



Rutland County Council

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP.

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Minutes of the **MEETING of the PLACES SCRUTINY PANEL** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HP on Thursday, 15th September, 2016 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Mr J Lammie Mr E Baines
Mr N Begy Mr O Bird
Mr M Oxley Mr A Stewart
Mr K Thomas Mrs D MacDuff

ABSENT: Mr W J Cross Mr A Mann

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr D Brown Director for Places (Environment, Planning and Transport)
Mr A Merry Finance Manager
Mrs E Odabas Transport Operations Manager
Mrs S Ramsay Corporate Support Officer

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr O Hemsley Portfolio Holder for Resources (excluding Finance), Culture, Sport & Recreation, Tourism and Housing
Mr T King Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Development
Mr T Mathias Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Places (Highways, Environment, Transport and Community Safety) and Market Towns
Miss G Waller

260 RECORD OF MEETING

The Record of the Meeting of the Places Scrutiny Panel held on 7 July 2016, copies of which had been previously circulated were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

261 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declaration of Interest were received.

262 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

No petitions, declarations or questions were received from members of the public.

263 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS

No questions were received from members.

264 NOTICES OF MOTION FROM MEMBERS

No notices of motion were received from members.

265 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE PANEL FOR A DECISION IN RELATION TO 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.

266 QUARTER 1 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT

Report No. 133/2016 from the Director for Resources was received.

The Portfolio Holder, Mr Mathias, invited members to ask questions on the report.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- i. That the figure in the revenue budget listed as Appropriations was not actual income and was the figure for depreciation. Income received from Section 106 monies and sale of assets would be shown in capital reserves and not the revenue budget.
- ii. A breakdown of monies allocated to each of the schemes approved under the Capital Allocation Project Board was requested by members. The Portfolio Holder, Mr King, advised that this was being revised at present and a list would be provided by the Finance department.
- iii. Members requested an explanation as to the difference in the figures for investment at Oakham Enterprise Park, Report 100/2016 authorised £500,000 (shown on page 16 of the report) and the Detailed Capital Programme at Appendix 1 has an allocation of £600,000 (page 47). The Portfolio Holder, Mr King, explained that the £500,000 was the figure approved by Cabinet and that a further £100,000 was required for a further project which had been withdrawn since the publication of the Quarter 1 report. The £100,000 would not be included in the Quarter 2 report when published.
- iv. Members queried a request for S106 education monies at Oakham Enterprise park, an amount of £15,000 was stated at paragraph 2.2.3 of the report but a detailed explanation of the spend was not included. Mr King advised that this may be for a pottery facility for the Rutland Adult Learning Service (RALS) but would clarify this at a later stage.*
- v. Oakham Castle – an apparent halt to works on the curtain walls was raised by members on behalf of the public living opposite the site. The Portfolio Holders, Mr Hemsley and Mr King, advised that a meeting with Heritage Lottery to discuss works was to take place and following this meeting they would be in a better position to advise members accordingly. This would be provided to members outside of the meeting.
- vi. The overspend in waste management was due to the increase in the price per tonne for onward disposal and a general increase in waste being produced across the county, both of these factors were out of the Council's control.

AGREED:

1. That the Panel NOTED the contents of Report No. 133/2016
2. That information due to be provided outside of the meeting were to be circulated to all members of Council.

* Following the close of the meeting Mr King advised the Chairman that the £15,000 noted at point iv. above was delegated to top up the agreed £55,000 funding allocated to provide a training kitchen which is being leased to the a private provider at Oakham Enterprise Park.

267 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

Report No. 150/2016 from the Chief Executive was received.

The Portfolio Holder, Mr Mathias, invited questions / observations from the Panel.

AGREED:

1. That the contents of the report be **NOTED**.

268 HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY CONSULTATION

Report No. 156/2016 from the Director for Places was received.

The Portfolio Holder, Mr Mathias, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to allow Scrutiny to make comments or suggest amendments to the policy before it was presented to Cabinet.

The following points were raised during discussion:

The Transport Task and Finish Group report contained 20 recommendations which were categorised and some of which had been implemented before this report was prepared. The work of the task and finish group included the people review and gave further recommendations including the transport review. It was suggested that the members of the Task and Finish group meet with the Portfolio Holder and Officers outside of Scrutiny to get an understanding of how the group's recommendations had been incorporated into the Transport Review

A £100,000 grant had been received from the Department of Transport and this grant enabled the review to start in earnest in early 2016, a full report on the review would be presented in due course. Members were advised that significant transport savings had already been made without affecting the service provided.

