

Scrutiny Committee

Minutes

Thursday, 30 January 2014 at 18:30

PRESENT:

Councillor Stone (in the Chair), Councillors Castle, Collins, Fairhead, Field, Hanton, Marsden, Robinson-Payne, J Smith and Wright.

Councillor Peck attended as a substitute for Councillor M Coleman
Councillor Jermany attended as a substitute for Councillor Hacon.

Councillor T Wainwright and Councillor Plant attended as observers.

Mrs J Beck (Director of Customer Services), Darren Barker (Conservation Officer), David Cowl (Financial Services Manager), Robin Hodds (Cabinet Secretary) and Karline Smith (Senior Member Services Officer).

1 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2013 were confirmed.

2 VAUXHALL BRIDGE

The Conservation Officer reported that the minutes of the Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust show that two Norfolk County Council officers attended and spoke about why the Norfolk County Council Partnership should be used as the contractor for this project.

3 ST GEORGES CHAPEL AND PAVILLION

The Committee considered the Director of Customer Services report which outlined the lessons learnt from this project and how these may be used in the future.

The Director of Customer Services stated that the Chapel should have opened in December 2011, but opened on 31 December 2012.

The Chairman commented that the design and build contract ran into problems with the concept and design. The Director of Customer Services stated that this was a complex project with a number of consultants involved and a number of people

involved in making decisions.

Councillor T Wainwright stated that if this project had been dealt with in house it would hopefully have been completed on time and in budget.

The Committee asked that the Project Manager, Peter Hardy attend the next committee meeting to provide more specific details about the project.

The chairman referred to the "design and build contract that was used as the base of the agreement. This involved a number of consultants, specialist consultants and contractors to progress the works through to final completion incurring significant costs." He then asked why so many consultants and contractors had been used. The Director of Customer Services stated that this was normal practice for this level on contract.

The Director of Customer Services stated that part of the report relating to the Design Team was included as the company was not local and was not here to make decisions on a day to day basis.

The Chairman asked where the £0.5m shortfall would come from and the Director of Customer Services stated that this would come from the Capital Budget.

RESOLVED:

That the Project Manager, Peter Hardy be requested to attend the next Scrutiny Committee to provide more specific details and that a more detailed report sharing a breakdown of the costs be provided.

4 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Committee considered the budget monitoring report for the third quarter for the financial year 2013-2014 for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 December 2013.

It is forecast that the Council will be transferring the sum of £607,000 to reserves against a budget which proposed to utilise £1,473,000 from reserves. This represents an underspend against the original budget of £2,080,000.

The Beacon Park and Marina Centre funds would be rolled over.

It was agreed that the Scrutiny Committee would ask a representative from DCLG or a Minister why the Council had received the level of grant it had received and why it was of a reduced amount.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and that a Minister or a representative from DCLG be requested to attend a future Scrutiny Committee to explain why the Council received the level of grant and why it was of a reduced amount.

5 WARD COUNCILLORS

The Cabinet Secretary reported on the recent Ward Councillor Working Group meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Members Handbook, Induction Plan and the Mentoring scheme be endorsed and presented to Cabinet for approval.

6 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2013-14

That Cabinet Secretary reported that it was anticipated that the following items would be considered at the March meeting:-

- * Tourism Review - receive an update on the bus station works from Norfolk County Council.
- * Efficiency Support Grant - receive an update at the next meeting.
- * Key Performance Indicators
- * Land Holdings
- * Impact on Benefit Changes
- * St Georges Chapel and Pavillion

and the following items be added to the work programme:-

- * Review of Civic Protocols
- * Town Centre Partnership Annual Report

The meeting ended at: 19:15