

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD
ON THE 15TH JANUARY 2009

Present:

Councillors Letts (Chair), Ball (Item nos 48 to 52 and 54) Cooke, Drake (Item nos 46, 47, 48), Fuller (Item nos 46 to 49, 51 and 52), Mizon, Stevens, Walker, and Richard Williams

Appointed Members:

Also in attendance

Cabinet Member for Economic Development
Cabinet Member for Young People and Skills
Cabinet Member for Resources and Workforce Planning
Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health

47. APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN PANEL MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from Councillor Baston. The Panel noted that apologies had been received from Councillor Rayment and that in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rules 4.3 and 4.4, Councillor Stevens had replaced her for the purposes of this meeting.

48. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee meeting held on 4th December 2008 and the minutes of the Healthy City Scrutiny Panel meeting (Increasing Independent Living Through Housing Inquiry) dated 29th October 2008, be approved and signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendment: (Copy of the minutes circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

- (i) that the Leader be included as one of the attendees at the meeting on 4th December 2008.

49. FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Performance detailing items for discussion on the Forward Plan for the period January 2009 to April 2009. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

RESOLVED that the Committee made the following recommendations to the:

- (i) Cabinet Member for Economic Development:
- (a) Appendix 1: Economic Recession: City Council Action to Support Business and Residents
- that for large scale capital projects contractors be encouraged to

- offer a significant number of apprenticeships;
- that a local focus on all procurement processes be encouraged;
- that a mechanism be put in place to identify all small and medium businesses that are at risk of closure e.g. arrears of business rates;
- that the Government's Small Business Guarantee Scheme be offered and promoted as widely as possible to encourage its take-up by local businesses;
- that short term relief for businesses from business rates be considered;
- that the expansion of the local banking partnership be considered;
- that the possibility for the Authority to assist in the completion of more new homes within the City be investigated; and
- that the Authority explore the opportunity to make use of vacant properties in the City.

(ii) Cabinet Member for Young People and Skills:

(b) Appendix 2: Acceptance of Funding to Deliver Volunteering Opportunities for Young People Aged 16-19

- that the Cabinet Member provides a copy of the Council's Volunteering Strategy to Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

(iii) Cabinet Member for Resources and Workforce Planning:

(c) Appendix 3: Workforce Strategy

- that the Council be innovative in ameliorating the impact of job cuts in the Council given the present economic climate; and
- that the Cabinet Member considers the development of a policy regarding the employment of consultants within the Council.

(iv) Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

(d) Appendix 4: Consultative Proposals for Reorganisation of Primary School Places in Central and Freemantle Areas of Southampton

- that the Cabinet Member provide Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee with a detailed breakdown outlining the source of the pressures for additional school places and the statistics supporting the increase in the birth rate.

(e) Appendix 5: Bitterne Park Five a Side Football Centre

- that lessons should be learnt for the future regarding the need to seek thorough and early consultation with local residents and other interested parties before progressing similar schemes.

50. SAFE CITY PARTNERSHIP, STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT AND PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2009-2012

The Committee considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, requesting the Committee to consider the draft Safe Partnership Plan and provide feedback on its content. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) that investigations should be carried out to find out what action other local authorities, such as Nottingham City Council, have successfully taken to reduce the incidence of alcohol related anti-social behaviour within their areas;
- (ii) that the enforcement opportunities be explored for Trading Standards and the Licensing Department with reference to the Licensing Act 2003 to constrain the sale of alcohol;
- (iii) that there should be a focused alcohol awareness education programme for secondary school pupils, targeted at children who are at risk of alcohol misuse or offending; and
- (iv) that details be forwarded to Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee of actions contained within the Children and Young People's Plan, such as the provision of nurture groups, which will support children and families who are considered to be at risk from alcohol misuse or other related "hidden harms".

51. GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS AND COUNCIL TAX

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Finance and IT detailing the General Fund Revenue and Capital Budgets process prior to consideration by the Cabinet on 2nd February and full Council on 18th February 2009. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the Cabinet Member forward the outcome of the budget consultation to Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee;
- (ii) that the budget analysis submitted to Council on 20th February 2008, detailing the proposed Council tax discount for persons over the age of 65, be circulated to Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee;
- (iii) that details of the geographical split of the proposed 10% discount in Council tax for pensioners be provided to the Members of the Committee; and

- (iv) that the funding opportunities available within the market place for fixed term, low rate borrowing be fully investigated by the Council.

52. REPORT OF THE HEALTHY CITY SCRUTINY PANEL – INCREASING INDEPENDENT LIVING THROUGH HOUSING INQUIRY

The Committee considered the report of the Chair of the Healthy City Scrutiny Panel, seeking approval of the recommendations into Increasing Independent Living Through Housing Inquiry prior to consideration and further action by the Executive. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be amended at paragraph 35 to state “next two years” to consider the long-term options rather than “next period of time”;
- (ii) that the report be approved with the above amendment and be forwarded to the Executive for consideration and further action; and
- (iii) that the Cabinet Member be requested to come forward with measurable targets and timescales in order to deliver the recommendations contained within the report.

53. CLOSURE OF WHITEHAVEN LODGE AND BIRCH LAWN CARE HOMES

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Adult Social Care detailing an update and progress of the care home closure project. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the entire content of the email from Head of Health & Community Care to the Director of the Commercial Section of the SCPCT, sent on 17th October 2008, be provided to Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

54. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S PLAN 2009-12

The Committee considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services seeking comments and considerations relating to the Children and Young People’s Plan. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

RESOLVED

- (i) that the support of the Primary Care Trust be sought in carrying out a health monitoring exercise in Southampton schools;
- (ii) that the draft Children’s and Young People’s Plan should include under priority 2, in the section “What we want to achieve” the need to improve the skills and understanding of parents, carers and professionals working with children of the parenting process;

- (iii) that the reference to “new ways of working” under priority 10 in the Children and Young People’s Plan be clarified;
- (iv) that the Executive publish a list of key priorities within the plan; and
- (v) that the actions required to respond to the recent Ofsted Annual Performance Assessment (APA) should be reflected within the targets and performance measures included within the final version of the Children’s and Young People’s Plan.
- (vi) that the results of the APA should form the basis of a future scrutiny inquiry to replace the proposed investigation into the transfer of Learning and Skills Council funding for 16-18 year olds to the Council within the current inquiry programme, with Councillor Stevens drafting outline Terms of Reference for this review.

55. MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE

The Committee received and noted the report of the Head of Corporate Policy and Performance, detailing the responses from Cabinet Members to recommendations from previous meetings. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).