

ACTION NOTES

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 9 OCTOBER 2012



COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Paul Cosham
Councillor Alan Davidson
Councillor Reginald Howard (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs Rosemary Kaberry-Brown
Councillor Michael King

Councillor David Nalson
Councillor Helen Powell
Councillor Bob Russell
Councillor Bob Sampson
Councillor Frank Turner

OFFICERS

Strategic Director (Corporate Focus) – Daren Turner
Community Engagement and Policy Development – Carol Drury
Principal Democracy Officer – Jo Toomey

29. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs Smith.

30. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

No interests were disclosed.

31. ACTION NOTES FROM 28 AUGUST 2012

The action notes from the meeting held on 28 August 2012 were agreed as a correct record and noted.

32. UPDATES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The Strategic Director, Corporate Focus explained that the Committee's Scrutiny Review of Procurement Lincolnshire was sent to the Procurement Advisory Board in April/May 2012. As a result of more recent recommendations by the Scrutiny Committee in respect of its report, the report was resubmitted for consideration by the board at its meeting in September 2012. It was also scheduled that the Procurement Steering Board would consider the report at its meeting in October 2012. The chairmen of both boards had been invited to attend a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee to present their feedback. The Committee looked forward to an update at a future meeting.

33. 'BEING THE BEST' - EAST MIDLANDS AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST CONSULTATION

A copy of the East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) consultation document 'Being the Best' was circulated with the agenda. The Council's representative on the Joint Lincolnshire Health Scrutiny Committee advised members that EMAS had made a presentation to that committee at its last meeting and summarised their deliberations. She read a list of the public consultation sessions that were being held in Lincolnshire and referred to maps showing proposed changes.

Members of SKDC's Scrutiny Committee were concerned that a number of the sessions were scheduled during the day, which made attendance difficult for people who worked. There was also concern that interested members of the public could have a distance to travel to attend a meeting, particularly outside working hours. Given the subject, councillors felt that consultation should be as wide as possible. Several councillors suggested that more full information on the proposals should be made available within the consultation document for those people who were unable to attend one of the public meetings.

In principle, councillors expressed their support for the proposals, identifying potential improvements in response times and onward transportation to hospitals. Members also highlighted strategic advantages given the large, rural nature of Lincolnshire and the road networks in the county. Councillors also noted the improved value for money that East Midlands Ambulance Service could achieve by making the proposed changes. The Committee also found the proposal that ambulance maintenance and preparation was carried out by teams of individuals an advantage although some concern was expressed about needing to return an ambulance to a hub for restocking part way through a shift.

Councillors queried whether the name Community Ambulance Point was appropriate and suggested it could be misleading to members of the public, who could interpret the name as meaning a walk-in treatment base.

Some concern was expressed at the five-year time scale; councillors were interested in EMAS' masterplan for the medium to longer term. Councillors also felt that further detail on the proposals would help people understand and add value to the consultation. Of particular concern was continuing growth particularly in respect of the number of households in the district.

To support consideration of the consultation document, the committee suggested a summary detailing the different types of ambulance and specific quantities of each would prove useful. The geographic differences between Lincolnshire and other counties in the region was highlighted, together with the potential impact of a major incident on the A1, the East Coast mainline or along the east coast.

A resolution summarising the committee key points and concerns was proposed:

“This committee believes that the principle of reorganisation advocated based on a system of dispersal is very sound, however there are a number of errors and problems with presentation, and presentation needs to be much clearer (including the feedback form and the maps) if the public is to understand it. The committee also felt that given the principle of dispersal and fast response more information on the number and types of ambulances and investment in them is required. The committee also stressed concern about catering for major emergencies, for example on the A1 road and east coast mainline railway or the impact of tourism along the east coast in the summer (making seasonal adjustments to arrangements). Additional consultation events should also be scheduled to allow members of the public who work during the day to be involved in the consultation.”

This was to be circulated to councillors for the addition of any further comments and, together with a copy of the action notes would constitute a key part of the council's initial response. It was further proposed that following the submission of initial comments and concerns, representatives from EMAS be invited to the next meeting of the committee to provide further information.

Action Point

- 1. Forward the Committee's resolution to East Midlands Ambulance Service for initial feedback.**
- 2. Invite representatives from East Midlands Ambulance Service to the Committee's next meeting (27 November 2012).**

34. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, OFFICERS AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUPS

The Community Engagement and Policy Development Officer and the Principal Democracy Officer gave a brief presentation which included constitutional provisions relating to policy development groups, work programming arrangements, feedback mechanisms and scrutiny arrangements. The Strategic Director, Corporate Focus stressed the importance of an annual work programme and the importance of PDGs working closely with Cabinet. He also advised members of the Committee that each PDG had a sum of money budgeted to support policy development work, for example procuring external resources for data gathering.

Councillors stated they were encouraged by the systems and processes that had been put in place and that PDGs were involved in the formulation of policy from the early stages. The committee also noted the importance of tracking actions and recommendations.

Some concern was expressed over the reduced period covered by the Schedule of Decisions (one month) as opposed to the Forward Plan (four months). It was suggested that the period covered by the schedule of decisions could be increased.

Recommendation:

- 1. The period covered by the Schedule of Decisions should be extended to cover a four month period as per previous Forward Plan arrangements.**
- 2. That the Strategic Director, Corporate Focus and Community Engagement and Policy Development Officer devise a feedback mechanism to ensure the Scrutiny Committee is appraised of the work of the policy development groups.**
- 3. That a progress report be presented to the Scrutiny Committee in October 2013, including a summary of the progress of recommendations.**

35. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee approved the draft work programme which was attached to the agenda and the proposed working group membership, which was circulated at the meeting.

36. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The district council's representative on the Joint Lincolnshire Health Scrutiny Committee summarised a presentation given to the committee by the LIVES voluntary service. A recent change in protocol meant that LIVES responders could respond to trauma accidents; they were despatched via EMAS control rooms. The Councillor reported that there was good representation in the south of the county, however there were fewer volunteers in the north. All LIVES first responders were trained to deal with three categories of incident and for each they completed a 2-3 day training course with an exam at the end.

37. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting was closed at 12:18.