

**Minutes of a Meeting of the
Performance and Finance Scrutiny
Committee held at Surrey Heath House
on 30 September 2015**

+ Cllr David Allen (Chairman)
+ Cllr Wynne Price (Vice Chairman)

+ Cllr Dan Adams	+ Cllr Max Nelson
+ Cllr Bill Chapman	+ Cllr Robin Perry
+ Cllr Edward Hawkins	+ Cllr Chris Pitt
- Cllr Paul Ilnicki	+ Cllr Darryl Ratiram
+ Cllr Oliver Lewis	+ Cllr Victoria Wheeler
+ Cllr Jonathan Lytle	+ Cllr John Winterton
+ Cllr Alan McClafferty	

+ Present
- Apologies for absence presented

Substitutes: Cllr Valerie White (In place of Paul Ilnicki)

In Attendance: Cllr Ian Sams, Lee Brewin, Julia Hutley-Savage, Kelvin Menon and Tim Pashen

13/PF Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 29 July 2015 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

14/PF Update on Joint Waste Collection Contract

It was noted that it would not be appropriate for the 'Scrutiny of Portfolio Holder' item to be considered at this meeting due to the sensitive nature of the Joint Waste Collection Contract negotiations.

The Committee was advised that at the meeting of the Executive on 3 December 2013, it was resolved that the Council jointly procure a new waste collection and street cleansing contract. It was noted that the current waste collection service provided by the Council had a 99% satisfaction rate but it was an expensive service to maintain.

The Committee was advised that a joint venture would provide substantial savings, involving cross boundary working. The Joint Waste Collection Contract partners were Elmbridge Borough Council, Mole Valley District Council, Surrey Heath Borough Council and Woking Borough Council. It was hoped that once the new contract began, there would be a seam less transition for customers.

It was noted that 14 suppliers had expressed an interest in the contract and 5 had agreed to proceed to the pre-qualification stage. The partners would be looking for innovation as well as value for money during the current stage of the process of the competitive dialogue stage.

Some Members felt that a consultation process launched by Surrey County Council regarding waste and recycling, could be counter intuitive as the consultation gave an impression that people would have to pay to recycle. It was agreed that the format could have been improved. It was made clear that domestic collections would be free but there could be a charge for certain materials.

It was also noted that close scrutiny of policies would need to take place so they would be consistent across all partner authorities.

Some Members sought clarification as to whether striving to remain top of the tables regarding waste had a cost implication and would there be any penalties for being a little further down the list. It was advised that with regard to some materials, the Council received recycling credits so it was beneficial to maintain the high level of success.

Regarding the new contract, Members were advised that the emphasis would be on minimising residual waste rather than maximising recycling.

Members noted that some recycling collections had been rejected due to contamination. These materials would then be transferred to landfill or sent for incineration. Therefore the focus would be reducing contamination and improving quality.

Resolved that the report be noted.

15/PF Update on Emergency Planning and Business Continuity

The Committee received a report on the Council's resilience to respond to emergencies and considered the Corporate Resilience Policy which outlined various objectives to be met. It was noted that this was a statutory function.

The main focus over the last six months had been on Business Continuity and a multi- agency flood plan. There would also be more training and an exercise provided in the near future. The Council also had an agreement with Rushmoor Borough Council where the civic offices would be a secondary centre.

The Committee discussed flooding and the work of the Council's drainage engineer Wayne Purdon was commended. Some Members also considered the security of the electrical supply and it was agreed that information regarding this would be forwarded to the Committee.

Some Members had concerns about a care home in Lightwater, during the water supply shortage this year, which had not had any contact from the Council. Members were advised that the Council maintained a list of vulnerable people and it was important that this was kept up to date. Nevertheless, it was noted that the responsibility on that occasion rested with the water supplier.

It was also mentioned that the skills of the Royal Logistics Corps in Deepcut could be called upon in emergencies. Members were advised that the Ministry of Defence were part of the emergency planning process.

