

# SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: 27 October 2010

Venue: East Northamptonshire House, Cedar Drive, Thrapston

Time: 7.30 pm

Present: Councillors: - Phil Stearn (Chairman)  
Sarah Peacock (Vice-Chairman)

David Bateman  
Peter Bedford  
Tony Boto  
Michael Finch  
Richard Gell  
Marian Hollomon

Dudley Hughes  
Barbara Jenney  
Brian Northall  
Duncan Reid  
Ron Silver

## 231. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

### RESOLVED:

That Councillor Phil Stearn be appointed Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

## 232. WELCOME AND MINUTES

The Chairman welcomed the new members of the Committee.

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2010 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## 234. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Gill Mercer and Clive Wood sent apologies.

## 235. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

### RESOLVED:

That Councillor Sarah Peacock be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

## 236. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest under Section 50 of the Local Government Act 2000.

## 237. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

## **RESOLVED:**

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business because exempt information, as defined under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, may be disclosed.

### **238. ALTERNATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN OUNDLE**

The following decision of the Policy and Resources Committee made at its meeting on 11 October 2010 (minute 219 refers) had been Called In by members of the Scrutiny Committee:

*That the future delivery of services at Oundle from 1 December 2010 be via a combination of council services being delivered from Oundle Library on Tuesdays and Thursday together with local tourism leaflet displays in businesses in the Market Place/Cross area of Oundle.*

The Committee considered the Call In details and past reports. The only additional information officers were able to give the committee was that the Festival Office rent proposal had been reduced to £9,000.

During discussion of the decision, the following concerns were raised:

- The importance of tourism for the town of Oundle and the district of East Northamptonshire
- The need for the Council to support local tourism and those who work in the tourism industry more than with just a leaflet service;
- Tourism and council services should be delivered in the same place as staff were trained on both;
- The booking service covers all local tourism not just that specific to Oundle;
- The use of Oundle Library on two days a week would better reflect the present use of council services;
- The use of the website should be promoted as a better service for the district;
- The public like personal contact.

The Committee debated whether asking the Policy and Resources Committee to reconsider its decision again would be successful and whether the issue could be referred to full Council for consideration as the removal of staffed tourism provision could be considered a change to the budgetary framework. Members were also asked to consider the possible effect of such a decision on precedent regarding future difficult decisions.

## **RESOLVED:**

That the decision of the Policy & Resources Committee on 11 October 2010 be referred to the full Council as the decision was

- (1) outside the budgetary framework, as provision had been made for a staffed tourism service in Oundle; and
- (2) possibly outside the policy framework as it impacts on the way tourism is delivered in the district.

**Chairman**