

**MINUTES OF THE GROWTH, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT 7.55PM, ON
TUESDAY 12 JULY 2022
BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOMS, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Committee Members Present: Councillors I Yasin (Chair), M Jamil (Vice-Chair), G Casey, C Fenner, JR Fox, M Haseeb, K Knight, N Moyo, M Rangzeb, R Ray, N Sandford, and Co-opted Member Parish Councillor Neil Boyce

Officers Present: Adrian Chapman, Executive Director Place and Economy
Matt Oliver, Head of Think Communities
Paulina Ford, Senior Democratic Services Officer
Charlotte Cameron, Democratic Services Officer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Michael Perkins.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

Parish Councillor Neil Boyce expressed a non-pecuniary interest as the Chair of the Parish Liaison Working Group and Chair of Good Neighbours Rural Peterborough.

There were no whipping declarations received.

3. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

The minutes of the Extraordinary Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 15 February 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

The minutes of the Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 1 March 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

The minutes of the Communities Scrutiny Committee held on 8 March 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. CALL IN OF ANY CABINET, CABINET MEMBER OR KEY OFFICER DECISION

No call ins were received.

5. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS 2022/2023

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to the appointment of Co-opted Members in accordance with the Council's Constitution Part 3, Section 4 – Overview and Scrutiny Functions.

The purpose of the report was to seek approval from the Committee to appoint Parish Councillor Neil Boyce as a Non-Voting Co-opted Member for the municipal year 2022/2023 and to approve the appointment of Parish Councillor Michael Samways as the substitute for Parish Councillor Neil Boyce for the municipal year 2022/2023 to the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee in accordance with Part 3, Section 4 – Overview and Scrutiny Functions.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and explained that the nominations for Parish Council Co-opted Members had been put forward by the Parish Council Liaison Committee and that the appointments would be reviewed annually.

The Committee unanimously agreed to the appointments of Parish Councillor Neil Boyce as a non-voting Co-opted Member and the appointment of Parish Councillor Michael Samways as substitute for the municipal year 2022/23.

The Chair welcomed the Co-opted Member who was in attendance and invited them to join the committee for the rest of the meeting.

AGREED ACTIONS

1. Appoint Parish Councillor Neil Boyce as a Co-opted Member with no voting rights to represent the rural area for the municipal year 2022/2023. Appointment to be reviewed annually at the beginning of the next municipal year.
2. Appoint Parish Councillor Michael Samways as the nominated substitute for Parish Councillor Neil Boyce should he be appointed as the non-voting Co-opted Member representing the rural area. Appointment to be reviewed annually at the beginning of the next municipal year.

6. COHESION AND COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS ENGAGEMENT – DEVELOPING THE APPROACH

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to the Cohesion and Community Champions Engagement work of the Council.

The purpose of the report was to report on the approach developed by the Think Communities Service to support cohesion in the city through participation, engagement, consultation and coproduction alongside its citizens.

The Head of Think Communities introduced the report and key points raised included:

The report set out the approach to the Community Champion work undertaken by the Council and highlighted the need to develop approaches that would face the challenges of Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis. It was also advised that report was written at a time where trust in authority was stretched.

The report targeted improvements in engagement to the changing population and new communities. The proposals in the report aimed to build on existing engagement streams within the community.

The Officer referred to the aims of the report in section 4.2 and the work undertaken during Covid-19 in section 4.3. Work which had been focused on translation and dissemination for key groups was highlighted and it was advised that some areas had been identified as targets for improving representation.

Government support around the Community Champion approach was referred to and linked to the proposals for a 12-month Community Champion Network trial. This would be

aimed at building a network of engagement which would put the champions in a position to reach out and engage with more residents.

Finally, the Officer emphasised the importance of the Committee's contribution to the Cohesion and Community Engagement approach.

