

**MINUTES OF THE GROWTH, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING
HELD AT 6.00PM, ON
TUESDAY, 16 JULY 2024
BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Committee Members Present: Asif Shaheed (Chair), Ormston (Vice-Chair), Ayres, Antunes (sub), Ellis, Farid, Hogg, Mahmood, Rangzeb, Ray, and Strangward.

Co-opted Members: Brennan, Sandford and Warne.

Youth Councillor: Kelly Jesus

Youth MP: Danielle Daboh

Officers Present: Madia Afzal, Democratic Services Officer
Rob Hill, Service Director Housing and Communities
Mandy Pullen, Service Director, People Services, BI and Transformation

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor John Fox, Cllr Antunes was in attendance as a substitute.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

3. MINUTES OF THE GROWTH, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITIES' SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 MARCH 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

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

There were no call-ins received.

5. APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS 2024/2025

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 James Nicholas Sandford, Parish Councillor Daral Brennan and Parish Councillor Barry Warne as Non-Voting Co-opted Members for the municipal year 2024/2025 to the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee in accordance with Part 3, Section 4 - Overview and Scrutiny Functions.

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

The Committee unanimously agreed to the appointments of James Nicholas Sandford, Parish Councillor Daral Brennan and Parish Councillor Barry Warne as Non-Voting Co-opted Members for the municipal year 2024/2025 to the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

AGREED ACTIONS:

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

1. Appoint James Nicholas Sandford to the Committee as an Independent Co-opted Member with no voting rights for the municipal year 2023/2024. Appointment to be reviewed annually at the beginning of the next municipal year.
2. Appoint Parish Councillor Daral Brennan as an Independent Co-opted Member with no voting rights to represent the rural area for the municipal year 2023/2024. Appointment to be reviewed annually at the beginning of the next municipal year.
3. Appoint Parish Councillor Barry Warne as an Independent Co-opted Member with no voting rights to represent the rural area for the municipal year 2023/2024. Appointment to be reviewed annually at the beginning of the next municipal year.

6. REVIEW OF 2023/2024 AND DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2024/2025

The Democratic Services Officer presented the report which considered the 2023/2024 year in review and looked at the work programme for the new municipal year 2024/25 to determine the Committees priorities. Members also noted the Terms of Reference for the Committee.

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

- The Committee requested a full report on skills.
- The Committee were advised that the report was scheduled for the 16th of July meeting. However, it had been withdrawn due to Officer absence.
- Members were further advised that the report would be re-listed on the Committee's Work Programme and presented at a later meeting.
- Members were assured that the future report would incorporate Further Education and Higher Education (City College, Peterborough College and ARU).
- On skills, the Committee queried whether it was worth meeting as a Joint Scrutiny with the Children's and Education Scrutiny Committee given the cross-over and interest from both Committees.
- Officers agreed to liaise with Democratic Services and report back to Members.
- On the Proposed Disposal of the Walton Community Centre decision, Officers agreed to update Members on the out of hours access for residents.
- Clarification on the Draft Local Plan decision - KEY/17JUNE24/03 was sought. In response, Members were assured that they would be updated following the Cabinet meeting in September.

AGREED ACTIONS:

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

1. Considers relevant items which were presented to the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee during 2023/2024 and makes recommendations on the future monitoring of these items where necessary.
2. Notes the Recommendations Monitoring Report attached at Appendix 2 and considers if further monitoring of the relevant recommendations made by the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee during 2023/2024 municipal year is required.
3. Determines its priorities and approves the draft work programme for 2024/2025 attached at Appendix 3.
4. Notes the Terms of Reference for this Committee as set out in Part 3, Section 4, Overview and Scrutiny Functions attached at Appendix 4 and in particular paragraph 2.1 item 4, Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee also requested that Officers:

- Provide a full report on Skills. Report to incorporate Further Education and Higher Education (City College, Peterborough College and ARU).
- Consider a Joint Meeting with the Children's and Education Scrutiny Committee on Skills.
- Update the Committee on the proposed disposal of the Walton Community Centre and the out of hours access for residents.
- Update Members on the Draft Local Plan following the Cabinet meeting in September.

7. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER FOUR/END OF YEAR (2023/2024) PERFORMANCE REPORT AND PRODUCTIVITY PLAN

The Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee received a report in relation to the Quarterly update on the council's Corporate Performance.

The report sought to provide an update on the council's corporate performance in line with the priority outcomes as set out in the Sustainable Future City Council Strategy 2022-25.

The Service Director, People Services, BI and Transformation introduced the report and key points raised included:

- It was noted that regular reporting on performance in Peterborough had begun in 2023.
- Members were advised that the report listed the authority's achievements and areas for development against the performance indicators.
- Reference was made to the key priorities on page 2 of the report.

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

- On key achievements on each of the areas, the Committee requested information on the authority's goals and how the city is performing against the plan as opposed to the national average.
- The Officer agreed to incorporate the Committee's request within future reports on performance.
- The Committee queried the challenges in respect to obtaining the round figures for the university as well as the next steps. The Officer agreed to update the Committee via email.

