

# MINUTES

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2010



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## COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Pam Bosworth  
Councillor Robert Hearmon  
Councillor Bryan Helyar  
Councillor David Higgs  
Councillor Trevor Holmes

Councillor Kenneth Joynson  
Councillor Mrs Rosemary Kaberry-Brown  
Councillor Bob Russell  
Councillor Mrs Judy Smith  
Councillor Mike Williams

## OFFICERS

Head of Human Resources & Customer Services (Jacqueline Chapman)  
Head of Finance (Richard Wyles)  
Head of Legal & Democratic Services (Lucy Youles)  
Consultation & Engagement Officer (Fiona Truman)  
Community Safety & Licensing Service Manager (Mark Jones)

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### 1. COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from members of the public.

### 2. MEMBERSHIP

The Committee had not been notified of any substitute members.

### 3. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

### 4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at this point in the meeting.

### 5. ACTION NOTES FOR THE MEETING OF 15TH JUNE 2010

The notes of the meeting held on 15 June 2010 were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

## 6. UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The Community Safety and Licensing Service Manager confirmed in relation to the Action Notes for the meeting of the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2010 the performance data as follows:

- NI 15 relating to serious violent crime. Twenty two recorded incidents confirmed an out turn 23% down on the previous year.
- NI 16 – Serious acquisitive crime i.e. burglary. There had been a reduction of 27% on the previous year with 343 less offences committed.
- NI 20 – Assault with injury. There has been an increase of incidents of 6.7% on the previous year with 44 more offences occurring. The total for the County is up 3.4% on the previous year. Extra measures have been brought in to encourage night time economy. To-date incidents for this year are down 20% on the same time last year.
- NI 32 – Repeated domestic abuse. The District Council's target is not to exceed 32%. Mr Jones confirmed that domestic abuse statistics related to the whole of the district covering all domestic residences. Councillor Hearmon suggested that the evidence from Police in respect of the crime relating to the night time economy should be taken into account in the planning decision process. Mr Jones confirmed that this was a consideration in respect of Licensing Applications. Planning Applications require the application of material consideration. Confirmation of the position relating to planning applications would be confirmed at the next meeting. Members expressed concern about potential cuts in Police Services. Mr Jones confirmed the intention to invite the Police to attend the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee as the Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Committee to discuss a range of issues which could include the PCSO function, neighbourhood policing, night time economy actions and community confidence/fear of crime.

The Head of Finance attended to confirm the position relating to the access to services review. A background paper was handed out for members' information. All options were currently being considered to provide District and County seamless working. A business case was being prepared and a meeting with the County was scheduled for October. Mr Wyles agreed to report back to the Scrutiny Committee with updates on progress. Councillor Trevor Holmes declared a personal interest relating to Bourne Town Hall as a member of the Bourne Town Council. Mr Wyles confirmed that the Town Council had been involved and that full consultation would be carried out as soon as a feasibility study had been completed

The Head of HR and Customer Services provided members with an update on the whole organisation system review. She confirmed that a service by service review was considered to be more useful with the current service review being undertaken in respect of Development Control Planning Policy and Building Control.

## **7. PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE WITH FOCUS ON CUSTOMER FIRST**

The Head of HR and Customer Services gave the background to the Quarter one performance report with focus on Customer First. She confirmed that the Report had already been to Cabinet but that Scrutiny was important to ensure that any comments were heeded for future reporting and that the changed format of the Report was understood. It was clear that the purpose of the Report was to give information to the public. She detailed the achievements for the period April to June 2010 confirming that Customer Excellence Standards should relate to the whole Council and not just the Customer Service Centre. Mystery shopping had been introduced in association with other Lincolnshire Districts and the information received from that exercise was being analysed. Members challenged the purpose and benefit of the project. It was agreed that those challenges would be applied when considering further mystery shopping.

