Agenda

Partnership Review
Monday, 8 September 2008 at 7.00pm
Committee Room, Swanspool House, Doddington Road, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire NN8 1BP

1. Apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of interest.


4. Any other items that the Chairman decides are urgent.

Enclosed

Lyn Martin-Bennison,
Chief Executive

Date issued: 29 August 2008

Membership: Councillor Harrington (Chairman), Councillor G Lawman (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Bass, R Bell, Bigley, Blackwell, Graves, Patel and Shram
**BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WELLINGBOROUGH**

**AGENDA ITEM** 2

Partnership Review

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Councillor ____________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agenda item no</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Personal or Personal &amp; Prejudicial</th>
<th>Reason for interest</th>
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Please complete and hand to the committee administrator. You are still required to declare your interest orally at the meeting.

See extract from the Code of Conduct on reverse
Personal interests
8.—(1) You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where either—

(a) it relates to or is likely to affect—

(i) any outside body to which are appointed by the Council
(ii) any body of which you are a member exercising functions of a public nature or directed to charitable purposes or whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union),
(iii) your job or your business
(iv) your employer or anyone who has appointed you;
(v) anyone who has made a payment to you in respect of your election or any expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties;
(vi) any person or body who has a place of business or land in your authority’s area, and in whom you have a beneficial interest in a class of securities in that body that exceeds the nominal value of £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital (whichever is the lower);
(vii) any contract for goods, services or works made between your authority and you or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi);
(viii) the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25;
(ix) any land in your authority’s area in which you have a beneficial interest;
(x) any land where the landlord is your authority and any firm you are associated with is, the tenant;
(xi) any land in the authority’s area for which you have a licence to occupy for 28 days or longer; or

(b) a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well-being or financial position or the well-being or financial position of a relevant person to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral ward, affected by the decision;

(2) In sub-paragraph (1)(b), a relevant person is—

(a) a member of your family; or
(aa) any person with whom you have a close association; or
(b) any person or body who employs or has appointed a relevant person; any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors;
(c) any body in whom a relevant person has a beneficial interest in securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or
(d) any body to which the Council has appointed you or one that exercises public or charitable functions.

Disclosure of personal interests
9.—(1) you must disclose your interest at the start of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent

(2) Where you have a personal interest affecting a body to which you are appointed by the Council or one exercising functions of a public nature, you need only disclose to the meeting the existence and nature of that interest if you decide to speak

(3) You only need to declare against persons who have provided hospitality or gift for three years after you made the declaration

Prejudicial interests generally
10.—(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), in cases where you have a personal interest in an item of business, you also have a prejudicial interest where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

(2) You do not have a prejudicial interest in any business of the authority where that business—

(a) does not affect your financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in paragraph 8;
(b) does not relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or any person or body described in paragraph 8; or
(c) relates to the functions of your authority in respect of […]

(iv) an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;
(v) any ceremonial honour given to members; and
(vi) setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Effect of prejudicial interests on participation
12.—(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority—

(a) you must withdraw from the room or chamber where a meeting considering the business is being held

(i) in a case where sub-paragraph (2) applies, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence;

(ii) in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered […]

(c) you must not seek improperly to influence a decision about that business.

(2) Where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority, you may attend a meeting (including a meeting of the overview and scrutiny committee of your authority) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to take part in the meeting for the same purpose)
1 Purpose of Report

a)  
I. To suggest possible Work Programme topics for the Committee to cover in the 2008/09 committee year.  
II. To help the Committee to decide which elements of the Work Programme from the former Scrutiny Committee should be brought to Partnerships Review.  
III. To give Committee Members the opportunity to suggest which organisations they would like invited to attend future meetings.  
IV. To advise Committee Members regarding the aims of the Partnerships Review Committee and other potentially problematic issues.

b)
I. Speakers will be arranged as agreed by the Committee

2 Executive Summary
At this inaugural meeting of the Partnerships Review Committee, Members are invited to start putting together a work programme for the 2008/09 Committee year. Two organisations had been due to address the former Scrutiny Committee prior to its disbandment, with four topics having been identified as priorities. The establishment of a working group to look at educational attainment within the Borough had also been proposed. If required, this work can be continued by the new committee. There are new terms of reference which need to inform the creation of a new Work Programme. The creation of this new Committee comes as Northamptonshire County Council is in the process of trying to establish a countywide Scrutiny Committee.

