

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 30 JULY 2018 - 2.30 PM



PRESENT: Councillor C Boden (Chairman), Councillor M Humphrey (Vice-Chairman), Councillor G Booth, Councillor S Clark, Councillor D Hodgson, Councillor K Mayor, Councillor S Tierney and Councillor C Seaton

APOLOGIES: Councillor S Count, Councillor K Owen and Councillor D Mason

Officers in attendance: Gary Garford (Corporate Director), Richard Cassidy (Corporate Director), Paul Medd (Chief Executive), Sam Anthony (Head of HR and OD), Jo Goodrum (Member Services & Governance Officer), Councillor Mrs Anne Hay (Portfolio Holder for Finance), Councillor David Oliver (Portfolio Holder for Growth, Community Safety and Heritage), Councillor Peter Murphy (Portfolio Holder for Environment) and Russel Beal

OSC9/18 PREVIOUS MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of 30 May 18 were confirmed and signed subject to the following comments.

- Councillor Booth highlighted that on page 6 of the minutes, item 18, the sentence should state his name as opposed to Councillor Bodens.
- Councillor Boden suggested that going forward, he would like to see 'matters Arising' as a standing agenda item, so that if there is anything from the minutes to be discussed, that there is the opportunity to do so.
- Councillor Boden asked Members whether it would be useful to have an action log so that points where actions are required are detailed in the log, so they do not get overlooked. There were 7 or 8 items in the last meeting where actions were needed which he understands are still to be completed.

OSC10/18 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN - ANNUAL REVIEW

1. Councillor Boden said that on the 18 July 2018, the Chief Executive, Paul Medd, received a letter from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, which is the annual letter which is received concerning complaints made to the Ombudsman and Councillor Boden stated that it would be helpful, if the letter could be an agenda item along with the details of the complaints. Councillor Boden stated that there were 13 complaints which were received in the 2017/18 financial year and there were 14 that were resolved and as a matter of good practice, it would be helpful for this item to be on the next agenda, so that they are a matter of public record and to give Members of the Committee the opportunity to ask questions.
2. The Chief Executive clarified that there are no reasons of confidentiality which would exclude this information from forming part of the next agenda and any information that is personal and would fall within the GDPR regulations would have already been redacted and to obtain a summary from the Ombudsman will be helpful for Members to be aware of.
3. Councillor Boden clarified that the information does not need to be made available for the September meeting as he will not be present at that meeting. Councillor Boden stated that this should also be an annual agenda item once the letter is received, as it is Councillor

Bodens understanding that the Local Government Ombudsman is going to change the emphasis of the letters in future to highlight where improvements can take place.

OSC11/18 MEMBER-LED REVIEW DISCUSSION

Councillor Boden stated that as far as Economic Development is concerned, a suggestion was made concerning cooperation with the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, however this did not meet with general Member approval and therefore the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have been asked to look at the entirety of the Economic Development Service and the resources which are required in order to achieve the objectives of the service.

Councillor Boden said that there are two major questions to answer:

What should the objectives be for the Service and how is the effectiveness of the Service measured and secondly what skills and resources are required to reach those objectives.

Members considered the Economic Development Member Led review presentation given by the Chief Executive which included possible key questions for the Review Team to consider including which Members of Overview and Scrutiny will form the Panel and also a suggested timetable to be considered including a delivery phase.

Members asked questions, made comments and received responses as follows;

