



# Rutland County Council

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Minutes of the **MEETING of the STRATEGIC OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HP on Thursday, 21st September, 2023 at 7.00 pm

**PRESENT** Councillor R Ross (Chair)  
Councillor L Stephenson (Vice Chair)  
Councillor T Carr  
Councillor M Chatfield  
Councillor K Corby  
Councillor H Edwards  
Councillor R Payne  
Councillor R Powell

**APOLOGIES** Councillor S Lambert  
Councillor K Payne  
Peter French Diocesan Deputy Director of Education,  
Dioceses of Peterborough

## **STATUTORY CO-OPTED MEMBERS – EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVES**

### **PRESENT**

Andreas Menzies Roman Catholic Diocese

### **PORTFOLIO HOLDERS PRESENT**

Councillor T Smith Portfolio Holder for Children's Services  
Councillor C Wise Portfolio Holder for Highways, Transport  
and the Environment

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

Dawn Godfrey Strategic Director of Children and Families  
Penny Sharp Strategic Director of Places  
Bernadette Caffrey Head of Early Help, SEND and Inclusion  
Emma Odabas Interim Senior Transport Manager  
Jane Narey (Clerk) Scrutiny Officer

### **ATTENDED**

Councillor A Brown Chairman of the Council and Chair of the  
Economic Strategy Task and Finish Group

## **1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES RECEIVED**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked Councillor Nick Begy for his service to the committee and welcomed his replacement, Councillor Kevin Corby. Apologies were noted from Councillor Karen Payne, Councillor Stephen Lambert and Mr Peter French. Councillor Raymond Payne attended the meeting as Councillor Lambert's representative.

## **2 RECORD OF MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023 were approved as an accurate record.

## **3 ACTIONS ARISING**

There were no actions from the previous meeting.

## **4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **5 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS**

No petitions, deputations or questions were received.

## **6 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS**

No questions with notice with notice were received from Members.

## **7 NOTICES OF MOTION FROM MEMBERS**

No notices of motion were received from Members.

## **8 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO THE CALL-IN OF A DECISION**

No call-ins were received.

## **9 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS/OUTCOMES**

The recommendations from the Economic Strategy Task and Finish Group were presented to Cabinet on the 15<sup>th</sup> August 2023 and the response was noted.

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Councillor Hannah Edwards joined the meeting at 7.04 p.m.

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## **10 REVIEW OF THE WORK PLAN**

### **A) PROPOSED ITEMS FOR SCRUTINISING**

The Chair confirmed that two proposal forms had been received for items to be added to the Committee's work plan:

#### **1. Charging for Care and Support Policy**

- It was agreed that the item should be added to the Committee's work plan for the Committee's meeting on the 8th February 2024 due to its Extent (it would affect a number of Rutland residents) and that it would be a matter of Public Interest.

- The Chair proposed that the Scrutiny Committee should also review the draft public questionnaire prior to its submission to Cabinet on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- a) **APPROVED** the inclusion of the Charging for Care and Support Policy to the Committee's work plan for discussion at its meeting on the 8th February 2024.
  - b) **AGREED** that the draft public questionnaire should be reviewed by the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to its submission to Cabinet on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023.
2. Oversight provided by the Rutland Health and Wellbeing Board in the development of the plan for future health service provision for Rutland residents.
- The Chair informed members that the Strategic Director of Adult Services and Health had attended the Committee's pre-meeting and provided additional information to members.
  - It was noted that though this matter was of Public Interest, it was questionable as to what impact the Scrutiny Committee could have by scrutinising it.
  - The Chair proposed that the item should not be added to the Committee's work plan. Instead, a plan of health responsibilities and key decisions should be presented to the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- a) **DECLINED** to include 'Oversight provided by the Rutland Health and Wellbeing Board in the development of the plan for future health service provision for Rutland residents' to the Committee's work plan.
- b) **AGREED** that a plan of health responsibilities and key decisions, which detailed all the current health plans, identified whose plans they were, showed how they all fitted together and detailed the development process for the current five-year plan for Rutland through to its completed form would be added to the Committee's work plan for discussion at its meeting on the 23rd November 2023.

