

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Offices, Narborough

WEDNESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2024

Present:-

Cllr. Nick Brown (Chairman - Scrutiny Commissioner)
Cllr. Neil Wright (Vice-Chairman - Scrutiny Commissioner)

Cllr. Royston Bayliss	Cllr. Susan Findlay	Cllr. Matt Tomeo
Cllr. Adrian Clifford	Cllr. Janet Forey	
Cllr. Luke Cousin	Cllr. Tracey Shepherd	

Substitutes:-

Cllr. Richard Holdridge (In place of Cllr. Antony Moseley)

Officers present:-

Sarah Pennelli	- Executive Director - S.151 Officer
Gemma Dennis	- Corporate Services Group Manager
Katie Hollis	- Finance Group Manager
Katie Brooman	- Elections and Governance Manager
Nicole Cramp	- Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer

Also in attendance as observers:-

Cllr. Tony Deakin

Apologies:-

Cllr. Antony Moseley

124. DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

No disclosures were received.

125. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2024, as circulated, were approved and signed as a correct record.

126. REVIEW OF THE REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (RIPA) POLICY

Considered – Report of the Corporate Services Group Manager.

Members questioned if the powers available in the policy had been used over the previous 12 months. The Corporate Services Group Manager responded that she was unaware, but would find out from appropriate Officers.

DECISION

That the annual RIPA report be noted.

Reason:

Whilst the Council does not actively make use of its RIPA powers as a rule, it is important that members are aware of RIPA, the policy and its usage, or otherwise.

127. QUARTER 2 BUDGET REVIEW 2024/25

Considered – report of the Finance Group Manager.

Members discussed the write off of irrecoverable debt, which were signed off by the Cabinet Executive. There were a number of reasons for the debt to be irrecoverable, including the existence of a debt relief order and individual voluntary arrangements. Members were reassured that all the usual recovery routes had been attempted without success.

Officers also commented that the Revenue and Benefits team regularly review training guides to ensure they are kept up to date with any change in legislation and any procedural changes, helping to reduce the risk of errors being made.

Members received questioned the fall in Building Control income, which was largely due to the economic climate and changes to Building Control regulations.

The agreement that the Building Control partners signed up to was that any loss or surplus at the end of the financial year is shared in accordance with the application data from the previous three years. The partnership budget is currently being reviewed; it is unlikely that the income will reach the current working budget target and will be required to be reduced in line with the expected annual income.

Members noted that the planning income had increased substantially during the second quarter of the year, surpassing £700,000.

DECISION

That the report be noted.

Reason:

It is appropriate for Scrutiny Commission to receive financial reports for consideration ahead of the scrutiny of the draft budget work in January 2025.

128. QUARTER 2 CAPITAL PROGRAMME REVIEW 2024/25

Considered – Report of the Finance Group Manager.

Members questioned spending not yet utilised, Officers responded that Portfolio Holders and SLT were consistently reviewing the projects.

DECISION

That the report be noted.

Reason:

It is appropriate for Scrutiny Commission to receive financial reports for consideration ahead of the scrutiny of the draft budget work in January 2025.

129. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID YEAR MONITORING REPORT 2024/25

Considered – Report of the Finance Group Manager.

DECISION

That the report be noted.

Reason:

It is appropriate for Scrutiny Commission to receive financial reports for consideration ahead of the scrutiny of the draft budget work in January 2025.

130. SCHEDULE OF CHARGES 2024/25

Considered – Report of the Finance Group Manager.

Members questioned the review process for determining where increases were to be applied.

Members also questioned the increase to legal fees proposed for 2025/26. Members were informed that the increase is due to Officer time involved and the previous fees were not a true reflection of the time and work involved.

Members questioned whether any consideration would be given to support charities with waste collection. Officers responded that the service needed to remain competitive with other service providers.

Members questioned the rent of Glebe Drive in Countesthorpe, Officers responded that they would find out the information requested and circulate it to Members.

DECISION

That the report be noted.

Reason:

It is appropriate for Scrutiny Commission to receive financial reports for consideration ahead of the scrutiny of the draft budget work in January 2025.

131. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Members accepted the items on the Scrutiny Work Programme 2024-25 and no additional actions were proposed.

132. CONSIDERATION OF FORWARD PLAN ITEMS

No items were raised for further information or examination.

133. FURTHER ACTIONS FOR SCRUTINY ARISING FROM MEETING

There were no further actions arising from the meeting.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6.29 P.M.