1. Councillor Booth said that with regard to the timetable, this may well change once the Review Team has met and objectives have been set.
2. Councillor Boden asked for volunteers for the Member Led Review Team and stated that he anticipates there will be six meetings between September and December 2018.
3. Councillor Humphrey asked how many Members were required.
4. Councillor Boden clarified that he would like four Members.
5. Councillor Humphrey, Councillor Sam Clark, Councillor Tierney, Councillor Booth and Councillor Boden all agreed to form part of the Review Team.
6. Councillor Boden stated that with regard to the question as to whether Officer support would be required, he confirmed that yes, there would be a requirement for Officer support.
7. Councillor Booth commented that the Chief Executive had suggested that members of the existing ED team should support the review, however to obtain an independent view, whether the support the review team should have an independent support officer. Councillor Boden stated that the question is a valid point and the answer would depend on the quality of the input of the Members. The Officers will be there to give support to Members and would not influence Members decisions.
8. Councillor Boden stated that the Review Team, will be very grateful of any support received from Officers.
9. Councillor Boden commented that with regard to inviting External Stakeholders to give evidence, Members have already discussed this matter and have agreed that the Review Team would like to question Officers, as they have the in depth knowledge will be helpful to Members to ascertain the current position. With regard to local business leaders, it will be helpful to have both large and small business representatives. Representatives from the Farming and Associated Industries should also be invited, given the importance of farming and distribution, it is important to be able for that sector to voice their opinions. The final area to be considered is also the tourism work that is carried out.
10. Councillor Boden stated that he has already asked the Deputy Leader of East Cambridgeshire District Council, Anne Bailey to come to the Member Led Review Team to give evidence as to what actions East Cambridgeshire have done with regard to commercialisation of their own portfolio and also the setting up of trading companies and the income generation work that they have carried out in their area.
11. Councillor Booth commented that although East Cambridgeshire have been asked, it maybe

worth also considering the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk as it was the intended shared ED partner, which was agreed.

12. Councillor Booth stated that with regard to tourism, should a broader sector of the economy be considered, as 80% of the economy is driven by the service sector and tourism is a sub sector, so we need to be mindful of having the correct representation.
13. Councillor Booth stated that representatives of Members of the Public should also be invited to give their views and opinions.
14. Councillor Boden said that with regard to asking for the public's views it can be very useful to seek their opinions and would suggest a press release.
15. Councillor Boden stated that consideration should also be given to other Councillors, particularly the Growth Portfolio Holder, to have an input will also be useful.
16. Councillor Boden stated that with regard to the Service sector comment, he highlighted Tourism as this has often been separated and is most certainly part of the economy.
17. Councillor Booth stated that an additional stakeholder to be considered would be the Combined Authority, to ascertain their viewpoint.
18. The Chief Executive commented that in addition it maybe worth considering the work of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Commission and inviting a representative.
19. Councillor Boden asked Members to consider whether interim resources are required for Economic Development up to the Review delivery phase in Mid 2019. Councillor Boden commented that in his opinion he believed this was outside the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and he feels that the decision should be made by the Cabinet.
20. Councillor Booth commented that at the Cabinet meeting it was raised that an interim resource was not to be implemented.
21. Councillor Seaton commented that it is important to see results from the Committee before additional resource is considered.
22. Councillor Boden commented that he would be interested to find out an estimate of the what the financial effect for the Authority would be if a new factory or hotel came to the area to see what impact it would have on the Authorities revenue as an impact of NNDR sharing.
23. Gary Garford commented that this information was in the Cabinet report and it showed a matrix of what effect a small supermarket or a small factory would have. Councillor Boden agreed to discuss this with Gary Garford following the meeting.
24. Councillor Boden stated that the Combined Authority have provided £150,000, for the development of economic masterplans for the three Growing Fenland market Towns reports and therefore it is imperative to work in combination with this project. The three towns will come up with suggestions and ideas based on what it appropriate and there must be some joined up working in terms of decision making.
25. Councillor Booth commented it would be useful and helpful to Members to be given information on what legislation and what powers are available. Councillor Booth asked whether the rates can be 'flexed' locally. Councillor Boden asked whether there was a particular piece of legislation that Councillor Booth was referring to. Councillor Booth commented that he is unsure what powers and legislation is available for Councillors to be able to take action on that will assist the Member led Review Group.
26. Councillor Boden stated that although rates cannot be flexed there are supplements which are possible, but the NNDR is fixed but in certain areas it can be increased in various ways.
27. The Chief Executive commented that if it would be helpful for the Member Led Review Team, clarification could be provided on the discretion the council has around small business rate relief and if that discretion is applied and to what extent and what basis it has on the Councils revenue.
28. Councillor Booth commented that another example to be considered are Enterprise Zones which have been discussed previously with regard to a number of companies moving out of this area to Enterprise Zones. Councillor Boden agreed that Lancaster Way Enterprise Zone has worked very well in Ely, and to receive information and evidence about them will be very helpful.
29. The Chief Executive commented that the Government's commitment to Enterprise Zones

appears to be waning, however if it is believed that the concept of an Enterprise Zone may be beneficial locally there is nothing to prevent you from using local discretion. If the review team thought setting up a zone or zones as a possible outcome, for businesses to relocate to, from other parts of the district to gain benefit from the five year NNDR holiday period.

