

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Commission held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 13 July 2016.

PRESENT

Mr. S. J. Galton CC (in the Chair)

Mrs. R. Camamile CC  
Mrs. J. A. Dickinson CC  
Dr. R. K. A. Feltham CC  
Dr. S. Hill CC  
Mr. D. Jennings CC

Mr. K. W. P. Lynch CC  
Mrs. C. M. Radford CC  
Mr. R. Sharp CC  
Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC  
Mr. L. Spence CC

In Attendance:

Mr. B. L. Pain CC, Cabinet Lead Member for Economic Development and Property Services (for Minutes 28 and 29).

20. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 June were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

21. Question Time.

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

22. Questions asked by Members.

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

23. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

24. 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.

The following members each declared a personal interest in respect of Item 9 as members of district and borough council representatives (as indicated) who would be affected by the proposals (Minute 28 refers):

Mrs. R. Camamile CC (Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council)  
Mrs. J. A. Dickinson CC (Blaby District Council)  
Mr. S. J. Galton CC (Harborough District Council)

Dr. S. Hill CC (Harborough District Council)  
 Mr. D. Jennings CC (Blaby District Council)  
 Mr. K. W. P. Lynch CC (Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council)  
 Mrs. C. M. Radford CC (Charnwood Borough Council)  
 Mr. R. Sharp CC (Charnwood Borough Council)  
 Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC (Charnwood Borough Council)

25. Declarations of the Party Whip.

There were no declarations of the party whip.

26. Presentation of Petitions.

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

27. Police and Crime Panel - Update.

The Commission considered a presentation concerning an update on the activity of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel (PC). A copy of the slides forming the presentation is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Mr. J. T. Orson JP CC, Chairman of the PCP who was present to deliver the presentation.

Arising from the presentation, the following points were noted:

- The newly elected PCC had indicated that he was fully committed to partnership working and that he would use the PCP as a sounding board in this regard;
- Some recent problems with anti-social behaviour in Countesthorpe had led to a public meeting being set up by the PCC and chaired by the local County Councillor. The work of the IMPACT Team was praised in dealing with this issue;
- The tri-force collaboration involving Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Northamptonshire was progressing well. It was unfortunate that Derbyshire were not currently engaged in this work, though it was known that talks regarding their involvement were ongoing;
- It was suggested that Leicestershire's crime figures had risen by around 3% against a falling national picture. No comparative figures had been provided by the former PCC in his most recent Annual Report and it was suggested that the Panel would take this issue away as part of its ongoing work programme;
- The Police's satisfaction rates were informed by a survey of a percentage of those who had been victims of crime. Satisfaction rates for crimes such as theft of and from motor vehicles were known to have dropped. The PCC had noted in his annual report that this decline in satisfaction was due to the reduced service now provided to many victims of vehicle crime as a result of the force's new operating model and regional policy decisions taken;
- The Police were known to have made efforts to increase reporting of crime, though questions were raised in regard to which crimes were required to be recorded, as it was known that in some cases victims did not always receive a crime number. It

was felt that confidence in the Police would be enhanced by greater clarity being provided on what constituted a crime;

- The PCC had met with the leaders of most local authorities and had indicated that he intended to attend future meetings of the Leicestershire Safer Communities Board as a means of engaging further;
- A question had been raised with the PCC at the most recent meeting of the PCP regarding funding for the Supporting Leicestershire Families programme. He had indicated that he understood the value of preventative work to all partners and that he would consider his funding contribution for this work in the future;
- It was pleasing that the PCC had given his commitment to “visible policing” though in light of the ongoing pressures in terms of resources it was questioned where resources might be directed away from other areas of criminal activity as a result of this commitment;
- The commitment from the PCC to allowing the Chief Constable to provide regular briefings to County Councillors on Force activity as he had done prior to the election of the former PCC was welcomed.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the chairman of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Panel be thanked for his informative presentation;
- (b) That the Police and Crime Panel be asked to follow up with the PCC and Chief Constable as appropriate on the following issues as part of its ongoing work programme:
  - (i) A national and regional comparison of the Force’s crime figures;
  - (ii) Clarity around the Force’s strategic response to lower priority crimes such as theft of and from motor vehicles;
  - (iii) Clarity around what constituted criminal activity and the guidelines that regulated its recording;
  - (iv) Further information on how resources will be directed in light of the PCC’s commitment to retaining police officer and PCSOs at current levels.

