

**Minutes of a Meeting of the
Performance and Finance Scrutiny
Committee held at Surrey Heath House
on 27 January 2016**

+ 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 Innicki	+ 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 Ian Sams

In Attendance: Andrew Crawford, Sheena Adrian, Sarah Groom, Julia Hutley-Savage, Cllr Ruth Hutchinson, Cllr Craig Fennell and Daniel Harrison

26/PF Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Craig Fennell, the Business Portfolio Holder and reminded Members of the areas under the remit of his Portfolio. He also welcomed Councillor Ruth Hutchinson, Sarah Groom and Daniel Harrison, the newly appointed Executive Head of Business, congratulating him on his appointment.

27/PF Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 2 December 2015 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

28/PF Scrutiny of Portfolio Holders - Business

Councillor Craig Fennell referred Members to the elements of his brief as Business Portfolio Holder and highlighted the following:

- (i) The Camberley Theatre – There had been a change of management at the Camberley Theatre and a conceptual change on food and drink provision. The food service, including lunchtime provision, which had been opened 18 months previously, with an external food provider, had not proved a success and the food service had been scaled back.

Consideration had been given to seat replacement, with options including refurbishment or replacement. The cheapest option proved to be replacement at a cost of approximately £100,000.

The Pantomime had achieved a net profit of approximately £35,000. Efforts continued to reduce the subsidy needed for the Theatre and the venue would celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2016.

The Committee sought clarification on the following:

- Subsidy Reduction – Members requested a breakdown of Corporate Overheads, in terms of cost and allocation;
- On-line Booking – Following experience of difficulties in booking and seat selection/allocation, Members sought a breakdown of how this service operated and any plans for improvement;
- The Future – Members queried the requirement to have a Theatre and sought an indication of the Council's commitment to this venue, going forward.

- (ii) Green Space – The Green Space Team operated and maintained a number of parks in the Borough. Recent developments include the opening of 3G pitch facilities. The business plan had set an occupancy target of 60%. To date, £79,000 had been accrued, but expenditure had been reduced, giving a net profit of £44,000 against an expected return of £37,000.

Pistachio's Café – The contract for this venue, in Frimley Lodge Park, had been put out to tender and it was anticipated that a new partner would be opening the Café again within 6 weeks' time.

Lightwater Country Park – The Visitors Centre was currently the subject of a major revamp, including an extension and refurbishment of toilet and café facilities.

Events – It was planned to drive revenue gain through more events in the Council's parks.

Arena Leisure Centre – The Centre contract had been extended by 3 years, to allow time to consider future options.

Leisure Leases – The Green Space Team advised property officers on ability to pay when leisure leases were re-issued.

Sports Development – The Council's Sports Development Officer was heavily involved in pushing forward and developing sports in the Borough. Sports demand across the Borough was evolving, with some seeing participation in decline, such as football, but others growing, such as adult netball which had seen growth of 20%.

The Committee sought clarification on the following:

- Model Railway – Frimley Lodge Park – It was understood that the miniature railway had previously had operating difficulties, particularly in terms of opening times. Members requested an update on this facility;

- Walking Football – Given the growth of Walking Football for the over 50s, Members sought assurances that suitable venues would be considered in the Borough;
- Basketball – Given the growth of this sport, were there any plans to provide outdoor courts? Councillor Fennell confirmed that there were no plans currently.
- Athletics - The biggest growth area was in athletics. It was noted that there were no athletics facilities in the Borough and the introduction thereof would carry a significant cost.
- Netball – Given the significant growth in adult netball, Members highlighted the lack of suitable playing surfaces and asked that this be investigated and an update on progress be provided;
- Public Planting – Members raised the issue of the street scene and public planting, in which it was considered that the Borough trailed, in comparison to neighbouring boroughs;

Councillor Fennell noted that, previously, the Council had looked to have hanging baskets in shopping areas, but had been advised by Surrey County Council that the street lighting was not strong enough to take the weight of these. As the street lighting was upgraded with greater load bearing poles, this issue would be considered further. Members asked that this matter be addressed urgently as the new street lighting was put in place across the Borough.