30. Councillor Boden commented that with regard to how the Council can shape economic development and the regeneration of Fenland there are a couple of questions that can be asked including the relationship between economic development and planning with regard to the potential revision of the local plan and secondly what the Council can put in place to achieve economic development and a financial return to the Council.
31. Councillor Boden commented that with regard to level of resource for the Economic Development Team, will be dependent on the outcome of the results.
32. Councillor Boden commented that with regard to the aims and objectives and terms of reference, the suggestion has been made that the Member Led Review will report back informally to the Committee to say what they have not been able to consider in conjunction with Officer's advice.
33. Councillor Booth commented that there has been the Partnership opportunity with Peterborough and it maybe useful to obtain a summary of the Services that they have been delivering for Fenland. The Chief Executive stated that this can be provided for the Review Group.
34. Councillor Boden asked Members whether they had all received a copy of the Fenland Economic Development Strategy 2012 -2031. Councillor Boden asked for this to be circulated to all Members of the Committee.
35. The Chief Executive asked whether it would be helpful to have the interim findings of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic review. The final report will actually be circulated in September which will be timely for the Member Led Review Team meet. Councillor Boden asked for this to be circulated.
36. Councillor Boden asked Members whether they were in agreement that Councillor Mason should be invited to attend the review meetings, so that he can have an input and also for the review team to question him about his ideas. This suggestion was supported.

OSC12/18 WISBECH 2020 VISION UPDATE

Members considered the Wisbech 2020 Vision update report, presented by the Chief Executive Paul Medd, Gary Garford, Richard Cassidy and Russell Beal from Anglian Water who is providing a project management role on the Wisbech 2020 project.

Members asked questions, made comments and received responses as follows;

1. Councillor Hodgson thanked the Officers for all their efforts since 2012. The presentation received today is totally different to the one received last year in October at Thomas Clarkson. Councillor Hodgson asked whether the presentation will be repeated again as it had a large audience. Councillor Hodgson commented that one topic which he thinks should have been included on the presentation is the update on the Wisbech Castle project.
2. Gary Garford commented that the Wisbech 2020 summit is planned for Spring 2019 and work is underway to inform the public and Wisbech Castle could be included and come under the Wisbech 2020 banner.
3. Councillor Tierney commented that when he attended a meeting at County Council to discuss the issue of control of the Wisbech Castle, the Wisbech 2020 project banner was used to underpin their discussions.
4. Councillor Tierney asked when the last time that the steering committee met was. Gary Garford commented that a meeting had taken place last week at which WTC was represented by the Town Clerk. Councillor Tierney would speak to the Town Clerk to ensure the Wisbech Town Councillors are kept appraised.
5. Councillor Tierney commented that with regard to the Wisbech Garden Town Project, in his opinion some of the residents of Wisbech still need to be convinced about the merits of the

Project as it goes forward. Councillor Tierney believes that most people would be supportive of the idea as long as they can see the infra structure that matches. The Mayor of Cambridgeshire visited Wisbech Town Council and he stated that the infra structure will be put in place before the build.

