

## RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: JUNE 2012

Ref	Resolution	Response/Outcome	State of Play & Further Action Needed
Dec 11 Minute 65	<p><b>Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership</b> That the Scrutiny Officer be requested to invite a Board member of the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting due to be held on 13 March 2012.</p>	John Gourd, Chair of the Hertfordshire LEP has agreed to attend on a date to be confirmed	Arrangements to be confirmed
Dec 11 Minute 66	<p><b>Project Boards Task and Finish Group Report</b> That the recommendations contained in the report of the Task and Finish Group on Project Boards be supported.</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>1. Communication from project boards with members and outside stakeholders should be improved by following the Council's project management protocol on communications. The project manager should discuss with stakeholders their communication needs and act accordingly.</p> <p>2. Two types of project were recognised – those which are internal to NHDC in terms of their lack of obvious direct effect on service users, and those which are public facing and focus on issues of interest or concern to service users. For the internal type of project, the current composition of project boards is acceptable. However, for public facing projects, the terms of reference and composition of project boards should have greater member and stakeholder involvement, for example with area specific projects the project board should include a local member as well as the relevant portfolio holder.</p> <p>3. Decisions from project board meetings and updates on project milestones should be recorded and made accessible to members through the members' information service (MIS).</p>	<p>Cabinet considered the report on 24 January 2012 and asked for officers to bring proposals to the Cabinet meeting on 20 March where the report was reconsidered.</p> <p>On 20 March, Cabinet decided that the recommendations should be supported apart from recommendations 2 and 7; and made the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recommendation 1 should be supported, wherever possible;</li> <li>• for recommendation 3, the update reports should be made at appropriate stages in a project;</li> <li>• for recommendation 4, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can undertake scrutiny activity in accordance with the Council's constitution. Cabinet welcomes a proportionate approach to reporting and monitoring and with the</li> </ul>	Committee to consider Cabinet's response

	<p>4. There should be better scrutiny of project boards and of the setting up and outcomes of significant projects. Exception reports should be sent to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on general projects; and to area committees on area specific projects. Dates of scheduled meetings of project boards should be published so members can monitor progress more easily.</p> <p>5. The project assurance officer should have a more active role and input to the project board so that project risks and issues about progress are highlighted and dealt with in a timely manner.</p> <p>6. There should be a debriefing session at the end of each project so that any lessons to be learnt can be identified. These should be recorded in the project closure report; and all the lessons from projects to date should be collated into a single document and actively shared corporately.</p> <p>7. Project boards in NHDC are advisory bodies only and they should be re-named so their role is clear to members and the public. We suggest they be re-named project advisory boards.</p> <p>8. The gap in members' understanding of project boards should be addressed through an information note in MIS; and by including the topic in the new members' induction programme.</p>	<p>Council's decreasing resources such reporting should be undertaken where it can add value;</p> <p>Cabinet considered that recommendation 2 should not be supported. The composition of Project Boards was given very careful consideration in particular the role of members. There could be instances where the effects of a local project extended beyond local interests and it could be more beneficial to have a wider user perspective.</p> <p>Cabinet noted recommendation 7 but did not support it. They considered that the term <i>project board</i> should be retained, as this is the name that most organisations who adopt the Prince methodology use.</p>	
Jan 12 Min 74	<p><b>Presentation by the Portfolio Holder for Policy</b> That the scrutiny officer be requested to consider how the Committee could assess service reviews</p>	Scrutiny officer to discuss with colleagues and report to the Committee in June	Pending
Jan 12 Min 79	<p><b>Safeguarding Children</b> That progress made against the Council's application of the statutory</p>	Scrutiny Officer has written to Herts	Completed