- Growth and Decline of Sports Involvement in Surrey Heath – The Committee requested a breakdown of the sports in the Borough that were growing or declining.

- (iii) Surrey Heath Museum – The Museum was developing and expanding its outreach work with schools in the Borough.

The Committee asked for an update on visitor numbers to the Museum.

- (iv) Events in the Borough – Members sought an update on what events were planned for the celebration of Her Majesty the Queen’s 90th birthday and National Picnic Week, which was understood to coincide with the birthday celebrations.

Councillor Fennell highlighted the ‘Clean for the Queen; initiative, which the Council planned to participate in.

The Executive Head of Business was asked to provide an update on plans for picnic events and the celebration of the Queen’s 90th Birthday.

- (v) Car Parking – The Council provided car park facilities for Camberley Town Centre, but also the rest of the Borough. It also provided on-street parking

enforcement at nil cost to the Borough. Unlike most surrounding Councils, which provided little or no free time on High Streets, Surrey Heath did not charge for the first 30 minutes.

Members noted that the Car Parking Strategy would be considered in the following agenda item, but sought clarification on the following:

- Revenue - How did parking revenue compare year on year and what had been achieved in terms of parking targets?

Councillor Fennell reported that parking revenue was slightly down on target by 2.4%. Earlier in the financial year, there was a major dip in usage for a weekend, following the suggestion on a television programme that Camberley could be a target which would interest terrorists. He agreed to circulate a comparison of revenue achieved over recent years.

- Feeder Road to Frimley from the Blackwater Valley Relief Road – Members were reminded that one of the feeder roads into Frimley had been closed (for some time) as it had been deemed to be dangerous. Members queried whether the use of this defunct road for parking had been considered and if this could be achieved safely.

Whilst there were differing views on whether or not the proposed parking could be achieved safely, Councillor Fennell agreed to raise the issue at a future parking meeting with Surrey County Council and to feed back the outcome to Members. The parking meeting was unlikely to be held before the next meeting of this Committee.

Councillor Fennell noted that whilst the first 2 hours in the Burrell Road car park were free of charge, a charge had been levied thereafter to deter commuters from parking there all day.

- Kings Ride/College Ride – Councillor Robin Perry reported that, as parking restrictions had been imposed in Camberley Town Centre, drivers had migrated to Kings Ride, College Ride and the surrounding roads.

Councillor Fennell acknowledged that when you introduce parking restrictions in one area, it caused a ripple effect in other areas. He offered to meet Ward Councillors on site to review the issue.

- Chobham – Councillor Victoria Wheeler highlighted residents' concerns on the lack of enforcement in Chobham, suggesting in particular that enforcing on current restrictions was preferable to introducing further double yellow lines. She also sought the Portfolio Holder's views on parking charges in the Chobham car park.

Councillor Fennell noted that there were only a limited number of enforcement officers to cover the whole Borough. Whilst he

acknowledged that income from parking in the Chobham car park was less than the costs involved, it had been implemented to assist local businesses by reducing commuter parking.

- Sponsorship of Roundabouts – Members noted that the Council had previously refused proposals for sponsoring roundabouts, but that, now, 5 roundabouts had been sponsored by businesses, bringing income to the Council.

Councillor Fennel reported that, previously, no income would have come to the Council, with all proceeds going to SCC. He agreed to provide the Committee with details of potential revenue streams from further roundabout sponsorship.

- Signage – Referring to other boroughs which used electronic signage, Members suggested the introduction of signage indicating which car parks were full or had spaces and the number thereof.

The Executive Head of Business reported that live feeds on parking were available on the Council's website.

Members asked for feedback on the possibility/practicality of signage outside car parks.

- Main Square Car Park – Members noted the need for more wide spaces in the car park and asked what consideration had been given to a proposal to reverse access and egress, using the current exit as the main entrance and vice versa.

