

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER 2018 - 10.00 AM



**PRESENT:** Councillor M Humphrey (Chairman), Councillor S Clark, Councillor D Hodgson and Councillor K Owen

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor C Boden (Chairman), Councillor Mrs K Mayor and Councillor S Tierney

Officers in attendance: Richard Cassidy (Corporate Director), Anna Goodall (Head of Governance and Customer Services), Nick Harding (Head of Shared Planning), Dan Horn (Head of Housing & Neighbourhood Services), Izzi Hurst (Member Services & Governance Officer), Kamal Mehta (Corporate Director), Annabel Tighe (Environmental Health Manager) and David Wright (Communications Manager)

## **OSC15/18 PREVIOUS MINUTES.**

The minutes of the meeting of 30 July 2018 were confirmed and signed.

## **OSC16/18 HEALTH & WELL BEING STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIP PROGRESS.**

Members considered the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Partnership progress report.

Councillor Cornwell introduced members to Cath Mitchell from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Chairman of the Living Well Partnership.

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

1. Councillor Humphrey said the report was positive and asked for further information in relation to point 2.2 on page 21 of the agenda pack. Councillor Cornwell explained that this relates to a referral scheme in place between the Council and the Health Service and therefore its performance is reliant on GPs referring individuals to the scheme. He explained that the programme is positive in encouraging individuals to seek help for problems they face and is a good example of third-party services benefitting the Health Service. Cath Mitchell confirmed that both the Living Well Partnership and CCG can assist with promoting this referral system and suggested the scheme is opened up to a wider aspect of the Health Service. Councillor Cornwell agreed that this would be useful.
2. Councillor Humphrey asked why there had been lack of growth in the number of GP referrals over the year. Richard Cassidy explained that currently, a few hundred people a year are referred to the scheme via their GP; however going forward the Council is keen to improve on this and incorporate the scheme into the Active Fenland programme. He explained that Active Fenland offers a wider range of sports and activities which may appeal to more individuals and therefore improve the number of users.
3. Councillor Humphrey asked for confirmation that this will continue in light of the recent changes to the Leisure Services provider. Richard Cassidy confirmed that the new provider is contractually obliged to continue this.
4. Councillor Owen asked how many people currently use the scheme. Richard Cassidy promised to provide Councillor Owen with the exact figure after the meeting.
5. Councillor Owen asked for clarification on the process of referring individuals to this scheme and the costs involved for the public. Richard Cassidy explained that the service is provided

for individuals who have a clinical need, as assessed by their GP. He highlighted that the service not only offers one-on-one help with weight-loss but also to individuals suffering from musculoskeletal injuries who require rehabilitation.

6. Councillor Owen asked if users are issued with a prescription to present when using the scheme. Richard Cassidy confirmed that a form is submitted via the GP that grants entry to the scheme.
7. Councillor Humphrey asked for further information in relation to point 3.2 on page 24 of the agenda pack. Richard Cassidy explained that this point refers to the Council's Culture Strategy and highlighted that initial deadlines needed to be revised. He explained that it was intended to form a community stakeholder group to help develop the strategy and that one key outcome of the strategy would be to work with the community to develop capacity to help them bid for external funding to deliver their own cultural projects.
8. Councillor Hodgson asked why Wisbech is not included in the Growing Fenland plans discussed on page 16 of the agenda pack. Richard Cassidy confirmed that the Growing Fenland plans for March, Whittlesey and Chatteris are funded by The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) and they are currently working on several projects within Wisbech linked to the Wisbech 2020 Partnership strategy. He confirmed that discussions will be taking place in relation to a similar review of Wisbech between the Council and CPCA.

Councillor Humphrey thanked officers and members for the report and said the next agenda item links well with the topics discussed.

## **OSC17/18 PROGRESS IN DELIVERING THE COMMUNITIES CORPORATE OBJECTIVES 2018-19.**

Members considered the Progress in Delivering the Communities Corporate Objectives report.

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

1. Councillor Owen asked for further information in relation to the Syrian Refugees relocating to Fenland, as discussed on page 37 of the agenda pack. Richard Cassidy confirmed that an action group had been set-up and work was underway with Peterborough City Council in relation to this, however currently no Syrian refugee families are in the area.
2. Councillor Owen asked if the families have been selected to take part in the project. Richard Cassidy clarified that in order to accept Syrian Refugees into the community, a support network and suitable accommodation must be in place. Once the accommodation is delivered, the Council will liaise with the Home Office in relation to selecting the families relocating to the District and the dates in which this will happen.
3. Councillor Humphrey informed officers that Councillor Mrs Mayor had asked if members of the public would be updated with information on this, as there have recently been negative discussions on Social Media surrounding this topic.
4. Councillor Owen asked whether the families had been chosen yet as the accommodation has already been identified in Whittlesey. Richard Cassidy explained that the provision of the accommodation is imperative to the timing of a family arriving in the area, as they cannot be relocated without this being in place.
5. Councillor Cornwell reiterated that the initiative is operated by the Home Office and once accommodation is ready, the families will be introduced to the area. Until this is in place, they will not be entering the Country. He explained that the delivery group is working closely with Whittlesey Town Council and Peterborough City Council to deliver this. He added that Peterborough City Council have a lot of experience in the relocation of Syrian refugees and have access to both voluntary and public sector organisations that will support the families when they arrive in the UK. He said it was imperative that this support network was in place

prior to their arrival. Councillor Owen thanked Councillor Cornwell for his explanation of the process.

