



Minutes of a meeting of the **RESOURCES SCRUTINY PANEL** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham, at 7.00 pm on Thursday, 11 December 2014.

Present: Mr J M Lammie - Chairman (in the Chair)  
Mr S Asplin  
Mr R Clifton  
Mr J R Munton  
Mr C A Parsons  
Mrs C L Vernon  
Miss G Waller

In attendance: Mr T C King Portfolio Holder for Places (Development) and Finance  
Mr M D A Pocock Portfolio Holder for Places (Environment and Transport) and Resources

Officers present: Mr S Della Rocca Assistant Director for Resources – Finance  
Mrs A Grinney Revenue and Benefits Manager  
Miss S Bingham Governance Co-ordinator  
Miss S Croad Corporate Support Officer

Apologies: Mr W J Cross  
Mr D C Hollis  
Mr D L Richardson

## **542 RECORD OF MEETING**

The Record of the Meeting of the Resources Scrutiny Panel held on 4 September 2014, copies of which had been previously circulated, was confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

## **543 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Clifton declared that he is a Director for a welfare work provider which may affect his participation in the Local Welfare Crisis Provision item on the agenda.

## **544 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS**

No petitions, Deputations or Questions had been received from Members of the public.

## **545 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS**

No Questions had been received from Members.

**546 NOTICES OF MOTION FROM MEMBERS**

No Notices of Motion had been received from Members.

**547 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE PANEL FOR A DECISION IN RELATION TO A CALL IN OF A DECISION**

No matter was referred to the Panel for a decision in relation to call in of a decision in accordance with Procedure Rule 206.

**548 QUARTER 2 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT 2014/15**

Report No. 245/2014 from the Director for Resources was received the purpose of which was to report on how the Council was performing against its revenue and capital budgets and report a forecast year end outturn position as at the 30 September 2014.

The Chairman, Mr Lammie, invited the Portfolio Holder for Places (Development) and Finance, Mr King, to introduce the report.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- i. That the change in approach to the underspend of £75,000 on the Discretionary Fund was an excellent proposal;
- ii. That Rutland County Council (RCC) could be more efficient in referring items to legal but as far as possible officers do attempt to assess legal implications before taking advice;
- iii. That not all reports to Cabinet may require legal advice from Peterborough but the time frames given allowed for this service to be undertaken and officers are instructed to obtain this advice (which covers constitutional and legal advice) unless in exceptional cases it is not required;
- iv. That the forecast included the cost of the interim arrangements in place for the Audit service. RCC have agreed to engage with a recruitment consultant to see if a suitable candidate could be found but options for the future are still being examined.

**AGREED:**

- i. The Panel noted the contents of Report 245/2014.

**549 QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT 2014/15**

Report No. 239/2014 from the Chief Executive was received the purpose of which was to report on the Council's Performance for the second quarter of 2014/15.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

Portfolio Holder for Places (Environment and Transport) and Resources, Mr Pocock informed the Panel that item 11, IT Strategy had been taken off the agenda due to Mrs Mogg being absent due to illness. Mr Pocock is to receive

a briefing on the IT review shortly. This will be added to a future meeting agenda to keep the Panel fully informed.

- i. That the time frame given for distribution of meeting papers was for electronic distribution and availability in reception.
- ii. That there is a draft budget proposal for the RCC website to be updated to be more accessible for staff and the public. This will include updates to the main website and to the Swift system for Development Control;
- iii. That any updates to the website will be undertaken by an external company;
- iv. That the website could be more accessible for other forms of technology including Tablets and Smart Phones.

**AGREED:**

- i. The panel noted the contents of Report 239/2014.

**550 CORPORATE SUPPORT TEAM – 6 MONTH REVIEW**

Report no. 266/2014 from the Director of Resources was received the purpose of which was to provide an update on the recent review of the Council's Corporate Support Team for the period January to June 2014.

The Chairman, Mr Lammie, invited the Portfolio Holder for Places (Environment and Transport) and Resources, Mr Pocock, to introduce the report.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- i. The panel asked what enhancements had been made to the Scrutiny process. A written response will be provided to the Panel;
- ii. The additional knowledge base of the Constitution had been extremely useful;
- iii. A discussion took place regarding Senior Management undertaking their own administrative work and whether this was something that the Corporate Support Team should be completing;
- iv. That the Corporate Support team be thanked for the support given to new Members;
- v. That it was good to see an increased resilience within the team;
- vi. That Diane Baker, Head of Corporate Governance, will circulate a survey to all Elected Members for their comments on their views of the support offered from the Corporate Support Team;
- vii. Concern was raised regarding Inspection Readiness work and its impact on all Directorates and whether there was more than one inspection taking place. A written response will be provided to the Panel.

**AGREED:**

- i. The panel noted the contents of Report 266/2014.

## 551 LOCAL WELFARE CRISIS PROVISION

Report no. 1/2015 from the Director of Resources was received the purpose of which was to present Cabinet with a review of the current local welfare crisis scheme and to consider the options for the scheme for 2015/16 onwards with regard to the latest information available.

The Chairman, Mr Lammie, invited the Portfolio Holder for Places (Development) and Finance, Mr King, to introduce the report.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- i. That a Rutland swap website could be introduced to allow more accessibility for items of need;
- ii. That the budget for this project is small and finding an organisation to organise the purchase, transportation, fitting and electrical testing of items could prove difficult;
- iii. That some people do not have access into Oakham so may struggle collecting funds;
- iv. Concern was raised that Parish Councils were not providing sufficient support to Welfare Crisis Provision. Elected Members and Officers have attended the Parish Council Forum on several occasions to promote this initiative but with limited success;
- v. That the number of claims received for electrical goods in quarters 1 and 2 was low and cash and voucher support was more prominent;
- vi. The panel was advised that Luton had introduced a voluntary group where second hand items were taken and refurbished. These items were then sold via a shop. It was queried as to whether Oakham could adopt a similar approach and that this could give opportunity for employment;
- vii. Councillor Clifton asked whether the Council worked with Welfare to Work providers who can also provide financial support to those looking for employment. Officers agreed to look into this;
- viii. The panel asked for a more specific area breakdown of the percentage of awards given within their wards. This will be provided by Mr S Della Rocca, Assistant Director Finance;
- ix. The panel asked for feedback on the winter fuel allowance project which was being undertaken by the High Sheriff of Rutland;
- x. Councillor Clifton offered his expertise and support regarding work programme providers within Rutland and that he would be happy to meet with the Chief Executive regarding his experience of working with the voluntary sector;
- xi. The Committee was supportive of the scheme continuing and the revisions to policy subject to the comment made in point vii) being resolved.

### AGREED

- i. The panel noted the contents of Report 1/2015.

**552 REVIEW OF FORWARD PLAN**

The Forward Plan was noted.

**553 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

No items of urgent business had been previously notified to the person presiding.

**554 DATE AND PREVIEW OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 14 January 2015 - Budget

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Chairman closed the meeting at 8:40pm

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