	<p>duty, and particularly the Hertfordshire safeguarding function with regard to children be noted; That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees that sufficient and robust processes are in place for the application and review of safeguarding processes;</p> <p>That the Corporate Legal Manager be requested to discuss with the Leader of the Council designating the Portfolio Holder for Community Engagement and Rural Affairs as the Children's Champion.</p>	<p>County Council about the Committee's consideration of this issue</p> <p>Passed to Corporate Legal Manager to action</p>	<p>Pending</p>
Feb 12 Minute 89	<p><b>Presentation on Economic Development, Partnerships &amp; Transport</b> The Strategic Director of Planning, Housing and Enterprise to prepare a briefing paper regarding employment in the District for circulation to all members of the Committee</p>	<p>Report circulated to Committee</p>	<p>Completed</p>
Feb 12 Minute 90	<p><b>Update on the recommendations of the task and finish group on the implementation of the parking strategy</b> That the Community Development Officers (CDOs) be requested to include information regarding options to alleviate verge parking in their report to Area Committees as soon as possible;</p>	<p>Passed to CDOs for action</p>	<p>Pending</p>
Feb 12 Minute 93	<p><b>Task and Finish Group Report on Communication and Consultation with Members</b> That the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group be presented to Cabinet without alteration; <b>Recommendations</b> (1) The council's communication strategy should be redrafted to ensure staff are made aware of the importance of keeping elected members informed about developments and of dealing with members'</p>	<p>Cabinet decided that all of the recommendations should be supported apart from recommendation 5 and added the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recommendation 2 should be supported within the context of the</li> </ul>	<p>Committee to consider Cabinet's response</p>

<p>queries in a timely and effective way.</p> <p>(2) Local members should always be informed about local events beforehand, and a single communication with all members may be the easiest way of doing this. If only local members are to be informed, this may mean including all the members in a town or members representing adjacent wards.</p> <p>(3) The Council's sometimes defensive communications culture should be re-examined so that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) ideas and criticisms from all quarters can be evaluated objectively; and</li> <li>b) members can receive a full, frank and timely response to their inquiries.</li> </ol> <p>(4) The member/officer protocol should be redrafted to provide a clear statement of what members and officers should expect from each other, taking into account the recommendations of this task and finish group.</p> <p>(5) The council should put in place a system for monitoring response times to inquiries by e mail and by letter across the council (to both councillors and members of the public) so managers can make sure that its service standards are being met, and take corrective action when they are not.</p> <p>(6) The problems with the upgraded telephone system which has caused answerphone messages to be deleted should be corrected urgently.</p> <p>(7) There should be a central contact point for members to help them identify and contact the correct person for their inquiry: and that should be the council's Democratic Services Department.</p>	<p>Member / Officer Protocol and that officers should use their best endeavours to assess who should be informed;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recommendation 2.3(b) should be supported where possible unless there were legal or contractual constraints which would prevent information being disclosed;</li> <li>• in respect of recommendation 4, the Member / Officer Protocol should be reviewed and the protocol included in the induction for new Members;</li> <li>• the issues relating to recommendation 6 had now been resolved.</li> </ul> <p>Cabinet considered that recommendation 5 should not be supported as it would involve a disproportionate amount of officer time and therefore the existing proportionate mechanisms should be used instead.</p>	
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	<p>(8) There should be a single reference point on the intranet which officers can use to obtain members' contact details and their preferred method of contact.</p> <p>(9) The Council should explore whether access to NHDC e mails accounts could be improved when members were using other e mail accounts; and if they could reply with an NHDC address from their personal accounts.</p> <p>(10) The Council should explore whether it would be sufficient to operate its members' dispatch service once a week rather than twice.</p>		
Mar 12 Minute 103	<p><b>Police &amp; Crime Commissioner &amp; Associated Scrutiny Matters</b> That the Committee and Member Services Officer be requested to circulate a copy of the Police Authority Powerpoint presentation to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p>	Presentation circulated on 20 March	Completed
Mar 12 Minute 108	<p><b>Performance Indicator Monitoring Report at 31/12 2011</b> That the Human Resources Department be complimented on their work towards the reduction of sickness absence.</p>	Comments sent to HR Department	Completed
Mar 12 Minute 109	<p><b>Performance Management Arrangements and Targets for 2012/13</b> That, the performance indicators and associated targets to be reported throughout 2012/13, as set out in the report, be approved.</p>	Noted	Completed
Mar 12 Minute 110	<p><b>Priorities For The District 2012-2013</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That Cabinet acknowledge that additional pressure may be placed on the Community Development Officers due to the community responsibilities resulting from the Localism Act and that they be requested to monitor whether further resources may be required;</li> <li>• That the changing role of Town Centres and utilisation of</li> </ul>	The Portfolio Holder for Policy replied that, in respect of Recommendation (1), the Head of Paid Service considered pressures of work and staffing levels and this would continue to be the case.	Committee to consider Cabinet's response

