

## **Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Commission**

At 7.00 pm on Tuesday 22nd June, 2021

Held at Council Chamber, Swanspool House, Doddington Road, Wellingborough, NN8 1BP

### **Present:-**

Councillor Wendy Brackenbury (Chair)  
Councillor Matt Binley  
Councillor Robin Carter  
Councillor John Currall  
Councillor Mark Dearing  
Councillor Jim Hakewill  
Councillor Philip Irwin

Councillor Kevin Watt (Vice Chair)  
Councillor John McGhee  
Councillor Elliot Prentice  
Councillor Simon Rielly  
Councillor Geoff Shacklock  
Councillor Lee Wilkes

### **1 Apologies for non-attendance**

There were no apologies for non-attendance.

### **2 Members' Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3 Notification of requests to address the meeting**

There were no requests to address the meeting.

### **4 Introduction to Scrutiny Work Planning**

The Monitoring Officer introduced a report which asked members to consider best practice and statutory guidance in relation to ensuring an effective scrutiny function and to agree a work planning process for 2021/22.

The Council had established two Scrutiny Committees and the model adopted of fewer committees and more task and finish groups focussed on specific pieces of work, was intended to reflect a modern and flexible approach to scrutiny. The establishment of a brand-new scrutiny function was an excellent opportunity to set the culture of the how scrutiny would work and officers, members, the public and stakeholders would be key in this process going forward.

For scrutiny to be most effective, a workplan would be needed to ensure that it had an impact and made a difference to the work of the authority. This would involve drawing up a long-term agenda whilst allowing the flexibility to accommodate short term issues that may arise during the year. To facilitate this, it was proposed that a Scrutiny Conference was convened to allow scrutiny members to engage with stakeholders and others to make informed choices as to what to scrutinise. The Conference would allow a long list of topics to be identified and prioritised which would be agreed by the Commission for the upcoming year.

During discussion on the report, Members supported the approach of a Scrutiny Conference and hoped it could take place as soon as possible. A number of issues were highlighted as possible topics for scrutiny to consider including diagnosis of dementia. The issue of appointing co-optees to the committees was raised and it was felt that once the work plan was agreed that would help identify any appropriate people who could assist Scrutiny. The resources available to scrutiny was highlighted and the Monitoring Officer advised that this would be considered as part of the future design of the Democratic Service team.

Members were asked to let Democratic Services know of any partners they felt could assist the Scrutiny Conference and Members would be advised when a plan for the Conference had been drawn up.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) To note the Scrutiny Statutory Guidance; and
- (ii) To approve the proposed 2021/22 work planning process, as set out in the report.

**5 Executive Forward Plan - June to September 2021**

The Monitoring Officer introduced the Executive Forward Plan which showed the key and significant decisions the Executive would be making over the next few months.

The work on Integrated Care across Northamptonshire was highlighted as an issue that the Commission may wish to look at in-depth.

It was highlighted that the Executive Advisory Panels would look at issues prior to them being considered by the Executive but the Scrutiny Commission could call-in a decision if they were not happy and the Monitoring Officer explained the call-in process.

The Monitoring Officer agreed to facilitate meetings with other authorities who were also running a hybrid model of governance to assist the development of the Council's scrutiny function.

**RESOLVED** to note the Executive Forward Plan.

**6 Close of Meeting**

The meeting closed at 7:33pm.

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Chair

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Date