

SCRUTINY BOARD

27th June 2007 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Taylor (Chair), Councillors Ayub, Dolling, Ireland, Pedersen, Singh and Skepelhorn.

20 MINUTES (REF: 2.1)

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 6th March 2007 and 22nd May 2007 be taken as read, approved as correct records and signed by the Chair.

21 REPORTS FROM CHAIRS OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEES (REF: 7)

There were no reports on this occasion. The Chair asked that all Scrutiny Chairs be invited to the next meeting of the Board on 23rd October 2007.

22 REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS ON MONITORING OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS (REF: 8)

The Chair reported on the Social Inclusion Scrutiny Committee meeting he had attended on 5th June 2007 and noted how well it had been conducted with members of the public in attendance. He suggested that Members of the Board attend other Scrutiny committees as a matter of course, as it was interesting to see how other Committees operated.

Resolved: (i) That the report (Ref: 8) be noted.

(ii) That Members of the Scrutiny Board attend Scrutiny Committees as a matter of course.

23 BEDFORDSHIRE AND LUTON JOINT HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2006-07 (REF: 9.1)

The Director of Scrutiny reported on the Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Health Scrutiny Committee Annual Report. Members of the Board were informed that the Annual Report had been submitted to the Council on 17th April, where it was considered and approved for publication as planned.

Resolved: That the Report (Ref: 9.1) be noted.

24 DIRECTOR'S REPORT (REF: 9.2)

The Director of Scrutiny updated the Members with regard to matters affecting Scrutiny. The Board were informed that the County Council had decided that they wished to withdraw from the Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Health Scrutiny Committee in autumn. Therefore, the Board would need to consider what arrangements should be implemented for the scrutiny of local

health services in Luton. There were three options available to Luton in regard to future arrangements for health scrutiny, these were:-

- To set up an additional Committee to undertake the scrutiny of local health services.
- To add the responsibility for undertaking health scrutiny to one of the existing Scrutiny Committees.
- For the board itself to undertake the Scrutiny of local health services.

The Director of Scrutiny informed Members that the County Council's reason for withdrawal from the joint arrangements was that the Patient and Public Involvement Forums (PPIFs), would be replaced by Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) in 2008. The LINKs would mirror the PCT areas and its remit would include adult and older persons' social care and health. The County Council had decided to echo this arrangement by establishing its own scrutiny committee to scrutinise health and social care.

Members of the Committee suggested that as an interim measure, the Social Inclusion Scrutiny Committee be requested to consider taking on functions dealt with by the Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Health Scrutiny Committee until LINKs were established in May 2008.

The Scrutiny Officer gave a presentation based on the deliberations of the 5th Annual Conference for Public Scrutiny. Emphasis had been laid on the extended role of Scrutiny in regard to Community Call for Action (CCFA's). The main shift would be from the scrutiny of an individual public service or institution to the scrutiny of a place. Three main models of Scrutiny had been developed to deal with CCFA's and outlined the possible stages of implementation using the Kirklees Model with Scrutiny's role supporting Councillors and identifying CCFA's. She added that issues would only be referred to Scrutiny after all other means had been considered. Support and advice would be offered to the public and Councillors would be advised on the new role of Scrutiny.

Two Models of CCFA's had been piloted. The Home Office Model and the Community and Living Model. The Home Office Model:-

- Was a tool for empowering the public
- A duty on Councillors to respond
- Used normal mechanisms in the first instance
- Could refer crime and disorder issues to Scrutiny
- Had a right of appeal via Executive.

The Community and Living Model:-

- Had a more generic remit: Local Government matter
- Excluded crime and disorder
- Was a tool to strengthen the power of Ward Councillors

- Referred to Overview and Scrutiny Committees
- Was likely to exclude planning and licensing applications.

The White Paper gave devolved powers/budgets to Ward Councillors. Also the control of CCFA's would be controlled by Overview and Scrutiny Committees and had safeguards against vexatious complaints.

Resolved: (i) That the Report (Ref: 9.2) be noted.

(ii) That the Social Inclusion Scrutiny Committee be requested to consider taking on functions dealt with by the Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Health Scrutiny Committee as an interim measure until LINKs are established.

25 **SCRUTINY COMMITTEES – ARRANGEMENTS (REF: 9.3)**

The Director of Scrutiny invited the Committee to set out and discuss options for alternative arrangements of scrutiny committees. The Board were informed that since the introduction of Executive and Scrutiny arrangements in May 2000, there had only been minor alterations, therefore it was proposed by the Corporate Leadership Management Team (CLMT) that the current arrangements be modified. Six Options for modification had been submitted, of which Option 5 was favoured by CLMT as it focused on the primary functions of Scrutiny, which held Executive portfolio holders accountable.

Members of the Board decided that no changes should be made to the Executive and Scrutiny arrangements, but the matter should be monitored and a report submitted at a future date when implications of the White Paper were known.

Members suggested that the Forward Plan be placed on future Scrutiny Board agendas and added to Scrutiny Committees work programme reports to enable Members to be informed of forth coming and relevant topics, which could be scrutinised.

A Member of the Board raised concern at the allocation of all Chairs of Scrutiny Committees to Labour Councillors, and felt that it was an insult to democracy. He suggested that the Scrutiny Board should recommend that the Council offered the Chairs of Scrutiny Committee to members of the opposition parties. This suggestion having been put to the vote was lost.

Resolved: (i) That the Report (Ref: 9.3) be noted.

(ii) That no changes be made at present to the current Executive and Scrutiny arrangements.

(iii) That the Executive and Scrutiny arrangements be monitored and a report be submitted to a future meeting.

(iv) That the Forward Plan be placed on future Scrutiny Board and Scrutiny Committee agendas to enable Members to be informed of forth coming and relevant topics, which could be scrutinised.

(Note: The meeting concluded at 8.05 p.m.)