

Notes of a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL** held in Meeting Room 1, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Wednesday, 20 March 2019 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

B Alcock (Chairman)
M D Booth (Vice-Chairman)

G R Aley
C J T H Brewis

P C Foyster
R Grocock
J D McLean

J D McLean
J Whitbourn

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors J R Astill, G K Dark, J L King, A M Newton and M D Seymour.

In Attendance: The Place Manager, the Housing Landlord Services Manager, the Housing Repairs Manager, the Democratic Services Officer and the Portfolio Holder Housing and Health.

52 **MINUTES**

The Panel considered the minutes presented for agreement, and the following issues were raised:

Performance Monitoring Panel – 30 January 2019
Economic Development (minute 47)

- The Panel asked what progress was being made with expressions of interest for the Future High Street Fund. Members were advised that senior officers were working on this and that the Authority's expression of interest would be submitted by the deadline of 22 March.
- The Panel commented that no response had been received following its request that consideration be given as to how the high street economy could be given greater focus within the context of the Council's wider work concerning the development of the district's economy. It was agreed that a response would be sought and members advised.

Joint Performance Monitoring Panel and Policy Development Panel – 9 January 2019

- At the meeting, the Joint Panel had referred to the impetus being placed on the new leisure contract, with the minutes from that meeting stating that the contract was for five years and it was more likely that the Authority would be seeking a longer position. Members queried the meaning of the phrase 'longer term position'. Officers advised that the five year contract in the current facilities met short term needs whilst a position around future requirements was assessed. This would include taking into account the current facilities. Members requested that the minute from the joint meeting be amended to reflect this explanation.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL -
20 March 2019

AGREED:

- a) The minutes of the meeting of the Performance Monitoring Panel held on 30 January 2019 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.
- b) The minutes of the meeting of the Joint Performance Monitoring Panel and Policy Development Panel held on 9 January 2019 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.
- c) The minutes of the meeting of the Joint Performance Monitoring Panel and Policy Development Panel held on 12 February 2019 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

53 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

There were none.

54 **QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 6**

There were none.

55 **TRACKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Public Toilets Task Group

Consideration was given to a report outlining the response of the Cabinet to the recommendations from the Final Report of the Public Toilets Task Group.

The Chairman of the Task Group, Councillor G Dark, had attended the meeting of the Cabinet on 12 February 2019 and had presented the Final Report which contained the recommendations of the Task Group, as agreed by the Performance Monitoring Panel on 30 January 2019.

All of the Task Group's recommendations had been approved by the Cabinet.

DECISION:

- a) That the responses of the Cabinet to the recommendations of the Panel be noted:
and
- b) That the Panel receive an update on progress in six months time.

56 **ITEMS REFERRED FROM THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL.**

There were none.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL -
20 March 2019

57 KEY DECISION PLAN

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan issued on 11 March 2019.

AGREED:

That the Key Decision Plan issued on 11 March 2019 be noted.

58 RE-LETTING OF VOID PROPERTIES TASK GROUP

Consideration was given to the report of the Portfolio Holder Housing and Health and the Executive Director Place which provided an update on progress against the Task Group's recommendations. A Task Group looking at the re-letting of void properties had presented its recommendations to the Cabinet on 25 July 2017, where it had been agreed these recommendations be incorporated within the Place Review.

The Panel had received updates in November 2017, May 2018 and September 2018, together with information provided within quarterly performance monitoring updates. The report under consideration provided updates against the Task Group's recommendations.

Members considered the report and the following issues were raised:

- Officers stated that the report only provided information to the end of January, but advised that performance in February was good and that March was also on track to hit the target for voids.
- Officers were congratulated in improving performance around voids. As would be expected, the report reflected the number of voids decreasing between October and December. An increase would be expected in January however, the void figure had been kept within the target.
- Officers confirmed that a certain amount of money lost by voids was budgeted for, and this formed part of the report performance figures.
- Officers stated that social media was not currently used to market properties as it had been the intention to first see the results of changes to the allocations policy taking effect. If it was found that some properties were difficult to let, consideration could be given to marketing them in this way, although there were reputational difficulties for the Authority to consider. Marketing on social media was being kept under review, and would be considered alongside other options.
- The Panel was advised that the Strategic Asset Review was currently underway. It would establish the stock held by the Authority and this could then be used as an informative tool going forward.

