

# SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date:** 18 June 2014

**Venue:** East Northamptonshire House, Cedar Drive, Thrapston

**Time:** 7.30 pm

**Present:** Councillors:- Philip Stearn (Chairman)  
Sarah Peacock (Vice Chairman)

Tony Boto	Derek Capp
Richard Gell	Brian Northall
Jake Vowles	Clive Wood

## **43. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 April 2014 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## **44. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Derek Capp, Sylvia Hughes and David Jenney.

## **45. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.3**

There were no declarations of interest or questions under Council Procedure Rule 10.3.

## **46. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORTING – Q4 2013/14**

The Performance Officer presented a report which detailed high level performance information from across the Council in relation to agreed performance indicators and other statistics that supported the monitoring of performance. Areas of achievement were also identified.

To monitor and report on performance, the Council held quarterly performance clinics for each service area. The purpose of the performance clinics was to assess how service areas were progressing towards delivering key priorities and outcomes, identify problem areas and actions where required, provide peer challenge and identify and record good performance. The result was a high level report for Members which focussed on the key areas of interest.

Members were advised that Performance Clinics for Quarter 4 had taken place in May 2014 and were attended by the Chief Executive, Executive Director, Head of Service, Policy & Performance Manager and Performance Officer.

An overall performance report had been prepared which contained:

- Performance indicators that are over-performing, under-performing or within target tolerance.
- Service area achievements
- Workforce statistics

Budget outturn figures had not been included in the report as they would first be included in a report for the Finance Sub Committee due to be held on 25 June.

It was noted that there had been a dramatic improvement in the processing of major applications within the 13 week period. The Committee asked that their congratulations be passed to the team concerned.

Councillor Vowles voiced a concern from some Solicitors and Estate Agents in the District about the time it took to deal with searches. It was noted that there had been significant improvement in the service following staffing issues earlier in the year which could still be influencing perceptions. Councillor Vowles would provide specific information about cases so that they could be followed up.

Discussion was held on the target for sourcing information from the council given that NVN was being produced as an independent newspaper; residents and customers from outside the District would be advised that the website should be the first point of call for information direct from the council.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**47. IT SERVICES SERVICE PLAN**

The Head of IT Services, Phil Grimley (PG), tabled the Service Plan for ICT Services for 2014/15. As the IT Service was shared with the Borough Council of Wellingborough, the information provided was for both Councils. PG highlighted various headings and particularly focused on plans for the future. He confirmed that priority was being given to discussions on service priorities and finances.

The Committee made particular reference to the planning service. It was noted that the information provided on the council's website in relation to planning applications East Northamptonshire Council was superior to that available from Bedfordshire and Norfolk councils although concerns remained in relation to the location of comments.

The Chairman thanked PG for attending the meeting and advised that the Committee would welcome further debate about the ICT service in the future.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**48. ENGAGEMENT WITH PARTNERS – TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS**

The Executive Director provided a verbal update on the current position. A questionnaire had been sent to the remaining Town and Parish Councils to be contacted. It was anticipated that responses would be received by the end of September when further consideration would be given to the way forward.

**Chairman**