

**Minutes of a Meeting of the
Performance and Finance Scrutiny
Committee held at Surrey Heath House
on 28 September 2016**

+ Cllr Alan McClafferty (Chairman)
+ Cllr Jonathan Lytle (Vice Chairman)

+ Cllr Dan Adams	+ Cllr Max Nelson
- Cllr Bill Chapman	+ Cllr Robin Perry
+ Cllr Edward Hawkins	+ Cllr Chris Pitt
- Cllr Paul Ilnicki	+ Cllr Wynne Price
+ Cllr David Lewis	+ Cllr Darryl Ratiram
+ Cllr Oliver Lewis	+ Cllr Victoria Wheeler
+ Present	
- Apologies for absence presented	

In Attendance: Cllr Moira Gibson, Karen Whelan, Andrew Crawford, Sarah Groom, Julia Hutley-Savage, Louise Livingston, Kelvin Menon and Richard Payne.

10/PF Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed Members to the meeting and in particular, welcomed the Council Leader, Councillor Moira Gibson and the Chief Executive, Karen Whelan, who had agreed to attend for discussions on the Annual Performance Report and the Annual Plan.

11/PF Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 6 July 2016, were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

12/PF End of Year Performance 2015/16

The Committee considered a report on the Council's performance for 2015/16. This report had previously been considered by the Executive in August 2016 and would be the final report in its current format, reflecting changes proposed to the Annual Plan and the introduction of a 5 year plan to replace the previous 10 year Strategy.

Members noted that inconsistencies in the Red/Amber/Green (RAG) report had been raised by the Executive and measures had been incorporated into future reporting to introduce a greater level of clarity.

The proposed changes to the report format and content were welcomed, particularly in respect of more clarity on whether or not an issue was fully within the Council's control and whether targets were to be achieved in that particular year or a more extended period.

The Chief Executive reported that, in an environment where councils were required to respond quickly to change, it had been considered prudent to introduce

changes to long, medium and short term measures which permitted the Council to maintain and improve services against a background of reduced funding and resources, whilst providing greater clarity for Borough residents on what had been achieved against targets set.

Within the report, there were a small number of targets which had not been met, notably in respect of the Museum/Heritage Centre. It had been recognised that whilst improvements were needed in some services, these were not as high a priority as some other more key issues and the Council had adjusted its focus accordingly.

Members sought clarification of the actual subsidy levels for the Camberley Theatre and how these compared to target reductions set. It was emphasised that the Council would need to take a broad view on all subsidies, including those to the Theatre.

The Committee welcomed a number of notable achievements from the report, including ongoing moves to regenerate Camberley Town Centre, investment in properties, achieving the 'Gold' level in Investors in People plus the 'Commitment' level of the Workplace Wellbeing Charter and achieving income returns at 20% above the Local Authorities average.

Frimley Lodge Park had been re-awarded a Green Flag and Members would be asked in the future to consider whether or not the Park should be upgraded to 'Sub-Regional Park' status.

In response to Members' queries, the Leader and Chief Executive noted that:

- (i) Ashwood House – Negotiations were proceeding with tendering organisations. Proposals would be considered by a Design Panel in October 2016 and a report would be submitted to the Planning Applications Committee shortly thereafter;
- (ii) Gyratory System – Funding was available for the Gyratory System, the majority of which would come from the EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership. However, funding for the remainder of the A30 was still to be secured;
- (iii) Arena Leisure Centre – A working group was actively considering options for the Centre and a report would be submitted to the Council by the end of 2016; and
- (iv) Complaints – Whilst the Council was in general very good at addressing complaints, there were areas where complaints at the different levels were considered to need further consideration. The majority of complaints related to planning and to a lesser degree, council tax. Complaint handling in these areas was the subject of a review.

Resolved, that the report be noted.

The Committee considered a report on an updated Annual Plan for 2016/17, including an overview of the vision and objectives from the Five Year Strategy and indicating the outputs and success measures that would be delivered in 2016/17 for each of the new priorities. The Annual Plan had been considered by the Executive in August 2016.

Members noted that the Annual Plan had been simplified and was more succinct, with a more definitive breakdown of what should be achieved and measured. Outcomes would be reviewed against success measures at the 6 month point and at the end of the year.

The Committee was informed that significant changes to the 5 Year Plan had impacted on the Annual Plan, building in an unavoidable delay in presenting to the Committee.

Councillor Moira Gibson noted that the new format, whilst being much improved on the previous model, would still require adjustment to get the right level of information, to allow a balance between informing members of the public and providing the type of data on key performance areas that Members would need to engage in proper scrutiny. Members would be encouraged to input to consideration on this.

