



Lewes District Council

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Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Committee** held in the **Warren Room, Lewes House, 32 High Street, Lewes** on **Thursday 27 June 2013** at **10.00am**

Present:

Councillors S J Osborne (Chair), A Dean, P F Gardiner, S J Gauntlett, J V S Harris, E E J Russell and I J White

Officers Present:

R Allan, Scrutiny and Committee Officer
A Chequers, Corporate Head – Housing Services

Minutes

40 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

41 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors D R Edmunds, J M Harrison-Hicks, E C Merry and J Stockdale.

42 Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2013/14

The Committee considered suggestions for the Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2013/14.

The Chair took the Committee through the list of suggestions. She explained that the first suggestion, for an Ageing Population Strategy, covered a range of different services within the Council, and examined best practice elsewhere in the country. The Committee advised that this was an important piece of work, and that infrastructure, such as transport and health services, should be included as part of the Review.

The Committee considered whether Councillors should examine the Council's Tree Management Policy. A discussion followed, and Councillors

felt that many of the issues referred to in the suggestion related to an individual case, and that a full review would not be necessary. The Chair suggested that an appropriate officer could attend a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee to provide an update on the Council's Tree Management Policy.

The Committee discussed the suggestion of conducting a retail review, and felt that this had been covered as part of the review into urban housing. A discussion followed, and Councillors advised that planning applications for new supermarkets often had retail studies undertaken, and that these could be considered as part of the background information for the Ageing Population Strategy Scrutiny Review.

The Committee noted that a review of the Agile Working Project would take place internally, and that this review could be examined by the Scrutiny Committee at a later date.

The Chair explained to the Committee that officers had advised that a record of lessons learnt regarding the Gentlemen of the Road Tour would be kept which would be used to produce a handbook, therefore a full Scrutiny Review would not be required. Councillors were concerned that a full consultation had not taken place ahead of the Gentlemen of the Road Tour, and felt that the Committee needed to consider the handbook once it had been produced.

The Committee advised that the joint waste and recycling contract had been discussed at its previous meeting, and felt that a further review by Councillors was not necessary.

The Chair advised that a further meeting of the Committee would be required to consider Special Expenses and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

Resolved:

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| 42.1 | That a Review of the creation of an Ageing Population Strategy be added to the Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme; | SCO |
| 42.2 | That the Corporate Management Team be requested to present a joint Scoping Report for a Scrutiny Review on an Ageing Population Strategy for Lewes District to a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in October/November 2013; | CMT |
| 42.3 | That the Tree and Landscape Officer be requested to attend the Scrutiny Committee meeting in August 2013 to present an update Report on the Council's Tree Management Policy; | TLO |
| 42.4 | That the Scrutiny and Committee Officer be requested to include any recent retail reviews undertaken as part of the background material for the Ageing Population Strategy Scrutiny Review; | SCO |

42.5	That the Interim Head - HR be requested to attend the Scrutiny Committee meeting in early 2014 to present a Report on the Council's Agile Working project;	IHHR
42.6	That the Corporate Head – Communities and Enterprise be requested to attend a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee with a Report on lessons learnt from the Gentlemen of the Road event in July 2013;	CHCE
42.7	That the Scrutiny and Committee Officer be requested to arrange a meeting in August 2013 of the Scrutiny Committee to discuss Special Expenses and the Council's Tree Management Policy; and	SCO
42.8	That the Scrutiny and Committee Officer be requested to arrange a meeting in Autumn 2013 of the Scrutiny Panel - Localised Council Tax Support Scheme to consist of five Councillors, the names of which are to be nominated by the Group Leaders.	SCO
43	Play Area Provision and Building Maintenance Reserve Funding	
The Committee noted the request from the Head of District Services, that Play Area Provision and Building Maintenance Reserve Funding be placed on a future agenda of the Scrutiny Committee due to the work currently being undertaken preparing the in-house bid for the Grounds Maintenance Contract.		
<u>Resolved:</u>		
43.1	That the Head of District Services be requested to attend a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee with an update on Play Area Provision and Building Maintenance Reserve Funding.	HDS
44	Chair of the Council's Business Report	
The Committee received Report No 101/13 which related to the outgoing Chair's civic programme, the civic programme for the forthcoming year and budget provision.		
The Committee wished to officially thank the Chair and Vice-Chair for their hard work and noted the reduction in budget. It also recognised the excellent Unsung Heroes event that had been organised. Councillors added that future events like this should occur on an annual basis, with more recognition within the event for nominated individuals.		
<u>Resolved:</u>		
44.1	That Report No 101/13 concerning the Chair of the Council's Business Report be noted;	
44.2	That a vote of thanks be accorded to the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council in 2012/13 for their excellent work; and	SCO

<p>44.3 That the Council be requested consider the arrangement of an Unsung Heroes event on an annual basis.</p>	SCO / HDS
<p>45 Scrutiny Review – Provision of Affordable Housing in Urban Areas</p>	
<p>The Committee considered Report No 102/13 which detailed the results of the Provision of Affordable Housing Scrutiny Review.</p>	
<p>The Chair of the Scrutiny Panel explained the background to the Review and thanked the relevant officers and Panel members for their work. She added that an update to this Review would be provided to a future Scrutiny Committee meeting. Councillors added that the University of Brighton could assist in undertaking some of the recommendations, especially Recommendation 5 on page 21 in Appendix A concerning the assessment of social value in land. The Committee queried if the payment of rents monthly by tenants had been considered as part of the Review.</p>	
<p><u>Resolved:</u></p>	
<p>45.1 That Report No 102/13 concerning the Scrutiny Review - Provision of Affordable Housing in Urban Areas be noted; and</p>	
<p>45.2 That a vote of thanks be accorded to officers and Councillors for their work on the Scrutiny Review – Provision of Affordable Housing in Urban Areas; and</p>	SCO
<p>45.3 That the Corporate Head – Housing Services be requested to inform Councillors by email of whether tenants are able to pay their rent on different dates during the month.</p>	CHHS
<p>46 Date of Next Meeting</p>	
<p><u>Resolved:</u></p>	
<p>46.1 That the next scheduled meeting of the Scrutiny Committee to be held on Thursday 5 September 2013 at 10.00am in the Warren Room, Lewes House, 32 High Street, Lewes be noted.</p>	All to note

The meeting ended at 11.00am

S J Osborne
Chair