6. Gary Garford commented that we have got to the stage where there were 2 statutory objections that could happen, one of which is the Department of Transport on the A47 and the other is the Environment Agency and Flooding. Both of these issues are being addressed and by September there should be an answer to both studies. Following this then further work can commence which is an appropriate time to inform the Community.
7. Councillor Seaton commented that he attended a meeting with Highways England and the Mayor of Cambridgeshire, where the duelling of the A47 was discussed and Highways England stated that they are going to work with the Combined Authority and support it.
8. Councillor Booth commented that with regard to the Garden Town, the infrastructure needs to be in place first, but with a population of 40,000 people in Wisbech and surrounding villages our communication needs to be improved.
9. Councillor Booth said he has mentioned before that the language that is used is very vague and needs to be improved on.
10. Councillor Booth said that the interaction and engagement with the rural villages is imperative.
11. Councillor Booth said that the public will be concerned about the amount of money being spent on the feasibility studies and the approach being used needs to be looked at.
12. Councillor Tierney said that he endorses Councillor Booths comments and whilst he appreciates that procedure has to be followed, there appears to be so many studies.
13. Councillor Boden asked how the work of the 2020 vision can fit in with the Economic Development Working Group that has been set up.
14. The Chief Executive commented that within the 2020 Vision, there is the economy theme and much of the works link with that of the Combined Authority and it would be worthwhile for when the Member Led Review Group meets to look at a specific focus of the economy priority and identify what the Councils contribution towards that is and that may then give an insight into what the best option is for Economic Development in the future.
15. Councillor Boden said that he hears on a reoccurring basis about the problems and challenges of Wisbech and the positive aspects are rarely mentioned. The Eastern European community are often linked to the challenges and problems and many of those individuals who have settled in Wisbech and the surrounding areas are qualified and educated and working in areas below their level of capabilities and knowledge and experience and we should be trying to encourage better community engagement with this sector of our community.
16. Richard Cassidy commented that this shouldn't be associated with the Eastern European Community as there are a significant amount of people in Wisbech who have unrecognised potential and who are not always given opportunities. Many of the projects that are being run are to try to integrate the Eastern European community to become a cohesive part of Wisbech.
17. Paul Medd said that everyone's potential should be recognised and there is still more work to be done with regard to both the Eastern European and local Community. Much of this good work has been recognised by the Government because of the way any funding monies has been used. We have been able to demonstrate cohesion in the town and have tried to overcome certain issues in the town such as street drinking and anti-social behaviour. Central Government have recognised the ground breaking work which has taken place in the area and have used some of the work we have undertaken for case studies in other parts of the country who have the same issues. Unfortunately the national perception of Wisbech which is frustrating, particularly when there have been instances where National media visit Wisbech and create a media item which then portrays the town in a bad light.
18. Councillor Seaton stated that Wisbech is known for Operation Pheasant rather than the positives. Under the signpost of Wisbech 2020, Councillor Seaton asked whether it would be feasible to encourage meetings with the non indigenous business holders of which there are many in Wisbech as they will have more weight within their own communities than the Council

- currently has. This could possibly be the opportunity to build bridges through an economic and business forum.
19. Councillor Boden commented that it is an interesting idea but feels that the potential will not be able to be achieved until they are recognised as part of the community.
 20. Councillor Boden commented that Gary Garford had referred to the measure of success in Wisbech being in some way related to the IMD 2015 figures and Councillor Boden asked whether the IMD is the best measure of success of anything and if it is relevant are there any concerns of the variation between super output areas and are we looking to address it.
 21. Gary Garford stated that he gave that as an example of this generation compared to the last generation where IMD has not changed and therefore measuring can only take place in the long term. It is a litmus test on the way a town is performing in terms of its social outputs and we need to measure the performance of each project to influence it, so when it is measured again in the future we can recognise it as being more positive than it is now.
 22. Councillor Boden asked whether the Low Super Output Areas (LSOA) variation is causing any concern. Gary Garford stated that the super output areas are linked to that and are the worst in the country in the Wisbech wards, so these are being focussed on and that is why Clarion are also involved. There are rural areas of deprivation as well including Elm and March and it is about trying to focus what contributes deprivation levels so that outcomes can be improved.
 23. The Chief Executive stated that Super Output areas give insight into where more deprivation exists, so in terms of prioritising resources and focus it provides a better picture. Parts of Fenland are affluent and therefore where the socio/economic challenges are we would not want to be focussing the same degree of resource into those more wealthy areas.
 24. Councillor Boden stated that he has been concerned that some of the conversations that have taken place over the dualling of the A47 seem to be focussing on then A47 Norfolk rather than the parts in Cambridgeshire and could Councillor Seaton provide any update. Councillor Seaton confirmed that the proposals are from the A16 just outside Peterborough through to West Walton.
 25. The Chief Executive stated that along with Councillor Seaton, they both sit on the A47 Alliance so they are able to reinforce the case for the Cambs A47 improvements.. Councillor Seaton added that there has been some interest from the City of Birmingham who see that the road improvements as link from there to the East Coast and if the dualling is completed it will take some of the pressure off of the A14.
 26. Councillor Tierney stated that he carries out a yearly questionnaire around Wisbech and the same 2 issues are raised every time. The top one is improvements to the hospital and the second is always Wisbech Rail. Whilst he recognises the importance of the A47 dualling, the community and Councillors of Wisbech consider that Wisbech rail is the number one objective for the future.
 27. Councillor Booth commented that with regard to rural parishes and public transport, this must not be forgotten within the Wisbech 2020 vision. With regard to flooding there has been no mention of the Internal Drainage Boards who are working on these activities and need to be given some recognition on the works that they are doing.
 28. Gary Garford stated that in terms of the drainage boards, the Chief Executive of the North Level IDB is part of the Garden Town Project and is involved in developing a solution. Fenland has a unique drainage landscape and we are modelling the flood impact and also their pumping model. With regard to transport, currently Community transport is the best way to transport residents from within rural areas into the towns. The bus franchises are unfortunately disappearing as they are no longer commercially viable and subsidised grants are not present. Councillor Boden commented that County Council are no longer responsible for transport it is now the Combined Authority. Gary Garford stated that the Combined Authority was looking into grant aid for key routes and that will only be limited to key routes. Councillor Booth stated that it is important to keep the rural routes alive and transport needs to be in place to stop rural isolation.
 29. The Chief Executive commented that he agrees with Councillor Booth that in a rural area, isolation is a key issue and the Combined Authority are carrying out a bus review which as a District Council we will fully engage with and forward our strong representations, highlighting