Resolved that the following be noted:

- i) All Services had produced, validated and tested service business continuity plans and that the agreed Critical Activities had been incorporated onto a Corporate Incident Plan.**
- ii) The Surrey Heath Multi-Agency Flood Plan had been completed and approved.**

16/PF Update on Independent Living

Members received a report on Independent Living in the borough and were advised that all the services within this area were discretionary. The various services on offer were to allow people to stay independent in their homes for as long as possible.

The only provision which was statutory was the disabled facilities grants (DFG).

The Committee discussed the Windle Valley Centre, community transport, community alarms, meals at home and the Home Improvement Agency. All these services helped to maintain independence which resulted in less cost overall. It was noted that the Council subsidised services for independent living by £804,000 (which included DFGs). Currently the Council had 2000 clients, each subsidised by £402. Members were advised that, for comparison, an elective in patient stay excluding excess bed days in 2012/13 cost £3366; a non-elective in patient short and long stay cost £1489. This clearly illustrated that it would cost less to maintain independence in the home.

It was also suggested that the Council's Community transport could be used to ferry people to and from hospital. This was being investigated but there would need to be a charge made as no claim could be made for using bus passes.

Resolved that the following be noted:

- i) the wide range of services provided by the council to promote independent living;**
- ii) the opening of the wellbeing centre at the Windle Valley centre;**
- iii) the increased number of customers receiving the Community Alarm and Meals at Home services;**
- iv) the number of properties which had been adapted to meet the needs of disabled and frail residents;**
- v) the aim to increase the numbers of people receiving these valuable services while at the same time decreasing the Council's subsidy.**

17/PF Air Quality Monitoring

The Committee received a report on the air quality in the borough. Monitoring of air quality had been carried out for over 15 years, measuring the levels of Nitrogen Dioxide and dust at 35 sites. The results of the monitoring would have to be reported to central government.

The various levels of NO2 and dust in the borough in certain areas could impact on residents, particularly those who suffer with asthma. The Council was looking into setting up a text system to alert asthma sufferers when the pollution increased.

Members were advised that the Director of Public Health had majored on Air Pollution. It was agreed that the paper would be forwarded to Members of the Committee.

Some Members also asked to what extent air quality was taken into account when considering planning applications. A response to this would be emailed to Members.

The committee thanked the Executive Head – Community for his detailed reports.

Resolved that the current air quality monitoring programme be maintained and reviewed following the conclusions of future statutory Air Quality reports submitted to DEFRA.

18/PF Annual Report on the Treasury Management Service and Actual Prudential Indicators for 2014/15

The Committee received a report on the Treasury Management Service and Actual Performance Indicators for 2014/15. This was a statutory function.

Members were advised that investment income from treasury activities had fallen but it had started to pick up again. This was due to diversifying investments, moving away from banks and investing in money markets, equity property and corporate bonds funds. In addition, the introduction of the 'bail in' directive this year had driven the Council to find other investment opportunities other than banks. The 'bail in' directive stated that if a bank became insolvent, depositors would be asked to bail in to make up any shortfall. Individual investors would be protected up to £85,000 but Local Authorities would have no protection at all.

Members were advised that the Council had complied with all Prudential Indicators. Some Members asked how the Council compared to other Local Authorities, and it was agreed that a chart illustrating this would be emailed to the Committee.

Some Members sought clarification on investments 'available for sale' on the spreadsheet for Treasury Related Investments Balances as at 31 March 2015 set out in the report. It was explained that these were money market funds which could be cashed in at any time. It was noted that some investments had been made in other Local Authorities and although the return was quite low, it was higher than banks and Central Government.

Members commended the change in investment to diversify.

It was noted that £17.9 million had been borrowed in relation to property, but it had been taken out in the new financial year and was fixed for 50 years at 4-5%. This would provide certainty for purchasing assets.

Resolved that the report on Treasury Management including compliance with the 2014/15 Prudential Indicators be noted.

19/PF Work Programme

The work programme for the remainder of the municipal year 2015/16 attached at Annex A, was considered and agreed by the Committee.

Resolved that the work programme as attached at Annex A, be agreed.

Chairman