The Panel agreed that no further updates were required as performance had improved, and future information would be reflected within the performance data regularly considered by the Panel.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL -
20 March 2019

AGREED:

- a) That the report of the Executive Director Place be noted; and
- b) That no further updates on progress of the re-letting of void properties were required.

(The Portfolio Holder Housing and Health left the meeting following discussion of the above item).

59 **PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Manager Governance, which set out the Work Programme of the Performance Monitoring Panel. The Work Programme consisted of two separate sections, the first setting out the dates of the future Panel meetings along with proposed items for consideration, and the second setting out the Task Groups that had been identified by the Panel.

Members requested that the bi-ennial review of implemented planning decisions be arranged early in the new municipal year, and that the Place Manager and the Planning and Building Control Manager be requested to attend.

AGREED:

- a) That the Work Programme provided by the Executive Manager – Governance be noted and
- b) That the bi-ennial review of implemented planning decisions be arranged early in the new municipal year, to be attended by the Place Manager and the Planning and Building Control Manager.

60 **PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL - CONCLUSIONS AND THE WAY FORWARD**

Consideration was given to the Panel's Work Programme and the way forward, following District Council elections in May 2019. Prior to the meeting, members had been asked to consider the work that the Panel had undertaken over the last four years, specifically any conclusions that could be drawn and any advice for the future, and also any potential subjects for inclusion on a future Work Programme.

The following issues were raised:

- It was requested that an Overview and Scrutiny Away Day be arranged early on in the municipal year. Consideration needed to be given to the scrutiny process and what it was required to achieve. The event should combine both scrutiny panels but with some independent sessions being held. It was necessary that the roles of each Panel should be understood, and that there was some overlap in their work.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL -

20 March 2019

- Planning work programmes in advance was useful however, the Panel needed to be able to accommodate issues that arose unexpectedly. The Chairman agreed that it needed to be more fleet of foot, but that extra meetings could be arranged should any unplanned or urgent business arise.
- Members commented that the Panel should be involved sooner in the consideration of some decisions. Where an issue arose, following consideration and agreement by the Chairman, the item could be added to the next meeting of the Panel.
- Scrutiny training needed to be available to all members following the District elections. It was also felt that the Panel itself needed to provide support to newer members, in conjunction with any training provided.
- The role of Portfolio Holders at Scrutiny meetings should be made clearer to both officers and members. Any member could attend any meeting of the Council however, the scrutiny panels were able to scrutinise executive decisions and could call in Portfolio Holders to do this. Scrutiny held a unique position and this needed to be protected. The Panel should always be made aware if a Portfolio Holder was to attend a meeting and officers, and members should be aware of the protocol around scrutiny.
- Spend within parishes of Section 106 monies was raised as an issue to be considered by the Panel. It was felt that some Parish Councils were not aware of how to apply for monies to be spent on a project within their area. The following issues could be considered by the Panel as part of its Work Programme:
 - A representative from the County Council could be invited to a future meeting of the Panel to explain how Section 106 monies were allocated in respect of areas it controlled, such as education.
 - Where Section 106 monies were awarded to a particular area, the Panel could investigate the way in which the monies were spent on projects within the area.
 - A weakness seemed to be that some Parish Councils did not understand the process for submitting bids for Section 106 monies – had Parish Councils been advised of how to do this? If not, what could be done to rectify this?

AGREED:

That the issues raised by the Panel during its discussion be addressed under the new administration, following the District Council elections in May.

61 **ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

There were none.

(The meeting ended at 7.50 pm.)

(End of minutes)