	<p>Industrial Areas be reconsidered in order to encourage economic development and job creation;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That Cabinet be requested to reconsider a number of bullet points contained in the document to ensure that achievements are better expressed;</li> <li>• That greater reference be made to NHDC's work with partners by, wherever possible identifying the Partners and the achievements made by that partnership.</li> </ul>	In respect of Recommendations 2, 3 and 4 Cabinet resolved that officers, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Policy, be authorised to make minor alterations taking into account feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and other Members.	
Mar 12 Minute 111	<p><b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report</b> That the draft Annual Report for 2011/12, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved;</p> <p>That the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be authorised to sign off any further necessary changes to the Report, so that it can be presented in its final form to Annual Council on 17 May 2012.</p>	Slightly amended and updated report made to Annual Council on 17 May.	Completed
Mar 12 Minute 112	<p><b>Work Programme</b> That the Scrutiny Officer be requested to invite the Portfolio Holder for Waste, Recycling and the Environment to present to this Committee regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) How the amount of recycling would be increased;</li> <li>(ii) Grounds maintenance and amenity areas;</li> </ul> <p>That the report entitled "Shared Services – Detailed Business Case for Shared Services with East Herts DC and Stevenage BC" be considered by this Committee prior to consideration by Cabinet;</p> <p>That that there should only be one presentation per meeting and therefore Portfolio Holders should only be invited when there were no other presentations expected.</p>	<p>Cllr Burt invited to the Committee's meeting in June</p> <p>Added to work programme and scheduled for Committee's meeting on 24 July</p> <p>Noted</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p>

<p>Mar 12 Minute 113 &amp; 115</p>	<p><b>Future Office Accommodation Provision</b> That the recommendations contained in the report entitled Future Office Accommodation Provision be supported;</p> <p>That any investment in the building is critically assessed in terms of value for money as part of the design and specification work and subsequently by Cabinet;</p> <p>That estimated revenue savings arising from refurbishment options and environmental sustainability are clearly identified in any future report;</p> <p>That in considering the acquisition of a long lease or purchase of the building, the details of improvements, flexible use of the building and opportunities for income generation be assessed;</p> <p>That there was no benefit in separating the costs of refurbishment of different areas of the building as this will be the subject of detailed assessment and management of contracts</p>	<p>Cabinet resolved:</p> <p>(1) That, in the light of the current financial position, the option of purchasing the District Council Offices (DCO), or remaining on a longer lease (e.g. 25 years), be taken forward as the primary office accommodation option;</p> <p>(2) That a full structural survey be commissioned, at an approximate cost of £7,000, and any major issues or difficulties emerging, which would require additional investment to that outlined in Appendix A1 of the report, are reported back to Cabinet before any expenditure on a design and specification is incurred;</p> <p>(3) That, provided no major structural issues are forthcoming, external expertise be engaged, at an estimated cost of £20,000, to prepare an outline design and specification for refurbishment works to achieve environmental sustainability and improve the building condition, as estimated in Appendix A1 to the report, including measures to reduce running costs for the building;</p> <p>(4) That a further report be brought</p>	<p>Committee to consider Cabinet's response</p>
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