

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2008 AT THE TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Present: Councillors Holdich (Chairman), C Burton, Fazal, Goodwin, Lane, Lowndes, North, Sandford and Walsh

Also Present: Councillor Kreling

Officers Present: Shahin Ismail, Head of Legal Services
Jo Proud, Strategic Improvement Manager
Louise Tyers, Performance Scrutiny Manager
Alex Daynes, Cabinet Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Seaton and Todd.

2. Declaration of Interests and Whipping Declarations

Councillors Holdich and Walsh declared a personal interest as they were named as non-executive appointees in the Decision Notice.

3. Request for call-in of an Executive Decision – Appointments to the Greater Peterborough Partnership for the municipal year 2008/09

A letter from The Leader was circulated to the Committee that addressed the issues contained in the call-in notice.

Councillor Sandford introduced the call-in notice and, with consideration to the letter from The Leader, raised the main issues behind the call-in decision:

1. Of the fourteen councillors appointed to the GPP, none are from opposition groups. Opposition councillors should be able to represent the Council on the GPP as this would enhance the views put forward to the GPP from the Council and the Council representation would more accurately reflect the political make up of the Council.
2. The appointment of opposition councillors was not included in the 'alternative options considered' section of the Decision Notice.
3. Because of the length of time for the Decision notice to be produced following the meeting of the Group Secretaries, the attendance of any councillors in the interim period went against the terms of the constitution.

Councillor Sandford agreed that by withdrawing Councillor Elsey from the GPP Board to reconsider that appointment, as proposed in The Leader's letter, that would address one of the main reasons for the call-in. However, Councillor Sanford also raised the issue that the procedure of appointing Councillors to the GPP had not been followed correctly as no opposition Member was considered and nearly four months had passed since the appointments meeting.

The Head of Legal Services replied to Councillor Sandford's points:

1. The GPP reduced the numbers of non-executive seats available to the Council to ensure that the attendees were more able to take actions away from meetings and realise them.
2. No opposition Member was considered as no opposition Member was nominated at the appointments meeting to be considered.
3. The call-in meeting was not to consider who had been attending the meetings in the interim period and the constitutionality of this.

Following a request from a Committee Member, the head of Legal Services was to investigate why it had taken nearly four months to publish the Decision Notice. Councillor Sandford raised a concern that if all group secretaries were able to nominate someone to fill the vacancy left by Councillor Elsey, a conservative group member could be considered and appointed again. Councillor Holdich advised the Committee that the intention of The Leader was to appoint a non-conservative group member to the position. The Head of Legal Services confirmed this intention.

Councillor Lane suggested that, should a consensus not be reached again, the Leader could be able to appoint an opposition Member. Councillor Holdich reminded the Committee that whichever Councillors were nominated, they would have to be available to attend the meetings that were held during the day and would be expected to offer a corporate view from the Council, not a party political view.

Councillor Holdich proposed that the Decision be called-in and referred back to the decision taker for further consideration regarding the appointment of an opposition Member to the GPP. Councillor Sandford seconded this proposal.

ACTION AGREED

To call-in the Decision and refer it back to the decision taker for reconsideration, including recommendations for him to appoint a non-Conservative Member to the GPP Board.

The meeting began at 7pm and ended at 7.20pm.

CHAIRMAN