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members queried if the funding received was for existing projects and if new projects would be affected if that funding were to be lost. Members were advised that the pandemic enabled the Communities team to review various ways of working, which had attracted numerous pots of funding.
- The Executive Director Place and Economy advised that the funding secured would not be financially sustainable but would present an opportunity to review and test new approaches to community engagement.
- Members were advised that Officers would bring recommendations to the Committee that would be focused on building a core funded budget to assemble a fit for purpose and permanent communities' team.
- It was acknowledged that the quality of community work conducted by Good Neighbours Rural and Parish Council Liaison Group highlighted the benefit of a good working relationship with the council.
- Members referred to page 36 and asked how Officers were working with the rural areas. Members were advised that work would be ongoing and completed work had allowed for the Good Neighbours Rural and the Parish Council Liaison Groups to do their work without Council interference.
- Members queried why page 37 of the report stated that there would be no rural implications of the report. Officers acknowledged that this was an oversight.
- Members referred to the Council's role in rural and urban areas and sought clarification on what mechanisms were in place to ensure changes were reaching residents. Officers acknowledged the importance of reaching all residents and advised that there were various forms of engagement used.
- Members referred to the translation element of the engagement strategy and queried whether communications from the council were monitored for the use of technical terms. The Officer highlighted that getting communication right was key to successful engagement and that Officers would work to reduce the technical language in communications.
- Members queried whether work had been done to focus engagement at the university students. Members were advised that a new Youth Voice Partnership had been started and strategies were being developed.
- Members noted that the Parish Council Liaison Group work had helped to reduce costs to the Council and expressed the need for the Community Champions to have a single point of contact.
- Members also referred to the work of the Peterborough Council Voluntary Service (PCVS) and asked if Officers had spoken to the team. Members were advised that Officers held regular meetings with PCVS which were focused on improving community engagement.
- Members asked whether work had been done to determine why residents distrust the Council. Officers noted that this was a national issue that increased throughout Covid-19 and that work would need to be done to find out what the trust issues locally were.
- Members sought clarification on who were part of the hard-to-reach groups mentioned in the report. Members were advised that these groups were hard to identify as they would be less likely to engage with the Council.

- Members asked how it was being ensured that underrepresented groups were being targeted. It was advised that engagement strategies were different for different groups and further detail could be brought back to the committee.
- The Officer also advised that the engagement strategy would need to be both appropriate for all residents and one that staff understood.
- Members queried if any gaps in the response to the Council's engagement strategy had been identified. Members were advised that the census data had highlighted some areas for improvement but that it would need to be reviewed further.
- The Executive Director Place and Economy noted that it was the team's job to reach those who were not being reached but that the right mechanism would need to be used. It was acknowledged that a workshop would be a suitable forum for the Committee to help identify areas where engagement could be targeted more efficiently.

The following recommendation was made by Cllr John Fox and seconded by Cllr Fenner, that Peterborough City Council recruit a liaison officer to work with the Parish Councils and other community groups.

The Committee unanimously **AGREED** to the recommendation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that Peterborough City Council recruit a liaison officer to work with the Parish Councils and other community groups.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Consider and endorse the approach to community champions engagement and the recommendations for developing this approach in line with best practice and to support the cohesion work of the council.

The Committee also requested the following:

- That the Head of Think Communities find ways of engaging with the urban areas of Peterborough so that they are included in any decisions made that influence how the Council engages with communities, ensure all communication used to engage with communities is made accessible to all and include the university in the engagement strategy
- That the Executive Director Place and Economy consider running a workshop with the Committee to have an in-depth discussion to help Officers identify ways of reaching individuals that the Council are not aware of but need to support.

7. REVIEW OF 2021/2022 AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2022/2023

The Senior Democratic Services Officer presented the report which considered the relevant items presented in 2021/2022 to the former Growth, Environment and Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committees and looked at the work programme for the new municipal year 2022/23 to determine the Committees priorities. Members also noted the Terms of Reference for the Committee.

The Committee discussed the work programme and points raised included:

- Members referred to the former Communities Scrutiny Committee and its responsibility to meet as the Crime and Disorder Committee and noted that the work programme lacked Crime and Disorder items.
- Members referred to the police presence at the felling of Bretton Oak tree and asked if policing priorities would be an eligible item for the Crime and Disorder Committee.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Consider relevant items which were presented to the former Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee and the former Communities Scrutiny Committee during 2020/2021, which now fall within the remit of this committee, and make recommendations on the future monitoring of these items where necessary.
2. Determine its priorities and approve the draft work programme for 2022/2023 attached at Appendix 1.
3. Note the Recommendations Monitoring Report attached at Appendix 2 and consider if further monitoring of the recommendations made by the former Growth, Environment and Resources Scrutiny Committee and the former Communities Scrutiny Committee during the 2021/2022 municipal year, that now fall within the remit of this committee is required.
4. Note the Terms of Reference for this Committee as set out in Part 3, Section 4, Overview and Scrutiny Functions and in particular paragraph 2.1 item 2, Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee and paragraph 3.4 Crime and Disorder as attached at Appendix 3.

The Committee also requested the following:

- Review if policing priorities are part of the remit of the Crime and disorder Scrutiny Committee.

8. FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Senior Democratic Officer introduced the report which included the latest version of the Council's Forward Plan of Executive Decisions containing decisions that the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members would make during the forthcoming month. Members were invited to comment on the plan and where appropriate, identify any relevant areas for inclusion in the Committee's Work Programme.

- There were no points raised.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the current Forward Plan of Executive Decisions and **RESOLVED** to note the report.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Joint Scrutiny Committee was noted as being the 13 September 2022.

The next meeting of the Committee was noted as being the 20 September 2022.

CHAIR

Meeting began at 8:00pm and ended at 8:55pm

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