that Cambridgeshire is a rural area on the whole.

30. Councillor Tierney commented that the days of large buses facilitating rural areas is coming to an end as most of the time they are underutilised and other models and options need to be looked at.
31. The Chief Executive agrees with that point and the Combined Authority will hopefully look at transport in a wider picture and find solutions that are financially sustainable.
32. Councillor Booth commented that with regard to action plans, can we ensure that any actions are deliverable.

OSC13/18 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Members Considered the Public Engagement in Overview and Scrutiny Report.

1. Councillor Boden stated that a couple of suggested amendments had been suggested by Members that as far as advertising was concerned, press releases would also be used to ask the Public to engage and provide topics which they believed need to be subject to scrutiny.
2. The second issue raised was to make sure the word was correct in the last but one line on page 13, the word 'and' was to be replaced with the word 'of'.
3. Councillor Booth commented that to aid transparency the public need to have confidence that when putting suggestions forward that at least they will be considered by the Committee. If there is any indication that we don't take an item forward and it is not discussed at Committee then it could have an impact.
4. Councillor Boden stated that Councillor Booths point is valid and we must have a comprehensive record of those suggestions that are made in terms of numbers, even if it is only to show that some of the suggestions made are not able to be discussed due to the topic, such as licensing and planning. Councillor Boden suggests that every other month there needs to be an item discussed by the Committee that has been put forward by the Public.

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel AGREED to approve the recommendations.

OSC14/18 FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

Members agreed the Future Work Programme 2018/19 for the Overview and Scrutiny Panel subject to the following comments.

- The housing enforcement policy to be reviewed in 12 months time.
- In addition to the September Agenda, the Comprehensive Spending Review that took place in 2015 is to be discussed so that Members can see what was achieved and if it was successful and whether there are any lessons to be learnt.
- During the Annual Meeting with the Leader of Fenland District Council, Councillor Chris Seaton, and the Chief Executive, it was suggested that the Leader be asked which subject matters he would like the Overview and Scrutiny to consider as part of any potential second Comprehensive Spending Review .
- Councillor Tierney suggested that a future review of the Kingdom pilot would be useful for the December meeting.
- The suggestion of the Local Government Ombudsman letter and the examples of the information about individual complaints be included as an agenda item in the September meeting.
- Councillor Booth commented that he had raised the point at Full Council regarding the amendments to the Constitution where the emergency powers are used by the Portfolio Holders and that should be added to the work programme to discuss annually. Councillor Boden asked Councillor Booth to clarify whether he meant the powers or the use of the powers. Councillor Booth clarified that he meant the use of the powers and this would be

added for 12 months' time.

4.46 pm

Chairman