Chief Executive concerning the Safer Communities Agreement 2011-13. A copy of the report, marked 'C', is filed with these minutes.

The Chief Executive reported that the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill was expected to receive royal assent in November. Election of the new Police and Crime Commissioners would then follow. The elected Commissioner would cover both the County and City areas. Control of the Community Safety Fund and other funding streams would pass to the Police and Crime Commissioner, but it was currently unknown how this would affect the funding of existing Community Safety activities.

With the permission of the Chairman, the Cabinet Lead Member for Safer

Communities, Mr. J. T. Orson CC addressed the Commission and commended the Agreement to the Commission. Mr. Orson stated that it was important for the County Council and partners to demonstrate to the new Commissioner how effective the Council's Community Safety Service was so far as to ensure his or her continual support.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Safer Communities Agreement be commended to the Safer Communities Strategy Board;
- (b) That an update be provided at a future meeting of the Commission in regard to the changes made to Community Safety Partnerships and the appointment of the Police and Crime Commissioner arising from the introduction of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill.

199. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2010/11.

The Commission considered a draft version of the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2010/11 prior to submission to the full County Council meeting in July. A copy of the report, marked 'E', is filed with these minutes.

In commenting on the Annual Report members praised the document for its ease of reading which would help to make it more accessible for members of the public.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2010/11 be approved for consideration by the full County Council at its meeting on 6 July;
- (b) That the officers responsible for drafting the document be commended for preparing a report that is easy to read and understand.

200. Work Programme Issues.

The Commission considered a report of the Chief Executive concerning matters which had arisen from a meeting of the Scrutiny Commissioners. A copy of the report is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the establishment of a Scrutiny Review Panel on the 95% bus coverage policy with the terms of reference outlined in Appendix A to this report be approved and that Mr. Slater CC be nominated to serve as Chairman on the Review;
- (b) That the intention to hold a workshop session to discuss Overview and Scrutiny priorities and the work plan for 2011/12 be noted and that members be canvassed for dates to hold the session in early July;
- (c) That it be noted that member training sessions focused around

project management for Scrutiny Review Panels would be held through June and July and members be encouraged to take part in the sessions.

201. Date of next meeting.

It was NOTED that the next meeting of the Commission would be held on Wednesday 7 September 2011 at 2.00pm.

2.00 pm - 3.30 pm
08 June 2011

CHAIRMAN