

# minutes



Meeting OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008 (commencing at 10.30 am)

## Membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

## COUNCILLORS

Edward Llewellyn-Jones (Chair)

Jen Cole	A	Peter D Prebble
Yvonne Davidson (Vice-Chair)		Andy Stewart
John Knight (Vice-Chair)		Chris Winterton (Vice-Chair)
A Joe Lonergan MBE		Brian Wombwell

## MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

## APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Joe Lonergan MBE and Peter D Prebble.

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor Jen Cole declared a personal interest in agenda item 4 – Response to School Attendance and Support Scrutiny Review.

## RESPONSE TO SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND SUPPORT SCRUTINY REVIEW

Councillor Joyce Bosnjak, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, introduced her response to the recommendations from the School Attendance and Support Select Committee. The Chair reported that he had received a letter from the Magistrates Court seeking further information about the suggestion of training for Magistrates. A letter had also been received from Rt. Hon. Jack Straw, Secretary of State for Justice. Rosie Parkinson, the Education Welfare Officer, indicated that the request for training for Magistrates was about them understanding the complexity of the cases. Councillor Bosnjak felt that there was a need for training of the court's legal advisors.

In response to a question, Rob Lancaster from the Children and Young People's Department stated that there was a range of alternative providers and that the

learning programmes were flexible. They recognised that not every child can be educated all the time in mainstream education.

In response to a question from Councillor Winterton, Rosie Parkinson stated that there were regular meetings between the police and education welfare officers but that the power to approach young people resided with the police. She pointed out that the approval of the managers of a shopping centre was needed to patrol there as the centres were private property. Councillor Winterton expressed concern that these patrols depended on police availability. Councillor Llewellyn-Jones commented that the select committee had felt that these patrols needed to be more frequent. It was pointed out that Community Protection Officers (CPOs) had been used in other areas and Members thought that this needed exploring.

It was agreed:-

1. That a further report be produced in December 2009 providing a review of the progress of the recommendations and update on the latest Department of Children, Schools and Families attendance data for Nottinghamshire schools.
2. That it be recommended that the possibility of using Community Protection Officers instead of police officers on attendance patrols be explored.

### **PROGRESS REPORT – EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCRUTINY REVIEW**

John Slater, the Service Director, Learning and Achievement in the Children and Young People's Services Department, gave a presentation to the Committee. He stated that between September 2006 and December 2008 there had been 102 head teacher appointments and of these 22 had been re-advertised. He indicated that the number that were re-advertised three or more times was only 5%. He pointed out however that the number of applications received was less than previously. The reason for this he felt was that in the past deputy's acted up as cover and there was an unstated grow your own policy. Now there was the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) which was a requirement to have a place in to apply for a first headship and there was a reluctance to do this. He outlined the response to this problem. The Aspiring Leaders Project was a mini-project with school management which encouraged people to look at their potential. There was a succession planning project in schools in 2009 to get governors to have a plan for the school. In addition Heads Count was a support mechanism for head teachers.

A comparison of the overall effectiveness of schools in Nottinghamshire at key stage 3 compared with our statistical neighbours and nationally was shown by John Slater. This showed that Nottinghamshire had far too many schools in the satisfactory band and not enough in good and outstanding compared with others. He added that the top quartile were improving but we did not have enough schools that added value. With regard to the overall effectiveness of primary schools he indicated that there were five in special measures, which were slightly above the national average but the County had the national average of primary schools in the good category. He referred to the National Challenge Initiative which the Prime Minister had announced in June 2008. This involved all schools with 30% or less achieving five or more A stars-C at GCSE. There were 13 schools in the County in this category and all the plans had been agreed by the Minister for Schools. There were 2 schools achieving below 20% - Magnus and Queen Elizabeth, and the Department was looking to see

if there was a need for a “structural solution.” He indicated that at Magnus there was now an executive board.

Mr Slater stated that the key stage 3 results were in disrepute and had now been abolished. Schools would in future report from internal monitoring. Overall he indicated that the Department’s view was that secondary schools in the County were improving. He added that the take up of teacher training had increased due to the credit crunch and that included math teachers as well. He added that he thought the difficulty of appointing head teachers was exaggerated.

In response to a question from Councillor Wombwell, John Slater indicated that the effectiveness of head teachers was now judged by an independent advisor. He added that when the school had an acting head teacher they were given extra support. In response to a question from Councillor Jen Cole, John Slater said that the statistics could not show qualitative data about head teacher appointments. He indicated that Ofsted’s judgement was that primary head teachers were good overall and that secondary ones were satisfactory.

