



MEETING OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

TUESDAY, 30 JANUARY 2007 2.30 PM

PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Dorrien Dexter
Councillor Mike Exton
Councillor Ken Joynson

Councillor John Nicholson (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs Judy Smith
Councillor Mike Williams (Vice-Chairman)

OFFICERS

Scrutiny Officer
Corporate Head, Sustainable Communities
Business Manager, Development and
Building Control
Service Manager, Assets and Facilities
Scrutiny Support Officer
Economic Development Officer
Markets Supervisor

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor John Smith (Economic
Development Portfolio Holder)

34. MEMBERSHIP

The Panel were notified that Councillor Exton would be substituting for Councillor Pease until the next annual meeting of the Council.

35. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Kaberry-Brown and Mrs Woods.

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

37. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

BVPI 109a, b and c

- A report explaining poor performance on indicators relating to the determination of planning applications was circulated with an action plan and month-by-month figures demonstrating improvements.
- The action plan addressed BVPI performance improvement, Member/officer liaison, customer care, communications, staffing structures, processes and training.

- Additional resources were not available to the department so smarter ways of working were being introduced.
- Applications only counted against performance indicators after they had been determined.
- The Barker report reviewed the way planning applications were dealt with. A briefing paper on this was to be prepared.
- Work was being done on outstanding applications, which were listed in reports to the Development Control Committee. These needed to be determined on a managed basis.

ACTION POINT

A briefing paper on the contents of the Barker report should be prepared for the next meeting of the DSP on 20th March 2007.

TT to prepare briefing note on the Barker report

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. ***The Panel were concerned about staffing problems within Development Control Services and hope that the situation will be kept under close review by the Cabinet.***
2. ***The staff from Development Control Services should be congratulated on their work to turn the service around.***

JT to complete DSP rec. form

SK33

- The indicator for the number of residents satisfied with the choice of shopping within the District was red.
- Figures for this indicator were collated on an annual basis so there would be no change until a new survey had been carried out.

38. ACTION NOTES

Noted.

39. FEEDBACK FROM THE EXECUTIVE

- Construction of Welham Street car park, Grantham was on schedule.
- The Resources DSP had requested that the Capital Asset Management Group review the charging structure for car parking.
- Wharf Road car park, Stamford would be closed from April for decontamination. Additional spaces had been provided on the Cattlemarket site.
- A strategic review of car parking was underway as part of the Local Development Framework.
- The Strategic Car Parking Working Group would be called together to produce a parking action plan for Stamford based on evidence that had been gathered. The group had been inactive for a year because of staff changes, consultation and work on the LDF.

40. UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The Scrutiny Officer prepared a briefing note on a public convenience audit, which was circulated at the Parish Council Conference on 7th December 2006. Little interest had been shown in this at the conference.

41. DECRIMINALISATION OF PARKING

- SKDC and all other councils in Lincolnshire had invested in a study on taking responsibility for parking from the police authority. The survey also covered off-street parking.
- Following the issue of the final report, a meeting would be held between Lincolnshire councils. The transfer would only go ahead if all local councils were in agreement.
- If parking was decriminalised, 12 parking attendants would be needed to cover the whole district.
- A decriminalised scheme could be led by the local authority or centralised through shared service mechanisms.
- It was hoped that target dates for decriminalisation would be available in two months. Implementation could take 18 months because parking orders would need to be put in place.
- It was suggested that decriminalisation should begin in the town centres, then hotspots and move to residents' parking schemes.

ACTION POINT

The Service Manager, Assets and Facilities to contact the Scrutiny Officer when there is anything further to report.

PS to advise PM when updated information is available

42. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT

- The initial equality impact assessment for the Economic and Community Development Strategy 2005-2008 had been circulated. A full equalities impact assessment was not required.
- The Strategy was the overarching document and needed to be inclusive. Delivery from action plans could be targeted.
- Some complaint monitoring mechanism should be in place. Complaints were not monitored by race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or religious belief.

CONCLUSION:

A sentence should be included in the strategy stating: "Complaints should be dealt with through the Council's corporate complaints system."

N Cuttell to incorporate into strategy document

43. MARKETS - CHARGING STRUCTURE

- The new charging structure for markets had been circulated. Charges had increased by 2.9%
- An invoice system had been introduced. Charges were payable

on a monthly basis.

- During the introduction of the Cedar System, it was made more difficult to monitor and pursue payments.
- In Stamford the charge for a stall was one pound higher than Grantham. Market forces would decide if the charge was excessive.
- There was concern over the Deepings market. This was privately run. The Town Centre Manager for the Deepings could look into concerns.
- The spread of retail in Grantham had had an impact on the market. Alternative arrangements for some stalls in Stamford had to be made because of the Stamford Gateway project.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. ***That the Deepings Town Centre Manager should be asked to look into concerns about the market in the Deepings;***
2. ***The Markets Team should be thanked for their effort, which was reflected in the viability of the markets.***

JT to forward rec to Portfolio Holder and Service Manager

JT to complete DSP rec. form

44. WORK PROGRAMME

On 18th January 2007, the Resources DSP recommended that:

- A working group comprising members of the Resources and Economic DSPs should be set up to look at the District Council's car parking policy, which should report back by September 2007.
- A joint meeting of the Resources, Economic and Healthy Environment DSPs should be held to scrutinise the draft Grantham Masterplan.

ACTION POINT:

The Scrutiny Officer to arrange a joint meeting of the Resources, Economic and Healthy Environment DSPs to scrutinise the draft Grantham Masterplan.

PM to organise a joint meeting.

45. FINANCIAL UPDATE

- This was circulated at the meeting.
- Figures were difficult to understand without profiling.
- Financial updates should be circulated before the meeting.
- Updates should be presented in a format that is easy to understand.
- Anomalies in figures should be highlighted.

ACTION POINT:

Feedback from the DSP on the format of financial updates should be sent to Financial Services and addressed.

JT to forward recs to RW
RW to implement

46. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting was closed at 16:42