Councillor Fennell reported that a significant number of parking bays had already been widened to accommodate larger vehicles. The Main Square Car Park was constructed in 1970. Mitigation measures have been built in to improve traffic flow, but the shape and structure did not easily accommodate a change in the entrance and exit.

The Chairman thanked the Business Portfolio Holder for his presentation and the Executive Head of Business for his support.

Resolved, that

- (i) **The report be noted; and**
- (ii) **With the exception of information on the feeder road, Frimley discussions with Surrey County Council, which would be circulated following the next meeting with SCC on that matter, the information requested by Members be circulated electronically prior to the next meeting.**

29/PF Update on Car Park Strategy

The Executive Head of Business noted that many areas of the Car Park Strategy had been considered during the previous item. He highlighted the following developments:

- (i) Ticketing – A new ticketing system had been introduced making a lot more data available on line;
- (ii) Payments by Phone – Payment for Camberley Town Centre parking by mobile phone was under development and it was hoped that this could be introduced in the future;
- (iii) Town Centre Car Parks – Town Centre car parks had been the subject of major refurbishment, including new lifts, improved lighting and floors, producing an improved environment for customers;
- (iv) Parking Enforcement – This had previously made a loss, but was now breaking even;

Members highlighted difficulties with enforcement, when, in some areas, parking on pavements caused considerable difficulties for pedestrians, whilst in others, drivers were required to do so.

The Committee requested further information on strategies for on street parking.

- (v) Out of Town Parking – Officers had been reviewing current arrangements on out of town parking, recognising the impact that parking changes imposed by the Council could have on local residents. A report on out of town parking arrangements would be considered at a future meeting of the Executive, when the costs and benefits of policies such as charging would be considered.

Members noted the practice in some Boroughs of charging for or preventing parking at lunchtime, to discourage commuter parking and the Portfolio Holder was asked to look at this as another option in out of town parking consideration.

- (vi) Marketing – The Council was working closely with partners to promote Camberley Town Centre and parking was key to their strategies, particularly in the run-up to Christmas.

Members noted that some residents did not have smart phones and could be penalised if all information in areas such as availability of parking places was provided on-line, without alternative methods. Details were requested on what other methods were being considered.

- (vii) Revenue Streams – Members noted that a parking Strategy Report had been considered in 2013. At previous meetings, the Committee had been informed that this Strategy would generate good revenue streams. This had not been covered in this report and the Committee asked for revenue data,

including a comparison to data dating from 2013 and comparator data for the Council's immediate closest neighbouring boroughs.

Resolved, that

- (i) The report be noted; and**
- (ii) The information requested by Members be circulated electronically prior to the next meeting.**

30/PF Mid Year Performance Report

The Transformation Team Manager presented a report on performance data for the period 1 April to 30 September 2015 and provided a verbal update on indicative outcomes for Quarter 3.

- (i) The Camberley Theatre – Additional income generation targets had been missed for 3 Quarters;
- (ii) Complaints – targets had been missed in terms of the percentage of stage 2 and 3 complaints responded to within 10 days. 80% had been achieved in Quarter 1, 50% in Quarter 2 and 60% in Quarter 3. This could, however, reflect the complexity of the cases involved.

Members queried whether complaints responded to meant that or resolved, whether the response sent would be computer generated and if there were delays, would the complainants get correspondence indicating progress?

The Transformation Team Manager confirmed that, at Stages 2 and 3, complainants would receive a letter from a Head of Service, responding to the specific complaint. Where there was a delay against the target resolution date, the complainants were appraised of the delay and reasoning. When the numbers of complaints were low, 3 to 4 complaints could significantly affect percentage outcomes.

Members requested further details, particularly in respect of what areas complaints were made against, what happens when complaints are escalated, what happens if complaints are found to be justified or not and what measures are in place to learn from complaints.