In response to a question from Councillor John Knight, John Slater stated that in 2005 there were only 7 schools in the County which added value and now 18 did. In 2005 the authority was in the lowest quartile at secondary level (ranked 126/149) in England and had now improved to the third quartile in 2008 (105/149) and improving ahead of the national rate.

It was agreed that a further progress report be made to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 12 months time.

### **PROGRESS – STREET LIGHTING SCRUTINY REVIEW**

Consideration was given to a report which gave information regarding issues arising from recommendations made by the scrutiny review of street lighting. Additional information was provided by Suzanne Heydon, Service Manager Accident Investigation Unit, and Ray Dunajko, Acting Service Director, Planning and Sustainability about new street lighting in relation to highway safety and energy procurement.

In response to a question from Councillor Wombwell, Alan Allsop Principal Officer (Energy Management) from Communities Department stated that a decision was made at the start of the budget year on energy procurement so that there was budget certainty for the year. In response to a question from Councillor Andy Stewart, Alan Allsop stated that the contract ran for 2 years for buildings and 30 months for street lighting. It would then be possible to consider amalgamating the contracts.

It was agreed that a further report on energy prices be made in 9 months time.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN PERFORMANCE AND PERFORMANCE PLAN MANAGEMENT PROCESSES**

Consideration was given to a report on the County’s performances measured by a number of key performance indicators including Best Value Performance Indicators and National Indicators and the monitoring and management of performance in the County. Peter Elderton from the Chief Executive’s Department explained that performance management was the action taken by managers as a result of

information. He emphasised that the role of Members in performance management was vitally important. He stated that Adult Services had had a Performance Board which had been operating successfully and other departments were now establishing a similar Board. In response to a question from Councillor John Knight, Peter Elderton explained that the Performance Boards would consist of senior managers who would focus on performance and would feed into the corporate board. It was pointed out that there was no Member input on the Performance Board.

It was agreed:-

1. That the draft protocol on overview and scrutiny and performance management be agreed.
2. That a further report be made to the Committee in 4 months time on the Performance Boards and the political interface.

### **SCOPING REPORT FOR SCRUTINY REVIEW OF CONSULTATION ON BUDGET PROPOSALS 2009/10**

Consideration was given to a report with a draft scope for a scrutiny review of consultation on budget proposals for 2009/10.

It was agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee offer comments on the Cabinet's draft budget proposals and make observations on the detail of the consultation arrangements underpinning the budget preparation process.

### **BINGHAM HEALTH CENTRE**

Consideration was given to a report outlining details on proposals by NHS Nottinghamshire County for a 12 week consultation on proposals to relocate primary care services in Bingham, including feedback from the local Member.

It was agreed:-

1. That this proposal whilst a variation/development of the local NHS for which the public and patients should be involved does not require a review at this time.
2. That the interim response attached to the report be agreed and sent to NHS Nottinghamshire County for consideration, and
3. That NHS Nottinghamshire County be thanked for consulting the Committee and invited to provide feedback on progress with the proposal.

### **HUCKNALL GP PRACTICE MERGER**

Consideration was given to a report which outlined proposals for 2 GP practices in Hucknall to merge and form a single practice. Feedback from the local Members was reported.

It was agreed:-

1. That this proposal whilst a variation/development of the local NHS for which the public and patients should be involved does not require a review at this time.
2. That NHS Nottinghamshire County be thanked for consulting the Committee and invited to provide feedback on progress with the proposal.

## **RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY REVIEW – SKILLS: NOW AND THE FUTURE**

Consideration was given to a report which outlined the response from the Acting Service Director – Human Resources to one of the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review – Skills: Now and the Future.

It was agreed that a further report be produced in November 2009 as part of a review of the progress of implementing the recommendations.

## **MANAGING THE WORK PROGRAMME**

Councillor John Knight reported that the Committee had agreed to establish a review of services that help older people to maintain independence. He indicated that a meeting had been held to discuss this in more detail and they had concluded that there was no merit in carrying out a review on this at the present time. He suggested that a review be carried out of school meals instead.

It was agreed:-

1. That the review of services that help older people to maintain independence be discontinued.
2. That a Select Committee of 9 members (5 Labour, 3 Conservative and 1 Liberal Democrat) be established to review school meals.

The meeting closed at 12.58 pm.

## **CHAIR**

Ref: overview and scrutiny/m\_8dec08