

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

of meeting held on **6 February 2013** at Loxley House

from 2.01 pm to 3.31 pm

- ✓ Councillor Parbutt (Chair)
- ✓ Councillor Bryan
- ✓ Councillor Culley
- ✓ Councillor Choudhry
- ✓ Councillor Dewinton (Vice-Chair)
- ✓ Councillor Hartshorne
- ✓ Councillor Healy
- ✓ Councillor Jenkins
- ✓ Councillor Khan
- ✓ Councillor Klein
- ✓ Councillor Molife
- ✓ Councillor Parton
- ✓ Councillor Watson
- ✓ Councillor S Williams

✓ indicates present at meeting

In Attendance

- Councillor A Norris - Portfolio Holder for Area Working, Cleansing and Community Safety
- Assim Ishaque - Parent Governor Representative
- Ms E Eckhardt - North Neighbourhood Development Officer
- Mr D Halstead - Head of City Services
- Ms D Holmes - South Locality Manager
- Mr A Vaughan - Director of Neighbourhood Services
- Ms J Garrard - Overview and Scrutiny Coordinator
- Mr R Kalsi - Constitutional Services Officer

47 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Choudhry, Culley, Healy and Watson and Beverley Denby (3rd Sector Advocate).

48 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were made.

49 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2013, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

50 NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING STRUCTURES

Mr Halstead gave a presentation, copies of which had been circulated, outlining the Council's current approach to neighbourhood and locality working and the way in which this supported the achievement of Council's objectives. Information provided to the Committee included:

- a new model of locality working had been in place for 6 months and therefore a review of its effectiveness in achieving its aims was sought by the Committee;
- following a restructure of recourse allocation, operational managers had been better aligned along with the relevant officers and partners who dealt with issues at monthly meetings;
- within the new structure, 3 locality boards provided the next tier of oversight and a potential escalation route to address wider ward pertinent issues. The locality boards would provide a further link to One Nottingham Partnership;
- as part of the new reporting structure, ward performance reports were submitted for consideration at area committees which provided a 'snap-shot' summary of a variety of themes across the relevant ward. The Nottingham Crime and Drugs Partnership played a lead role in performance data collation.

During discussion, the following comments were made and additional information provided:

- inconsistencies had been identified within the new structure with some members regularly attending Neighbourhood Action Team (NAT) meetings whereas other members did not feel that they were afforded an opportunity to attend NAT meetings. It was felt that members would benefit from periodic reports from the locality boards on wider issues which would go some way to bridging the gap between councillors and the higher echelons of the governance hierarchy;
- concerns were raised that members were not effectively informed of outcomes from locality boards and felt information should also be fed from the boards to area committees;
- assurances were given that councillors were welcome at NAT meetings however their importance of the relationship with NDOs was stressed. An invite was extended to Area Committee chair's to attend locality board meetings;
- it was recommended that an audit be carried out by ward to ensure that a consistency in communication about, and councillor access to NAT meetings

and NDOs that local ward councillors were satisfied. This would offer a means to improve communication between different levels of the neighbourhood working structure;

- Mr Vaughan reported that councillors had been clear in their assertion to protect front line resources and in comparison to other cities, Nottingham was blessed with structural funding. Having received the Cleanest Big City award in 2010, the streets of Nottingham were getting cleaner and this was part due to the good relationship between elected members and front line staff.

RESOLVED

The Committee concluded:

- (1) that the new neighbourhood working structure represented a positive direction of travel in improving the way people work together at a local level to improve outcomes for citizens;**
- (2) in particular, that Neighbourhood Development Officers were effective in their role;**
- (3) that it be recommended to the Portfolio Holder for Area Working, Cleansing and Community Safety that in order to improve communication between different levels of the neighbourhood working structure and ward councillors:**
 - **an audit be carried out by ward to ensure that there is a consistency in communication about, and councillor access to Neighbourhood Action Teams and Neighbourhood Development Officers that local ward councillors are satisfied with; and**
 - **review how communication about the role, work and outcomes of Locality Boards can be improved, including:**
 - **requiring Locality Managers to report to area committees on the work and outcomes of the relevant locality board, and in between area committee meetings report outcomes of the locality board to ward councillors via Neighbourhood Development Officers**
 - **sending copies of agenda and minutes of the relevant locality board to ward councillors.**

51 PROGRAMME FOR SCRUTINY

The Committee considered the future programme for scrutiny as set out in the report of the Head of Democratic Services, copies of which had been circulated. The following items were suggested for consideration at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the coming months:

- air pollution;

- adult social care;
- effectiveness of parking enforcement;
- 3g and 4g connectivity masts;
- cycling – traffic awareness;
- the effective management of relationships between community schools and academies.

RESOLVED that the Committee give consideration to including the above areas in the programme for scrutiny.