Details of Customer Complaints and Compliments were explained as detailed in the Report. Members' made a request for further information to be brought back to the next meeting about complaints relating to the temperature of the swimming pools. In future, members' requested a comparison between the number of complaints and the number of compliments.

The Consultation and Engagement Officer provided members with details of the community events provided for members of the public including the Cleaner Greener Safer Campaign by consulting face to face with the public at various community events such as the markets. She confirmed the proposal for a question time panel with six form students and members' of the Council. She confirmed the activity of the Community Focus Groups in respect of hard to reach customers.

Councillor Hearmon stressed the need for the Council to understand that it needs to communicate with customers as to what they want and not what the Council think they need.

Members' discussed the ongoing work relating to the participatory budget process and the consultation exercise undertaken in that respect.

*Councillor Mrs Kaberry-Brown left the meeting at 11.45*

The Head of HR and Customer Services confirmed additional work being carried out relating to Customer Focus and "getting it right first time" to ensure that queries were dealt with on first contact, ongoing work on plain English, the improvement in call answering times, the review of access options and improvement in the website.

Members were informed that the Performance Monitoring Report to be brought to the next meeting on 30 November 2010 related to the priority theme of

“quality living”.

## **8. VISIT TO EDITH CAVELL HOSPITAL - CHAIRMAN OF SCRUTINY TO REPORT**

The Chairman confirmed the successful visit of members of the Scrutiny Committee and Council to the Edith Cavell Hospital at Peterborough which serves the South of the District. He confirmed that this was the last official visit to the site before the Hospital was due to be opened. The trip was found to be interesting by all members who attended. They felt it was important that they were informed of the services available to the members of the public in the South of the District. An article about the proposed new Hospital was proposed for the next edition of “SK Today”.

In view of the information available to the members from the Edith Cavell Hospital in Peterborough, it was felt that the United Lincolnshire Hospitals Trust serving the North of the District should be given the same opportunity to brief the committee on the services available in the Grantham region.

*Councillor Mrs Pam Bosworth left the meeting at 12.20.*

## **9. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS**

Councillor Mike Williams confirmed that he was waiting to hear from Lincolnshire Police for a further visit in relation to the night time economy. He confirmed that an addendum would be added to his original report following that visit.

## **10. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services confirmed a proposed work programme relating to:

- The annual report to Council.
- Crime & Disorder Scrutiny
- Performance monitoring and priority actions on quality living.
- Budget Proposals

The Chairman confirmed that further work would be needed in respect of proposed economies relating to the comprehensive spending review due at the end of October.

## **11. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

Councillor Hearmon confirmed his position on the Joint Scrutiny Panel and referred to the proposed meeting on the 13 October 2010. Councillor Hearmon would be unable to attend on the 13 October. Councillor Bryan Helyar agreed to attend in his place. It was confirmed that nothing further had been heard in relation to the proposed task group on procurement scrutiny.

Councillor Hearmon confirmed his position on the Joint Health Scrutiny Panel. It was agreed that members' of the Scrutiny Health sub-committee – Councillors Higgs, Hearmon, Mrs Jalili, Mrs Bosworth were to meet to discuss a proposed response on the issue relating to consortiums of G.P's.

Councillor Trevor Holmes confirmed his representation on the Citizens Advice Board. Concern was expressed about the increased workload of the Citizens Advice and a decrease in Local Authority funding.

Councillor Hearmon confirmed a personal interest in the matter of the Citizens Advice Bureau as a former Treasurer of that organisation.

Councillor Joynson confirmed that a new Principal had been appointed at Stamford College.

## **12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS, WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, DECIDES IS URGENT**

### **Stamford Cellar Bar**

All members had been handed a copy letter received from a member of the public in Stamford who was concerned about the proposed closure of the Cellar Bar at the Stamford Arts Centre. It was confirmed that no decision had been made to the Cellar Bar. Members' requested a report to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee to brief them on the current position relating to any proposals to properly address the concerns of the member of the public.

## **13. CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting closed at 12.40 pm.