- (iii) Customer Contacts - the target increase of customer contact undertaken via a self-service channel had been missed;

Members challenged the 'Red/Amber/Green (RAG)' colour coding of indicators. Whilst 'Green' was supposed to indicate that the indicator was on target, with a tick if completed, in Key Priority 1 (Improved Camberley Town Centre) in which all 3 targets listed had end dates of March 2016 and were marked as green, none of these appeared to be on target and in the case of the Arena Leisure Centre, unlikely to be completed in the next 3 years.

The Committee asked for further information, prior to the next meeting including the requested update on complaints and a review of the RAG reporting against actual achievement.

Resolved, that

- (i) The Executive be advised of the Committee's concerns in relation to the RAG Report colour coding; and**
- (ii) The Transformation Team Manager be asked to arrange for further data to be circulated to the Committee, prior to its March 2016 meeting, on complaints, including what areas of Council work complaints were made on, what happened when complaints were escalated, what actions were taken if resolution was delayed and what measures were in place to learn from complaints.**

31/PF Mid-Year Finance Report

The Committee considered a report on the Revenue, Treasury and Capital position for the first half of 2015/16.

Revenue - In terms of the Revenue Budget, the Acting Senior Accountant reported that:

- (i) Services – Overall, services were expected to be £250,000 under budget at the end of the year, with the savings target of £250,000 and a small overspend in one area offset by savings and income elsewhere;
- (ii) Interest Received – Despite the turbulence faced in the financial year, it was likely that interest received would exceed targets;
- (iii) Wages and Salaries - An underspend of £77,000 was expected on wages and salaries by the year end; and
- (iv) Income – The Council had a strategy of generating additional income and had been particularly successful in its investments in property.

Capital Budget – Of the allocated £19.773 million allocated in 2015/16, £17.289 million had been spent to date, mainly on property acquisition. These had been funded through borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board and/or the Local Enterprise Partnership.

Sundry Debt – As at 30 September 2015, there were invoices unpaid totalling £606,000, of which £218,000 related to one invoice from Surrey County Council.

Housing Benefit Debt – As at 30 September 2015, this stood at £643,000.

In response to Members questions, the Acting Senior Accountant reported that:

Iceland - £676,000 remained in Icelandic Banks in local currency.

Reporting Processes – The report, when drafted, was reviewed by the Corporate Management Team and then considered by the Executive, before coming to this Committee.

Members expressed concerns about the delay in and therefore the value of the data being reported to the Committee and asked the Acting Senior Accountant to:

- (ii) Discuss with the Executive Head of Finance ways to get more up to date data to this Committee;
- (ii) Provide more financial detail in the annexes to the report;
- (iii) Provide an Executive Summary, with a headline figure and a feel for the overall expenditure and income; and
- (v) Circulate more detail on the Camberley Theatre Budget.

Resolved, that

- (i) **The report be noted; and**
- (ii) **The information requested by Members be circulated electronically prior to the next meeting.**

32/PF Work Programme

The work programme for the remainder of the municipal year 2015/16 was considered and agreed by the Committee.

It was noted that the Committee would be required, at its next meeting, to set a work programme for the 2016/17 municipal year. The proposed meeting dates for 2016/17 were noted.

Resolved, that the work programme, attached at Annex A to the Committee report, be agreed.

33/PF Exclusion of the Press and Public

In accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the ground that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as set out below:

Minute	Paragraph(s)
34/PF (Part)	3
35/PF	3
36/PF	3

Councillor Wynne Price in the Chair.

34/PF Working Groups

The Committee considered the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to address Members' concerns over the future health of shopping streets in the Borough and agreed to the establishment of a Task and Finish Group.

Membership would be nominated by the Group Leaders, with Councillor Edward Hawkins asked to chair the Group. The Group would be asked to develop draft terms of reference for consideration at the Committee's meeting on 23 March 2016.

35/PF Review of Exempt Items

The Committee reviewed the report which had been considered at the meeting following the exclusion of the Press and Public, as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information.

Resolved, that Minute 34/PF and the associated Committee considerations remain exempt for the present time.

Chairman

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