

SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 23 JULY 2024

Present:

Councillor Mick Smith (Chair) (in the Chair)
Councillor Neil Baker (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Mark Foster
Councillor Ross Shipman
Councillor Christine Smith

Councillor Carol Lacey
Councillor Derrick Skinner

Also Present:

L Hickin	Managing Director - Head of Paid Service
J Dethick	Director of Finance and Resources & (Section 151 Officer)
Nicki Astle	Assistant Director of ICT
J Wells	Corporate Finance Manager / Deputy S151 Officer
J Hayden	Senior Scrutiny Officer
T Scott	Governance and Scrutiny Officer

SSC/ Apologies for Absence

1/24-

25

With the agreement of the Chair, Councillor Kathy Clegg contributed to the meeting virtually. She did not participate in any of the decisions taken.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Michelle Emmens.

SSC/ Declarations of Interest

2/24-

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No Declarations of Interest were submitted.

SSC/ Minutes of Last Meeting

3/24-

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RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Services Scrutiny Committee held on 7 May 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

SSC/ Scrutiny - A Practical Overview

4/24-

25

The Senior Scrutiny Officer delivered a presentation to Members which included an overview of how the Scrutiny function operated, the specific remits of the Council's four Scrutiny Committees, how to add topics to the annual Work Programme, and the different options to carry out reviews.

Some Members expressed concerns that there had been no full Scrutiny reviews for the Committee in the last year. The Managing Director emphasised that there were a variety of different review types, and the decision on which ones to use rested with the Members of the Committee.

RESOLVED – That the presentation was noted.

**SSC/
5/24-
25**

Update on Combined Authority

The Managing Director delivered a presentation to Members explaining how the recently established East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) was progressing in terms of its operating framework. Members were also informed of the Strategic Leadership Board that was used as a feeder into EMCCA. The presentation included details on the EMCCA's formation, how the EMCCA would operate, who would sit on the Board and other Committees, and how the EMCCA's Scrutiny function would operate.

Members asked how the Strategic Leadership Board operated and how other Boards fed into it. The Managing Director explained that the Leadership Board was found to bring together different sources of funding.

Members discussed the Planning and Housing Board of the EMCCA and how it would operate. The Managing Director informed the Committee that all organisations would apply for £16.9 million of Brownfield sites funding.

Some Members felt that the Combined Authority would add a tier of unnecessary bureaucracy to Local Government. The Managing Director emphasised that the arrangements gave local authorities a host of powers they did not previously have.

Some Members were concerned that the Combined Authority would lead to the Council having no say in decisions relating to its own area. The Managing Director explained that this would not be the case, and the EMCCA Board had been set up in such a way to prevent this.

RESOLVED – That the presentation was noted.

**SSC/
6/24-
25**

Medium Term Financial Plan

The Corporate Finance Manager presented a report to inform the Committee of the contents of the Financial Outturn 2023/24 report presented to Cabinet on 18 July 2024.

RESOLVED – That the report was noted.

**SSC/
7/24-
25**

Cabinet Business

The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented a digest of Cabinet decisions taken since the last Committee meeting on 7 May 2024. The digest set out key information for each decision.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer also presented Members with the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions for the period 15 May 2024 – 30 September 2024. The Senior Scrutiny Officer drew attention to the DLUHC Productivity Plan decision taken in July, and suggested that the Committee could include this as a topic to potentially review in the 2024/25 Work Programme.

RESOLVED – That the update was noted.

SSC/ **Policy Development**

**8/24-
25**

The Assistant Director of ICT presented the Joint Information & Cyber Security Policy approved by the Council in April 2024.

Members were informed that the aim of the updated policy was to make sure standards of security were constantly being maintained. This update also included new specific policies on areas such as WhatsApp use, the use of Teams and Generative Artificial Intelligence.

Members asked if the recent national ICT incident had impacted the Council's ICT systems. Members were informed that the incident only caused a slight fault in Leisure Centre payments.

Members enquired what the process was for the ICT department monitoring different policies to identify ones in need of an update. The Director of Finance and Resources explained that this monitoring used to be left to managers, but there was now a repository in place where all policies and their ages were listed.

RESOLVED – That the update was noted.

SSC/ **'Horizon Scanning'**

**9/24-
25**

The Senior Scrutiny Officer updated Members on potential significant changes in the Council's operating environment, including changes to national legislation and regulation.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer informed Members that the operations of the East Midlands Combined Authority would be closely monitored. Members were also informed that the recent General Election result would mean a lot of new legislation in the near future, which would also be monitored for the Committee.

RESOLVED – That the update was noted.

SSC/ **Work Programme**

**10/2
4-25**

The Senior Scrutiny Officer presented the draft Work Programme 2024/25 for the Committee to consider. If approved, it would be the first Work Programme of the new municipal year. Members were told that the new draft design of the Programme now included an 'outcome' section for each issue, to set out what the Committee aimed to achieve with each one.

Members discussed the item in the draft Work Programme for September 2024 titled '4-Day Working Week Update', and agreed that this should remain in the Programme, because even though the previous Government did not want Councils to consider it, the new Government might have a different perspective.

Members referred to the item in the draft Programme titled 'The Relationship between NEDDC and Rykneld Homes' for November 2024, and requested if the results of the recent inspection of Rykneld Homes could be included in this

update. The Director of Finance and Resources explained that the housing inspector's report was currently embargoed, but it would be ready to be included within this November update.

The Committee discussed the possibility of including something on the Programme about the Council charging for pre-planning applications. The Director of Finance and Resources advised that although this was more within the remit of the Communities Scrutiny Committee, this Committee could consider the Business Case for the issue. Members agreed to make an addition to the draft Work Programme for the 17 September 2024 meeting to consider the Business Case for pre-planning applications.

RESOLVED –

(1) That one item be added to the draft Work Programme 2024/25 for the 17 September 2024 meeting to consider the Business Case for pre-planning applications and charging for them.

(2) That the Work Programme 2024/25 be approved with this addition.

SSC/ Additional Urgent Items

11/2

4-25 None.

SSC/ Date of Next Meeting

12/2

4-25 The next meeting of the Services Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to take place on 17 September 2024 at 10am.