28. Draft Infrastructure Plan.

The Commission considered a report of the Chief Executive concerning the Draft County Council Infrastructure Plan which was currently the subject of a consultation process. The report before the Commission had been considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 17 June. A copy of the report, marked “Agenda Item 9”, is filed with these minutes.

The Commission welcomed to the meeting Mr. B. L. Pain CC, Cabinet Lead Member for Economic Development.

The Chief Executive reported that the comments of the Commission would be taken into account as part of the consultation process and formulation of the final version of the

Plan. Its comments would also be reported to the Cabinet as part of the Cabinet's consideration of the final version of the Plan. The Plan was broad in its scope and aimed to place the County Council on the best possible footing to secure Government and other investment.

Arising from a discussion, the following points were noted:

- It was noted that details had been omitted erroneously from Appendix 2 distinguishing between County Council investment and potential funding from Government and other external sources. This would be included in the final version of the Plan;
- It was noted that the final paragraph on page 31 would be amended to read "...seeking to 'influence' and 'support' and not 'control'...";
- It was anticipated that the result of the EU Referendum would have a limited impact on the Plan as very little of the funding the Council hoped to access would be from the EU;
- As part of its consideration of the Strategic Growth Plan, the Commission had previously raised concerns around the impact housing growth would have on transport infrastructure. Though the HEDNA would provide some clarity on this issue soon, the Plan would need to demonstrate that the Council recognised these pressures and was able to be flexible in its approach. The Plan would be refreshed regularly to take account of changes in circumstances and funding availability. Publication of the HEDNA had been delayed and the Commission will be updated on its findings when it considered the proposed Memorandum of Understanding on housing provision in the Autumn;
- Risk management was not articulated in the Plan as this would feature in the Local Plans that sit below it. This would also be the case for issues such as health and utilities which were not included in the Plan as it only related specifically to County Council functions. It was noted that the Plan included many references to schemes and investment in the City as many projects were cross-border in nature but it was confirmed that County Council investment was only made within the County. This would be made clearer in the final version of the Plan;
- Questions were raised in regard to the health sector's capacity to respond to future challenges around growth. It was suggested that this might be an issue that the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee might wish to take up;
- In response to concerns around flood mitigation and suggestions that water companies might not be actively engaged in the planning process for new large scale developments, it was suggested that the Scrutiny Commissioners would consider further the scrutiny of companies like Severn Trent in this regard.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Infrastructure Plan be supported;
- (b) That the Scrutiny Commissioners consider further any scrutiny of local water companies such as Severn Trent;

- (c) That the comments of the Commission be considered by the Cabinet when the Infrastructure Plan was submitted for approval.

29. Corporate Asset Management Plan 2016/17.

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources concerning the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2016/17 (CAMP) which was to be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 18 June. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 10", is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting the Cabinet lead Member for Property and Facilities Management, Mr. B. L. Pain CC. The Lead Member reported that the CAMP was a significant document for the Council as it was cross-cutting across all Council departments. He added that Property Services should be congratulated for its delivery and impressive outturn which it was felt had significantly exceeded expectation.

In introducing the report, the Director provided the following updates on the previous year's CAMP:

- The Delivery Programme had been ambitious and set challenging targets of the Service. These targets had mostly been met;
- The County Hall Master Plan had delivered sufficient surplus space to enable co-location of staff from the health sector;
- Capital receipts had reduced from £12 million to £3.1 million largely as a result of delays in the planning process. These sales had been re-scheduled into the 2016/17 Programme;
- The capital programme for schools accommodation had delivered £31 million against a target of £36 million, the largest in over 10 years;
- The "Strategic Vision" for the CAMP had been revised slightly to take account of the new powers that would be delivered via the Combined Authority and future partnership initiatives.