3 Proposed Action

3.1 The Committee is asked to discuss and RECOMMEND topics and speakers to be brought to the Committee in 2008/09

3.2 The Committee is invited to decide whether it wishes to RECOMMEND the setting up of a forum which would work with partners to look at ways to improve educational attainment within the Borough.

3.3 The Committee is invited to consider the points raised in 5.8
4 Background

4.1 The former Scrutiny Committee, which met for the last time in February 2008, had a work programme of external organisations that were due to attend the Committee. Two had been given definitive dates for their attendance and had accepted the invitation. It was agreed at December’s meeting that four topics should be prioritised, including the Fire and Arson Taskforce.

4.2 The Partnerships Review Committee has had its Terms of Reference approved (Please see appendix A). Besides these Terms, the Committee effectively has a blank sheet of paper from which to start. To ensure that Committee time is used effectively, a work programme needs to be established for the 2008/09 Committee cycle. The Committee is, therefore, invited to discuss which organisations should be invited to this year’s meetings and whether any organisations from the previous work programme are required in light of the new terms of reference. NCC is currently in the process of trying to establish a countywide scrutiny committee. Any development of such a function is likely to impact on scrutiny in Wellingborough and could create the potential for joint working.

5 Discussion

The Former Scrutiny Committee

5.1 Two organisations had accepted invitations to attend the former Scrutiny Committee. These were the Fire and Arson Taskforce and Victim Support.

5.2 It was agreed by the former Scrutiny Committee that the following four topics be prioritised:

- Adult social care and health (Considered a particular priority due to the new contract arrangements which were due to enter into force in April 2008).
- Youth Provision
- Housing Allocation
- Fire and Rescue Arson Taskforce

Other topics that remained as possible issues to be brought to the Committee in the future included:

- The work of the Safer Community Teams and PCSO’s for each area of the Borough
- The Local Area Agreement
- An update on the supply of services to pupils and parents, e.g. breakfast clubs and after school clubs
- The North Northamptonshire Development Company (NNDC)
- Recycling within the Council.

It was agreed that the Castle Board would report to Resources and the Waendel Leisure Centre to Community.
5.3 The former Scrutiny Committee received a presentation from local secondary heads regarding educational attainment within the Borough, at its December 2008 meeting. It was subsequently agreed that a forum should be set up. This would be devoted to the subject of how the Council might involve local stakeholders within the secondary education system to achieve the optimal results for students and young people in the borough. To date, no action has been taken to set up such a forum.

Work of the Partnerships Review Committee

5.4 It is recommended that the Committee hold introductory sessions for its partners. These can be used to provide Committee Members with a background of what the organisation does as well as providing an opportunity for both parties to outline what they hope to achieve from the Scrutiny process.

5.5 Although the issue of equalities is important, it is suggested that equalities issues which affect other organisations be handled by the Audit and Performance Committee. Partnerships Review will still be able to scrutinise organisations whose work is in itself connected to equalities issues e.g. the Wellingborough African Caribbean Association.

5.6 The Partnerships Review Committee is required to scrutinise a much wider range of partners than the former scrutiny committee. Organisations which should be scrutinised include other public sector bodies, the voluntary sector, the business sector, other tiers of local government and regional/sub-regional bodies. To this end, it is suggested that the following issues are considered for inclusion in the Committee’s Work Programme:

- The Town Centre Partnership
- The six strands of the Local Strategic Partnership
- What is the Wellingborough Partnership achieving?
- How can partnership be better managed? - With input from the LSP
- Scrutiny of the council’s own work in relation to partnerships
- Wellingborough African and Caribbean Association
- Scrutiny of other local voluntary organisations
- Parish Councils – particularly with regard to planning

5.7 NCC is currently looking to set up a county wide scrutiny committee. A meeting of lead scrutiny officers is due to take place today to discuss pros and cons and finalise models. A meeting between lead scrutiny members, officers, the Police Authority and the Primary Care Trust will be then be held. The model will be amended as necessary, with the Chief Executives Group receiving a paper on the preferred option by December. If a countywide scrutiny committee is launched, it may be beneficial to consider the activities of this committee when formulating the Partnerships Review Work Programme.
Other Issues