6. Councillor Mrs Laws informed members that due to delays and the requirement for further work, the accommodation in Whittlesey is not ready at the moment.
7. Cath Mitchell explained that she had been involved in the re-settling of refugees in Peterborough and said it was a complex process. She highlighted that once accommodation is ready, the Home Office will release further information in relation to the prospective families health in order to ensure the District's Health Services have resources in place to manage their needs. Other organisations are involved to ensure the families receive support in relation to their English language and integration skills. She added that there have been many success stories in Peterborough of Syrian families being rehoused. She said in relation to updating members of the public, further information of the families is not available until a later step in the process.
8. Councillor Humphrey asked if a Briefing Note could be circulated to members informing them of the process and providing them with an update. Councillor Cornwell agreed that this would be a good idea; however members have been briefed on the situation previously. He added that Whittlesey Town Council are currently acting as a pilot location for this initiative however if successful, other Fenland locations could be utilised to support Syrian refugee families.
9. Councillor Owen asked if the refugees are required to speak English competently prior to migration. Cath Mitchell confirmed she was not aware if this was a requirement but Peterborough City Council may be able to answer this.
10. Councillor Owen asked if the refugees would be tested for Tuberculosis (TB) prior to their arrival. Cath Mitchell confirmed that they would be tested for TB prior to migration, as the prevalence rate in Peterborough is high. She added that Syria is not deemed a high-risk country for TB however.
11. Richard Cassidy said in light of today's discussion, he would feedback member's comments to the multi-agency team dealing with the initiative.
12. Councillor Owen said whilst it was positive that the processing times for Council Tax and Housing Benefit on page 31 of the agenda pack had improved, why had these fallen previously as mentioned in the report. Councillor Mrs Hay confirmed that Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) were working hard to improve these figures and have recently taken on new staff members to improve them further. She informed members that the current figures are 6.68 days for the processing of Council Tax and 6.8 days for the processing of Housing Benefit.
13. Councillor Sam Clark asked if it was possible to have a breakdown of the individual villages listed on page 35 of the agenda pack. She suggested that it would be useful to members that represent village locations in the District, if they were provided with specific figures relating to their village. Councillor Cornwell said whilst this is possible, members must consider that the spread of data across all the villages may make certain cases and individuals identifiable as each village may only have one or two statistics.
14. Councillor Hodgson asked if Rough Sleepers are being approached across the District, as page 33 of the agenda pack suggests this only occurs in Wisbech. Richard Cassidy clarified that the Controlling Migration Fund (CMF) project, discussed on page 33 of the agenda pack, is a Wisbech-own fund and therefore only operates in Wisbech. He confirmed that the Council tackle any areas where Rough Sleepers are reported but in relation to the CMF, this is only relevant to Wisbech.
15. Councillor Hodgson said, following his work with the Golden Age project, he is keen for all sports clubs and groups to become involved in the project. Councillor Cornwell confirmed that local sports clubs and groups are encouraged to attend Golden Age events and advertise their services however organisers cannot make them attend. He highlighted that Active Fenland representatives attend along with Leisure Centre staff. Councillor Humphrey confirmed that a previous event in Gorefield was attended by the indoor and outdoor bowls club and the village has a popular over-50's table tennis group too.
16. Cath Mitchell explained that the CCG have set up a Health & Wellbeing network in the

voluntary sector that matches individuals to types of services on offer to them locally. She suggested that the network could recommend Golden Age to members of the public in the future. Councillor Cornwell agreed that this would be very beneficial.