Arising from a discussion, the following points were noted in relation to the CAMP 2016/17:

- An advisory group of Cabinet Lead Members had formed an Asset Investment Board to consider potential land acquisitions for the property portfolio. £15m had been ring fenced in the MTFS for this purpose;
- It was anticipated that the number of County Council assets was likely to stabilise at around 650-700. However, a number of projects such as the de-trunking of Highways Agency land would result in statutory transfers of parcels of land to the County Council which would need to be reviewed and associated strategies developed;
- The CAMP would not progress in isolation. Other Council departments were heavily involved in its delivery and regular monitoring took place to ensure any concerns around, for instance housing and schools, could be addressed as part of delivery;

- In response to a request, the Director indicated that further details on the potential to retain the “Living Water” facility project as part of the proposed redevelopment of the Billesdon Depot site would be provided to members following the meeting;
- In response to a request, the Director stated that the Danemill Annexe in Enderby had been retained pending clarity on potential pupil place needs in the area. The local County Councillor, Mrs. Dickinson CC requested to be kept informed on any evolving strategy for the building and suggestions regarding its use e.g. chargeable car parking to fund any works to the site;
- In response to a request, the Director indicated that he would report back to members following the meeting on the maintenance cost incurred by the County Council in making repairs to schools as part of the academy conversion process;
- Property Services aimed to deliver all the CAMP’s projects listed from pages 100 to 110, though it was felt that an element of prioritisation would be required via the high level strategies of individual departments. The Director and Lead Member offered to take this point on board regarding future delivery intentions;
- The Cabinet Lead Member for Children and Families and Children and Family Services’ Pupil Place Planning staff had developed the CAMP’s programmed delivery of classroom space. It was noted that, as yet, academisation had not had a negative impact on investment in schools.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Corporate Asset Management Plan 2016/17 be welcomed;
- (b) That the comments of the Commission be forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 18 July.

30. 2015/16 Provisional Revenue and Capital Outturn.

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources setting out the provisional 2015/16 Provisional Revenue and Capital Outturn position. A copy of the report, marked “Agenda Item 11”, is filed with these minutes.

Arising from a discussion, the following points were noted:

- The number of actions highlighted on page 140 would hopefully bring the cost of social care placements down. The provision of external placements was known to be very costly and it was hoped that by developing the approach to foster carers, including a greater number of “in-house” placements a significant saving would be made in future years;
- The savings identified as having been delivered early throughout the report would be refreshed over the autumn in the MTFS;
- The Special Educational Needs (SEN) overspend in the Children and Family Service, was caused by a combination of reduced funding and increased demand for places at special schools. The Department for Education had recently launched a consultation on funding which was likely to provide some clarity on future funding. A programme of work was being undertaken to reduce the cost of meeting children

and young people's needs. The Commission noted, with concern, that overspends in SEN would be a County Council liability in future. In response to some concerns expressed at the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Chairman of that Committee had asked for a report to be submitted to the September meeting in order to clarify the legislative position and how Leicestershire might respond.

RESOLVED:

That the 2015/16 Provisional Revenue and Capital Outturn be noted.

31. Quarter 4 2015/16 Performance Report - Safer Communities, Customer Services and Economy Update.

The Commission had been due to consider the Quarter 4 performance report - Safer Communities, Customer Services and Economy Update. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 12", is filed with these minutes.

As a result of members needing to attend an all member briefing session at 2.00pm there was insufficient time to consider this item with a full debate and the item was therefore withdrawn.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the item be withdrawn;
- (b) That those members with any specific questions or concerns in regard to the report direct them to Sam Weston ([sam.weston@leics.gov.uk](mailto:sam.weston@leics.gov.uk)) who would collate them and forward them to officers for a response.

32. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Commission would be held on 7 September at 10.30am and that all future meetings of the Commission would now start at 10.30am.

1.00 - 1.15 pm  
13 July 2016

CHAIRMAN