5.8

- It has previously been noted that three presentations in a single meeting is considered to be too much. The new committee would be advised to limit presentations to a maximum of two per meeting.
- The new Terms of Reference provide the potential to generate a large volume of work for the committee. If the committee has too much work then the quality of the scrutiny function is likely to be diminished. There needs to be enough time and capacity available for presentations, questions and any other follow ups to take place.
- Some other local authorities have produced a ‘Scrutiny Toolkit.’ Such toolkits provide advice and guidance to Members, Officers, the general public and anyone else who is interested in the Council’s Scrutiny process. They also set out how the public can get involved. Creation of such a toolkit for Wellingborough could help to make the scrutiny process clearer as well as helping the Council to fulfil its ‘Duty to Involve.’
- The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 gives Councillors the right to put items on Scrutiny agendas, even if they are not Members of the Committee. This amounts to a ‘Councillor Call for Action’. This can only be used when an issue is of direct concern to the Councillor’s Ward. Although this power is not yet in wide use, Committee agendas need to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate such items or presentations that are added to the agenda at short notice.

6 Legal Powers
6.1 Not Applicable

7 Financial and value for money implications
7.1 Financial – Speakers may require the payment of expenses
7.2 Value for money – The Work Programme is likely to occupy the vast majority of Committee time

8 Risk analysis and Implications

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<th>Nature of risk</th>
<th>Consequences if realised</th>
<th>Likelihood of occurrence</th>
<th>Control measures</th>
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<td>Work Programme is not finalised</td>
<td>Committee will not be able to scrutinise organisations in a timely and effective manner</td>
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<td>Ensure that the committee decides as far as possible what to incorporate in its work programme and communicates this to officers</td>
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<td>The work of the former Scrutiny</td>
<td>The working relationship</td>
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Committee is abandoned with organisations that previously attended the Committee will be lost and lack of effective scrutiny the former Committee’s work it wishes to continue and ensures that this is followed up

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<th>Organisations invited to attend Committee do not adequately reflect the Committee terms of reference</th>
<th>Scrutiny will be ineffective and may not fulfil legal obligations</th>
<th>Carefully consider the relevance of each topic to the Work Programme and ensure that all terms of reference are covered in some capacity</th>
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The Committee lacks the capacity to fulfil all obligations placed on it by the terms of reference Scrutiny will be ineffective and may not fulfil legal obligations Committee needs to review work programme regularly to ensure its effective delivery. If appropriate, changes to Committee structure or terms of reference could be considered

8.1 **Implications for Resources**
Minimal. Some officer time will be required to arrange speakers.

8.2 **Implications for Stronger and Safer Communities**
Dependent on which organisations are invited to the Committee and the topics discussed.

8.3 **Implications for Equalities**
Dependent on which organisations are invited to the Committee and the topics discussed.

9 **Author and Contact Officer**
David Seabrooke – Head of Policy
Jonathan Pitt – National Management Trainee

10 **Consultees**
   David Seabrooke, Joe Hubbard, Jonathan Pitt

11 **Background Papers**
   Scrutiny Committee Minutes from meeting of 05/02/08
   Partnerships Review Committee Terms of Reference
Appendix A

Partnerships Review Committee Terms of Reference

1) To undertake reviews and make recommendations on services or activities carried out by external organisations which affect the Borough of Wellingborough or its inhabitants

2) To monitor the Council’s external relations with:
   a) Other public sector/quasi public sector bodies e.g. Police, PCT, Strategic Health Authority
   b) Voluntary sector e.g. CVS
   c) Business sector e.g. Wellingborough Chamber of Commerce
   d) Other tiers of local government – Northamptonshire County Council and Parish Councils within the Borough
   e) Regional and sub-regional bodies e.g. East Midlands Regional Assembly, EMDA, GOEM, East Midlands LGA, Sub-Regional Strategic Partnership

3) The Council’s role in facilitating, developing and consolidating partnerships both statutory and non-statutory including:
   a) Community Safety and Crime Reduction Partnership
   b) Local Strategic Partnership
   c) Wellingborough Town Centre Partnership

4) Local Area Agreements and Public Service Agreements

5) Communication and consultation with external agencies and the public

6) Overview and Scrutiny of outside bodies on which the Council has representation including examination of the “added value” of the Council’s participation and the opportunity for appointed representatives to “feedback” to the Council on the activities of the body concerned

7) Matters relating to the community leadership role and empowering communities