

## **JOINT SCRUTINY PANEL**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 28 JULY 2014**

#### **TOWN HALL, CHESTERFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Councillor Jean Innes (Chesterfield Borough Council (CBC)) in the Chair

Councillor John Windle (North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC))

Councillor Rita Turner (Bolsover District Council (BDC)) +

Anita Cunningham, Policy and Scrutiny Officer (CBC)

Malcolm Clinton, Business Manager, BCN Consultancy

Neil Johnson, Development and Growth Manager (CBC)

Bryan Mason, Joint Executive Director of Operations (BDC and NEDDC) ++

Lynne Cheong, (Acting Scrutiny Officer) (BDC)

Donna Cairns (Committee and Scrutiny Coordinator) (CBC)

+ Attended for Minutes 6 - 9.

++ Attended for Minutes 1 - 5

#### 1. **QUOROM**

As there were no Members present from Bolsover District Council at the beginning of the meeting, the meeting was not quorate. It was therefore agreed that the Joint Panel continue as an informal meeting.

#### 2. **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

No declarations were made.

#### 3. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Heffer (BDC), Councillor Wallis (BDC), and Councillor Wright (NEDDC).

#### 4. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING, 15 MAY, 2014**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 May, 2014 were approved.

#### 5. **SHARED PROCUREMENT UNIT (SPU) UPDATE**

The Joint Executive Director of Operations provided an update on issues affecting the shared procurement service. Staff had left to take up posts with the NHS, leaving the service seriously under-staffed, which resulted ultimately in it being dissolved.

CBC had resolved that it would leave the SPU and appoint a

procurement officer to deal with the current workload at the Council.

From April 2014, NEDDC and BDC had entered into a partnership with the NHS (Chesterfield Royal Hospital) in order to retain access to the services of the skilled and experienced staff that had moved over.

CBC remained involved in shared procurement for the provision of banking services, together with BDC, NEDDC, Derbyshire Dales and Ashfield district councils due to the withdrawal of the Co-operative Bank services at the same time for all councils.

It was discussed that it was possible for further joint procurement to take place on specific matters as they arise. The joint partnership with Chesterfield Royal Hospital had availability for other bodies to use the service, but with an expectation that a contribution be made towards the costs.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6. **INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS UPDATE**

The Joint Executive Director of Operations presented an update on the review of Insurance Arrangements.

It was discussed that the insurance needs of the different councils varied too much for a unified approach to insurance; however the sharing of resources such as in-house insurance administration was considered.

It was discussed that a possible savings efficiency could be found in sharing one officer as an insurance administrator, but this presented a risk in having no skilled/experienced officer to provide cover for any of the authorities should that one person be off work. At present, it was considered that no shared arrangements would be suitable, other than the sharing of information and best practice which was ongoing.

RESOLVED that the update be noted and the officer thanked for his attendance.

7. **ANNUAL REPORT TO THE JOINT BOARD**

The proposed annual report of the Joint Scrutiny Panel was presented for approval. The meeting of the Joint Board had not taken place on 30 June 2014 so it was agreed for Cllr Innes from CBC to present the report at the next Joint Board meeting on 1 September 2014.

8. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 – EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** - That under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it

involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act – information on the financial or business affairs of an organisation.

9. **BCN CONSULTANCY (BUILDING CONTROL) UPDATE REPORT**

The Development and Growth Manager provided an update report on the financial position of the BCN Consultancy as at the end of the financial year 2013/2014 and on the potential for a Building Control service to be developed to cover Derbyshire. A budget monitoring statement for April to June 2014 was also provided.

A report was made to the Joint Scrutiny Panel in July 2013 (Minute No. 78 (2013/2014)) on an appraisal commissioned to consider the future of the BCN following the deficit that had existed in that financial year.

Two options were recommended:

- Outsourcing to a local authority/commercial partnership where staff and responsibility for service delivery would transfer to a third party
- Recruiting a commercial manager and retaining a rationalised in-house core team and capacity support from a third party.

The appraisal had not reported immediate demand from neighbouring authorities for expansion of the consortium, however at a Derbyshire Chief Executives Group meeting, interest was expressed by other Derbyshire councils. A decision on implementing the options of the appraisal were therefore deferred until the wider local authority consortium was explored. The scoping work for this was to be put out to tender at the beginning of August 2014, with a review to be complete by October 2014.

In the financial year 2013/2014, the BCN account held a surplus, a portion of which was agreed at Joint Board to be used between the costs of the Derbyshire wide consultancy exercise and to pay for changes in ICT to allow for more flexible working. The remainder was shared between the three authorities on a pro-rata basis.

The Panel expressed how pleased they were with the progress being made with BCN.

It was agreed that a further update would be brought to the next meeting of the Joint Scrutiny Panel following the completion of the review into the Derbyshire-wide Building Control Partnership.

**RESOLVED** that a further report be provided to the next meeting.

10. **READMISSION OF PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED -** That the public may be readmitted to the meeting.

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be at Tuesday 4 November, 2014.