- On the formatting of the report, the Committee requested that future reports be paginated. The Officer Confirmed that future reports on performance would be paginated.
- Clarification on the pathways to employment for young people and further information on the strategic plan was sought. The Officer agreed to update Members via email.
- On the Education, Health and Care Plans under the Education and Skills for all section, the Committee suggested that reference be made to highly talented children with learning disabilities as these children were often ignored.
- On the smoking cessation service under the Health and Wellbeing section of the report, the Committee queried why the number of vape shops in Peterborough had increased although the effects of vaping were well known.
- In response, the Committee were advised that Officers were working with Planning to destabilise the proliferation of such stores and Members were updated on the cumulative impact areas.
- Furthermore, the Committees concerns were acknowledged, and Members were encouraged to report stores outside of the cumulative impact areas.
- The Committee queried whether the cumulative impact areas covered the city centre. The Officer agreed to provide clarification via email.
- On the occupancy of market stalls and whether unused stalls can be re-allocated, the Committee's concerns on unoccupancy were acknowledged and the directorate's plans to promote and expand the markets were outlined.
- In terms of the reallocation of unused stalls, the Officer agreed to provide clarification via email.
- On the challenges in respect to the closure of the Regional Fitness and Swimming Centre and the alternatives solutions to keep the community active, the Committee were advised that alternative arrangements had been made for swimming provisions at various locations including Stanground.
- On the replacement Regional Swimming Pool, it was noted that a proposal had been drafted for Cabinet in September.
- Clarification on the household recycling figures was sought and Members queried how these figures compared to previous years/the national average. In response, the Officer agreed to update Members via email.
- The Committee queried the completion of the Economic Strategy and Skills Strategy and whether these would be considered by the Growth, Resources, and Communities Scrutiny Committee. The Officer agreed to update Members via email.
- On the fly tipping targets and the source for the increase, the Committee's concerns were acknowledged and the Officer agreed to provide clarification via email.
- In terms of the Committee's query on the authority's 2030 net-zero target and whether the objective ought to be kept within the report given the authority's current position, Officers agreed to provide clarity via email.
- On rough sleeping, it was noted that the barriers would remain in plan and that the number of rough sleepers had decreased as a result of the barriers. The engagement work with rough sleepers was also outlined.
- The Committee sought clarification on the funding for housing given the issues around housing availability.
- The Service Director for Housing and Communities acknowledged the supply and funding issues and Members were referred to ongoing projects such as the Draft Local which sought to address the housing issues.
- With respect to the query on accommodation for care leavers, the Officer agreed to speak with the Director for Education and report back via email.

- Concerns were raised around the expenditure on agency workers. Members also sought clarification on the reasoning behind the reliance on agency workers and the high turnover of staff.
- The Committee's concerns were acknowledged, and it was confirmed that the authority had seen a reduction in the number of agency workers. The Committee were further advised that work in respect of recruitment and retention was underway due to its ongoing impact on all service areas.
- On the installation of electric charging points and whether targets were being met, the Officer agreed to provide a response via email.
- On how we serve and the lack of improvements in respect to diversity, the Committee queried which council employees the statistics were referring to and the Officer confirmed it was internal and external diversity.
- On the cloud migration query, Officers agreed to liaise with colleagues in IT to provide clarification on the cloud migration.
- Freedom of information requests had gone up with a 66% increase in the volume, but no new members of staff had been recruited to deal with the increase.
- Members were assured that FOI targets were being met despite the increase in requests.
- Members to be updated on the roll-out of AI within the Planning Department.

AGREED ACTIONS:

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

It is recommended that the Committee note and comment on the Corporate Performance Report for Quarter Four, 2023/24 and the related Productivity Plan, approved for submission to DLUHC by Cabinet.

The Committee also requested that Officers:

- Provide clarification on the goals.
- Provide clarification on the challenges around obtaining the figures and the next steps for the university.
- On the formatting of the report, the Committee requested that future reports be paginated.
- Provide clarification on the pathways to employment for young people and further information on the strategic plan.
- Provide clarification on cumulative impact areas and whether they cover the city centre (re vaping).
- Provide clarification on the occupancy of market stalls and whether unused stalls can be re-allocated.
- Update Members on the household recycling figures and how these compare to previous years/the national average.
- Provide clarification on the completion of the Economic Strategy and Skills Strategy and whether these will be considered by the Growth, Resources, and Communities Scrutiny Committee.
- Update Members on fly tipping targets and the source for the increase.
- Provide clarity on the authority's 2030 net-zero target and whether the objective ought to be kept within the report given the authority's current position.
- Speak with the Director for Education to provide clarification on the housing supply/care leaver issue.

- Provide clarification on the installation of electric charging points/whether targets are being met.
- Liaise with colleagues in IT to provide clarification on the cloud migration (whether business critical services are being transferred first).
- Report back on the AI Policy and Strategy. Members to be updated on the roll-out of AI within the Planning Department.

8. FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Chair 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.

AGREED ACTIONS:

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

It is recommended that the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee considers the current Forward Plan of Executive Decisions and identifies any relevant items for inclusion within their work programme or request further information.

The Committee also requested that Officers:

- Draft Local Plan - KEY/17JUNE24/03 - Officers to consider an extraordinary meeting, extraordinary meeting to cut across various Committees.
- Officers to provide clarity on the scale and impact of the Write-off of irrecoverable debts in excess of £10,000 (biannual process) - KEY/22APRIL24/01 decision.
- Update on Ken Stimpson Academisation - Officers to consider bringing this to the Growth, Resources and Communities Scrutiny Committee given its significant community ramifications.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was noted as being 17 September 2024.

CHAIR

Meeting started at 6.00pm and finished at 6:48pm