The Home to School Transport Review being considered did not include Post 16 Transport and was a small part of the broader Transport Review.

Members were disappointed at the lack of consultation responses, the Portfolio Holder, Mr Mathias, advised that this would have been less if not for member comments, the consultation went through all relevant channels but very little response received.

Members supported the inclusion of a check sheet for routes as part of the safe route assessment process following issues with a route between the Ketton and Normanton wards. The route had previously been deemed safe but on re-inspection by Mr Brown this was the case and the route had been deemed unsafe due to vegetation growth.

It was felt that the amount of notice given should transport arrangements need to be changed may not always be sufficient, particularly where the child in question had special needs and may not be able to adjust to a last minute change to their regime. The Transport Operations Manager, Mrs Odabas, advised members that any changes made to travel arrangements were done in conjunction with the relevant Case Officer and would need a manager's authority before it could be implemented. She also advised that changes could not be made without response from affected families and sometimes this response was not always forthcoming which could add to the time allowed and result in less time being available for notification of the change.

Members asked clarification on the use of seatbelts (where fitted) as paragraph 5.1 of the report (page 15) stated that seatbelts must be worn by those 14 or over but there was no legal requirement for 3-13 year olds to do so. On page 22 of the report (Appendix C) states "Always wear the seatbelt provided and store it properly at the end of the journey". Mrs Odabas advised that the wording on page 15 was directly quoting seatbelt law and that on page 22 was the Council's guidance. On primary school routes the driver will ask children to use their belts and if they do not do so this would be reported to the school on arrival to be fed back to parents. Members were advised that all contractors invited to tender for a contract have been asked to include a 10 minute stopover to allow for checks to be made to ensure seatbelts are being worn.

Policy states that where a child moves house for a reason that was not parental choice then Home to School transport would only be provided if that child was in the final year at secondary school. Members felt that this could be detrimental to the child as it was, in fact, the last two years (GCSE years) that were important as a change in school may mean a different examination board and a different curriculum, having this change in the middle of a GCSE course could adversely affect students.

The appeals process detailed on page 17 of the report allows 20 days for parents to request an appeal and then 20 days for officers to review the decision and provide written notification to the parents at stage one and another 20 days at stage two. This could mean a family would have a wait of 60 working days until resolution was found. Members felt that this was too long and asked if, and how, it could be reduced. Mrs Odabas advised that officer time was set to match time allowed for parents but that this could be shortened to 10 days each instead of 20, this would bring the process in line with council procedure on complaints. A request to shorten the time taken to convene an Appeals Panel was also put forward, Mr Brown advised that he would need to consult the Corporate Support Team in this regard as they would be responsible for arranging this and would be able to advise accordingly.

Miss Waller asked if transport was provided for any year 10 or 11 students taking part in work experience, she felt that it may limit their choice of employer if they were restricted to those only accessible on foot. Mr Mathias advised that this would need more research at which point Miss Waller asked if officers could check with schools to see if this had been an issue they had encountered before taking it forward.

Following further discussion members **RECOMMENDED** the following amendments to the document that would be presented to Cabinet:

- a) Inclusion of a check sheet for the walking route safety assessments;
- b) Amending the time allowed for Stage one appeals to 10 days for officers;
- c) Extending the time frame in paragraph 3.10 for "Pupils who move address permanently during their final year at school" to include the final two years at school.
- d) Reasonable notice to be given to parents of SEND children before changes are made to transport.

269 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS WORKING GROUP

The Chairman of the Panel, Mr Lammie, advised that at the last meeting the Panel chose to take Neighbourhood Planning forward as a task and finish group. The Panel were asked to consider the draft Terms of Reference for the working group which had been provided by the lead officer Roger Ranson.

A meeting with the officer and task and finish group members was to be arranged as soon as possible and information gathered would be fed back to members at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Panel.

AGREED:

- i) That the Terms of Reference for the Task and Finish Group be approved.

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Mr Stewart left the meeting and did not return.

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270 SCRUTINY PROGRAMME 2016/17 & REVIEW OF FORWARD PLAN

Agenda items for the meeting to be held on Thursday 24 November 2016:

- i) Poverty in Rutland sub group
- ii) Neighbourhood Plans Task and Finish Group Update
- iii) Revised Signs Policy
- iv) Highways Asset Management Plan

271 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

272 DATE AND PREVIEW OF NEXT MEETING

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The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.52 pm.

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