A number of concerns were raised in respect of historic decisions and delays in areas such as highways improvements in the Yorktown Business Park. It was, however, noted that many of the concerns raised related to responsibilities that did not lie with this Council.

The Chairman thanked the Council Leader and Chief Executive for attending and discussing the Performance Report and Annual Plan with the Committee.

Resolved, that the Annual Plan for 2016/17, as set out in Annex A to the Officer report, be noted.

14/PF Review of Reserves and Provisions

The Committee considered a report which detailed the criteria for maintaining individual Reserves and Provisions, following the closure of the 2015/16 accounts. The Executive Head of Finance detailed the difference between reserves and provisions and noted that getting the right levels thereof would become more critical when the 100% localisation of Business Rates was introduced.

Members were asked to consider whether or not the criteria relating to specific reserves or provisions continued to be appropriate and to review the actual sums set aside for each.

When considering the individual reserves and provisions, the Committee noted the following responses:

- (i) Community Fund – Although £75,000 was available per annum, the level of funding used was dependent on the number of qualifying grant applications submitted;

- (ii) Blackwater Valley and Developer Contributions – This funding was for the maintenance of the park and facilities for the period of its useful life and had been generated through developer contributions;
- (iii) Surrey Family Support Programme – This had been front-funded for set up and operation and was now being used for day-to-day support. At such a point as the fund became depleted, Members would have to consider what service was needed and how to fund/resource that service; and
- (iv) Pot Hole Repairs – These related to potholes in property/land owned by this Council and therefore not a Highways responsibility.

Resolved, that the Committee proposes to the Executive that all Reserves and Provisions and the associated criteria, as detailed in the Officer's report, remain unchanged.

15/PF Working Groups

There were no proposals to establish any task and finish groups.

16/PF Work Programme

The Committee considered a report on a possible work programme for the remainder of the 2016/17.

The Chairman reported that he and the Vice-Chairman had met with officers and had proposed that in future:

- (i) Executive Summary - Reports should start with an Executive Summary;
- (ii) Presentations - Where possible, presentations should be limited to 10 minutes and copied to the Chairman in advance of the meeting;
- (iii) Portfolio Holders (PHs) –
 - Prior to meetings, PHs be asked to submit a short written brief for inclusion in the agenda.
 - PHs be asked to indicate how their portfolios impact on the community and if possible give an indication of their objectives and the strategies which will be used to achieve these;
 - Presentations to be kept to a minimum to maximise question opportunities.
 - Given that only 4 meetings were scheduled for each year and there were currently 6 portfolio holders, it had been suggested by the Leader that, rather than increase the number of meetings, the Committee should invite more than one portfolio holder to each meeting.

- Members be asked to, where possible, submit questions in advance to allow PHs to provide more detailed responses at the meeting;
- (iv) Reports to Note – A number of matters which the Committee was required to consider each year showed little if any change year on year, examples being air quality monitoring or Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), where the regulations have changed but no interventions have been made. It was suggested that an update report be presented once a year incorporating all such issues.
- (v) Priorities – It was recognised that scrutiny of 2 Portfolio Holders would limit the time available for other scrutiny. It was suggested that in order of importance, the Committee should consider scrutiny of portfolio holders, issues that the Committee was required to consider and other matters, as they were raised.

The Chairman noted that he was having discussions on the timing of reports, to seek more timely availability of key reports such as the Annual Plan. The availability of the Transformation and Regulatory Portfolio Holders had already been confirmed and the Finance and Corporate Portfolio Holders would now be invited.

Resolved, that the Committee Work Programme for the remainder of 2016/17, as indicated below, be agreed.

DATE	TOPIC	OFFICER
7 December 2016		
1	Scrutiny of Portfolio Holders – Transformation/ Finance	Louise Livingston/ Kelvin Menon
2	½ Year Treasury Management Report	Kelvin Menon
3	½ Year Finance Report	Kelvin Menon
4	Complaints and Ombudsman	Lyn Smith
5	Mid-Year Performance Report	Sarah Groom
6	Transformation linked reports	LL/KW
7	Working Groups	Andrew Crawford
8	Committee Work Programme	Andrew Crawford
22 March 2017		
1	Scrutiny of Portfolio Holders - Regulatory	Jenny Rickard
2	3 rd Quarter Finance Report	Kelvin Menon
3	Executive Summary Report	Andrew Crawford
4	Corporate Risk	Kelvin Menon
5	Regulatory linked reports	Jenny Rickard
6	Working Groups	Andrew Crawford
7	Committee Work Programme	Andrew Crawford

Chairman