17. Councillor Sam Clark stated that many local community groups had attended the recent Golden Age Fayre.
18. Councillor Sam Clark said there had been negative comments on Social Media in relation to the temperature of the pools and the opening times of Leisure Centres over the recent Bank Holiday. She asked if the new provider, Freedom, would be changing the opening times when they take over the operation of the centres. Richard Cassidy explained that Leisure Centres had previously been open over Bank Holidays however were not busy and it was demonstrated that it was not cost effective to open them over these periods. He confirmed that Freedom Leisure may decide to extend these opening times when they take over the contract. In relation to the temperature of the pools, these are measured throughout the day and equipment is in place to maintain and regulate the temperature of the pools.
19. Councillor Humphrey said that Councillor Mrs Mayor had asked if the grass was due to be cut prior to Whittlesey Park Run starting. Councillor Murphy confirmed that it is included in the cutting rota.
20. Councillor Humphrey asked for further information on the Wisbech Alcohol Project as he is not familiar with the work they carry out. Councillor Oliver explained that the project was a pilot set by the Government, with Wisbech being identified as an area to trial it. It is a multi-agency project involving the Council, Health Service Teams, Cambridgeshire County Council and the Police and targets individuals identified as having issues with alcohol in order to assist them with the help and support they need.
21. Councillor Humphrey asked how successful the project is. Councillor Oliver said it had been well received by those who have been approached however it is hard to quantify the scale of the issue as many individuals do not want to engage with officers and avoid patrolled areas. He said he would provide members with definitive figures at a later date.
22. Councillor Humphrey asked for further information on the 'weekly recovery walks'. Councillor Oliver said intelligence is gathered via CCTV and Kingdom officers and groups will then patrol on a regular basis and engage with any individuals they believe need support.
23. Councillor Sam Clark asked for a breakdown of the figures provided on page 48 of the agenda pack in relation to Fenland residents who have benefitted from Stay Well grant funding. Richard Cassidy said the grant was being successfully accessed by residents, with 96 receiving it in 2017/18 and 35 residents receiving it so far in 2018.
24. Councillor Sam Clark asked for further information on the King's Dyke/ Must Farm update on page 50 of the agenda pack. Councillor Buckton explained that a Heritage Lottery Funding bid by Peterborough Museum had recently been rejected which has halted progress on the project. He said future plans had been linked to the artefacts being moved to the museum and as this is now not an option, alternative scenarios are being considered.

Councillor Humphrey thanked members and officers for their input and said the report contains lots of positives.

## **OSC18/18 ANNUAL OMBUDSMAN LETTER AND 3CS PROCESS.**

Members considered the Annual Ombudsman Letter and 3Cs process report.

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

1. Councillor Hodgson said he was disappointed that the number of complaints shown in Appendix B of the report had increased from previous years.
2. Councillor Humphrey asked for the Planning service's view on the complaints in Appendix D on page 57 of the agenda pack. Nick Harding explained the background of each complaint and said lessons had been learnt from each of these. He informed members that there are

now permanent Enforcement Officers within the team and they have implemented new systems to prioritise the incoming workload.

3. Councillor Mrs Laws said the Planning team now have stability in relation to staffing, for the first time in many years.
4. Councillor Humphrey asked for further information in relation to the statistics in Appendix B on page 56 of the agenda pack. David Wright said these statistics fluctuate greatly dependent on any controversial topics in the District at that time.
5. Councillor Humphrey informed members that this item will be discussed annually at Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

#### **OSC19/18 MATTERS ARISING - UPDATE ON PREVIOUS ACTIONS.**

Members were provided with an update on the status of actions they had raised at previous meetings of the Committee.

Anna Goodall said the item will be discussed at all future meetings to enable actions to be tracked and the responses fed back to members. Following members comments, a 'timescale' column has been added to inform members when they will receive a response.

#### **OSC20/18 FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME.**

Members agreed the Future Work Programme 2018/19 for the Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

11.22 am

Chairman

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## Outstanding actions from Overview and Scrutiny - September 2018

MEETING DATE  AGENDA ITEM AND  MINUTE NUMBER	RECOMMENDATION/ ACTION	UPDATE	TIMESCALE
OSC/3/18	Councillors asked if the Fenland District Council Business Centres were fulfilling their purpose as incubator units for businesses or are firms locating to them permanently.	<b>AWAITING FURTHER INFORMATION</b>	
OSC/3/18	Councillors are seeking clarification regarding whether or not the GRANTFINDER software is the same software the Council previously used.	<b>AWAITING FURTHER INFORMATION</b>	
OSC/3/18	Members requested statistics relating to other sectors including Agriculture and Retail	Require some further clarification from Cllr Booth on the statistics required in relation to this action	
OSC/4/18	Based on the success of the shared Planning service, was there a possibility to widen this to include other Local Authorities in the area for example in relation to a wider shared technical team function. Councillors felt this would solve issues with recruitment and allow expertise to be shared amongst each Council.	The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood planning Cllr Mrs Dee Laws will consider this recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny alongside the recommendations arising from the recent PAS review.	

<b>OSC/4/18</b>	Members suggested that improvements be made to the management of large planning applications as anecdotal evidence would suggest this is an area in which delays are experienced	The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) review has now concluded following which there will be a number of resulting recommendations which Members and Officers will work towards implementation	
<b>OSC/4/18</b>	Members recommended that future changes to policies for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be highlighted as this enables any amendments to be easily identified	Agreed The Overview and Scrutiny Officer will advise Officer colleagues accordingly to ensure this is implemented in relation to all policy updates.	