

ACTION NOTES

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2015



COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Reginald Howard (Chairman)
Councillor Michael King
Councillor David Nalson
Councillor Helen Powell

Councillor Bob Russell
Councillor Bob Sampson
Councillor Ian Selby
Councillor Mrs Judy Smith (Vice-Chairman)

OFFICERS

Executive Manager, Corporate (Lucy Youles)
Community Engagement and Policy Development Officer (Carol Drury)
Principal Democracy Officer (Jo Toomey)

45. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cosham, Mrs Kaberry-Brown and Turner.

46. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

No interests were disclosed.

47. ACTION NOTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2014

The action notes of the meeting held on 25 November 2014 were noted.

48. UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

At its meeting on 25 November 2014 the Committee received a report from the Council's representative on the Lincolnshire Health Scrutiny Committee, which included an update on a project to computerise patient records. SKDC's Scrutiny Committee was keen to see the project progress and asked whether there was anything it could do to expedite the transition.

Representatives from United Lincolnshire Hospitals Trust regularly attended meetings of the Lincolnshire Health Scrutiny Committee and it was suggested that as part of their next update report on 11 March 2015 the Committee might ask for a project progress update. South Kesteven District Council's Scrutiny Committee supported this suggestion and agreed that Councillor Mrs Kaberry-

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Brown be asked to put forward that question.

Recommendation

That as South Kesteven District Council's representative on the Lincolnshire Health Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Mrs Kaberry-Brown should ask representatives from United Lincolnshire Hospitals Trust for a progress update on the computerisation of patient records at the Committee's next meeting on 11 March 2015.

49. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

The Executive Manager, Corporate explained that this item had been added to the Committee's agenda following a request from Councillor Rob Shorrocks. Councillor Shorrocks had submitted a report for the Committee's consideration on the arrangements in place for the cancellation of meetings of committees and policy development groups. The Committee was informed that the matter had been considered at a meeting of the Constitution Committee on 9 March 2015.

At its meeting, the Constitution Committee made a recommendation to Council which would introduce a section into the Constitution detailing the procedure for the cancellation of meetings of committees and policy groups. The Committee's proposal was that a meeting could be cancelled if the notice period for items to be put on the agenda had lapsed (12 working days before the meeting) and that the Chairman (or Vice-Chairman in the Chairman's absence) has consulted with the members of the committee or policy development group and a majority agreed to the cancellation of the meeting.

The Executive Manager, Corporate stated that she had received an e-mail from Councillor Shorrocks before the meeting in which he highlighted the considerations and recommendations of the Constitution Committee and requested that this be reported to the Committee as a resolution to the matter.

The Committee noted the recommendation of the Constitution Committee. Members were advised that the Constitution was silent on the matter of meeting cancellations and that the proposals going forward to Council would clarify the process.

50. FLOODING

Over a number of meetings the Scrutiny Committee had gathered evidence from a range of individuals about different aspects for flooding. At its meeting on 25 November 2014, the Committee agreed that as the culmination of its work a report should be prepared to pull together the information it received and identify any areas where clarification might be required.

A summary of the draft report that had been prepared on the Committee's behalf was given. The report was divided into a number of sections setting out the background of the Committee's investigation then identifying areas where additional information was requested.

Key points addressed in the report were considered and in conclusion, the report identified a number of areas where the Committee might seek additional information from the lead local flood authority:

- Who does what in Lincolnshire?
- Who is the appropriate authority to call? (e.g. a way of communicating in simple terms to appropriate contact in the event of flooding, to talk about prevention, to help with emergency plans, etc.)
- Arrangements for investigations (what is the definition of a flood incident, the procedure for investigating flooding incidents, prioritisation for investigations, whether the outcomes of investigations are published, etc.)

Discussion ensued on a number of the issues to which the report referred. Members shared experiences of flooding incidents in their local communities and emphasised the importance of ensuring that there was clear information to let people know what to do in the event of flooding. Committee members referred to a possible perception that the Environment Agency was the responsible authority for all flooding incidents.

In considering the draft report, Committee members commended the paper and were supportive of the three areas in relation to which it was suggested that further information might be requested. There was some discussion about the most appropriate way to present the report. Several suggestions were made:

- Send the whole report to the lead local flood authority
- Send only the three questions asking for additional information
- Send a précis of the report with the requests for additional information presented in full

After evaluating the pros and cons of each approach, the Committee agreed that it was important to provide some context to demonstrate the level of work that had already been undertaken but a précis might be more appropriate.

Agreed:

- 1. To produce a summary report to send to the lead Local Flood Authority to obtain further information***
- 2. Authority was delegated to a working group consisting of Councillors King, Mrs Smith and Powell to approve the summarised document on the Committee's behalf***

51. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee was informed that a performance report would be presented to its next meeting.

As the next meeting (14 April 2015) was the last scheduled meeting for the

Council term, officers suggested a workshop session at the close of the meeting to identify any learning points to support the new Committee appointed after the election on 7 May 2015.

52. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting was closed at 11:19am.