## **11 SEND PROGRAMME UPDATE**

Report No. 138/2023 was received from Dawn Godfrey, Strategic Director of Children and Families. The report was presented by Councillor Tim Smith, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services and a presentation was received from Bernadette Caffrey, Head of Early Help, SEND and Inclusion (copy attached). During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- The aim of the DfE Delivering Better Value (DBV) Programme was to improve outcomes for SEND children and young people and deliver a balanced high needs block budget. Phase 1 of the DBV Programme had been completed.
- Rutland County Council (RCC) had been appointed joint lead alongside Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council for the East Midlands Change Partnership in relation to the SEND and AP national change programme

- Phase 2 of the Delivering Better Value Programme would run until March 2025 with regular reporting to the DfE. The first report, including financial forecasts was required by the DfE in February 2024.
- Councillor R Payne asked what support was being provided to armed forces families. The Strategic Director of Children and Families confirmed that SEND officers had been to Cyprus to meet the children of those armed forces families that would be moving to Kendrew Barracks over the summer 2023. Each child's needs and the level of support required had been identified to ensure a suitable school place was secured for when the family arrived.
- The Head of Early Help, SEND and Inclusion confirmed that an induction session had been arranged at Kendrew Barracks for the incoming families to be briefed about Children's Services and to meet the staff involved.

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Councillor Ross declared a non-pecuniary interest in that his wife had been a Special Educational Teacher

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- Councillor Stephenson proposed that the Scrutiny Committee should send a letter supporting the continuation of the 'statutory override' relating to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The 'statutory override' meant that any DSG deficit was not included in the Council's main revenue budget but this would cease in 2026.
- The Strategic Director of Children and Families confirmed that RCC had a good relationship with its health colleagues and that the new governance arrangements would only strengthen the strategic partnership relationships.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- a) **NOTED** the Area SEND inspection outcome and the Delivering Better Value (DBV) Programme progress.
- b) **ADVISED** how the Committee wished to be involved in the progress of the Delivering Better Value Implementation Plan.
- c) **AGREED** that the Committee would receive a report detailing the progress of the Delivering Better Value Implementation Plan at its meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024.
- d) **AGREED** that the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee would send a letter to the Member of Parliament / Minister of State for Education supporting the continuation of the 'statutory override' relating to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

## **12 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

It was proposed by the Chair that Agenda Item 14 B) – Asset Review Task and Finish Group was taken before Agenda Item 14 A) – Economic Strategy Task and Finish Group and that the public and press be excluded from the meeting in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as the following items of business were likely to lead to the disclosure of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). This was seconded and upon being put to the vote the motion was unanimously carried.

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The Chair closed the public meeting at 8.01 p.m.  
Dawn Godfrey, Strategic Director of Children and Families and Bernadette Caffrey,  
Head of Early Help, SEND and Inclusion left the meeting.

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**13 TRANSPORT NETWORK REVIEW BUSINESS CASE & POST-16 TRAVEL OPTIONS**

**14 ASSET REVIEW TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

**15 GROUP AND PANEL UPDATES**

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The Chair re-opened the public meeting at 9.06 p.m.

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**A) ECONOMIC STRATEGY TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

The final report of the Economic Strategy Task and Finish Group was presented by Councillor Andrew Brown, Chair of the Economic Strategy Task and Finish Group. During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- Councillor Brown informed attendees that both members and officers had found the Economic Strategy Task and Finish Group process beneficial. This was because the Task and Finish Group had started by being properly scoped with clear, realistic, timely and time limited objectives identified.
- All the meetings between members, officers and external partners had been very positive with all parties working in partnership.
- Members of the group had understood the topic under review and how it would affect the council and its residents.
- Positive questioning had led to positive and productive responses and this had resulted in the group providing recommendations regarding the new Economic Development Strategy.
- Councillor Brown expressed his thanks to members and officers for all their hard work and hoped that the Committee saw the Economic Strategy Task and Finish Group as an example of 'good practice' for future scrutiny task and finish groups.
- The Strategic Director of Places thanked the Group noting that it had been a positive process for officers as it had added value to what the Council wanted to achieve.

**RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- a) **APPROVED** the final report of the Economic Strategy Task and Finish Group.

**16 ANY URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

**17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday, 23rd November 2023 at 7.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber.

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**The Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.14 p.m.**

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