

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Commission held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 22 October 2008.

PRESENT

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

Mr. G. A. Boulter CC  
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. D. Jennings CC  
Mr. John Legrys CC  
Mr. P. G. Lewis CC  
Mr. J. S. Moore CC

139. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2008 were taken as read, confirmed and signed as a correct record.

140. Question Time.

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

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

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

142. Urgent Business.

There were no other items of urgent business.

143. Declarations of interests.

The following members declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in the report on the Leicester and Leicestershire Multi-Area Agreement 2009 – 2020:

Mr. G. A. Boulter CC – as a member of a Leicestershire District Council  
Mr. R. Fraser CC - as the user of a service that might be affected by the MAA.  
Mr. S. J. Galton CC - as a member of a Leicestershire District Council  
Mr. G. A. Hart CC - as a member of a Leicestershire District Council  
Mr. D. W. Houseman CC - as a member of a Leicestershire District Council and as a member of the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Combined Fire Authority  
Mr. D. Jennings CC - as a member of a Leicestershire District Council  
Mr. John Legrys CC - as a member of a Leicestershire District Council  
Mr. P. G. Lewis CC - as a member of a Leicestershire District Council

144. 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.

145. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 36.

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

146. Leicester and Leicestershire Multi-Area Agreement.

The Commission considered a report of the Chief Executive on the draft Leicester and Leicestershire Multi-Area Agreement (MAA). A copy of the report, marked 'A', is filed with these minutes.

The Commission was advised that arising from a second round of consultations there had been a number of comments on the draft MAA from Government departments and agencies. A revised draft would be submitted to the Government next week. It was proposed to arrange a workshop in early November with Government Departments to address some of the issues arising from the consultations and then a final draft would be submitted towards the end of November. The Cabinet would consider the revised final draft on 14 November.

The following points and issues arose from questions and discussion:

Executive Summary

- A glossary of acronyms should be provided and plain English should be used in the text;
- There needed to be some comments included reflecting on the potential impact of the economic recession on the objectives, targets and performance indicators referred to in the document ;
- The impact of the economic recession on small businesses should be monitored;
- The importance of the Government's agreement to ASK 3 should be emphasised as being fundamental to allowing the flexibility to enable the objectives and targets of the MAA to be achieved

Introduction

No comments.

Principle and Objective

No comments.

Rationale

- It would be helpful to mark the location of the main county towns on the maps;

- Some concern was expressed about both the evidence for the statement made in the last sentence of paragraph 3.10 ('The universities produce over 15,000 graduates a year and evidence suggests that a significant number of graduates are forced to leave the sub-region due to lack of suitable employment opportunities') and its emphasis on lack of suitable employment opportunities; it was suggested that universities should be looking to attract more international students and to offering greater flexibility in degree courses, especially for part-time undergraduates.

#### Scope and Priorities

- Particularly in relation to the final sentence of paragraph 4.4 there needed to be a reference to the potential impact of future legislation

#### Delivery and Resources

- It was noted that there would have to be full consultation with the business sector before a proposal to raise additional funding through a Supplementary Business Rate (SBR) could proceed; in any event, it would be necessary to determine what could be achieved via the available existing resources before contemplating seeking a SBR.

#### Governance and Accountability

- Some reference to the role of Scrutiny in scrutinising the activities of the Leadership Group and the delivery agencies should be included in this section, including the diagram on the proposed governance arrangements;
- It was considered that one representative was insufficient to adequately represent the Voluntary and Community Sector on the Leadership Group;
- It was suggested that the Universities should be offered observer status on the Leadership Group;
- There needed to be a process agreed with the Leicestershire District Councils for appointing a District Council Leader representative on the Leadership Group.

#### Performance Management

No comments.

#### Business Cases

- It was noted that the employment rates referred to in paragraph 9.3 represent the working population; a significant proportion of those not in employment were those people in full-time education.

#### The Agreement

No comments.

General Comments

- Given that much of the data in the draft MAA agreement was derived from the 2001 Population Census, there needed to be recognition of the impact of significant migration into Leicestershire of people from eastern Europe after that date;
- It was noted that if the Government agreed to ASK 1 it would require primary legislation to enable it;
- It was noted that delivery plans would need to be in place by February/March 2009 and that these should be subject to scrutiny.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet be informed of the Commission's comments on the draft MAA.

147. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday 5 November at 2pm.

11.00 am - 12.16 pm  
22 October 2008

CHAIRMAN