

Minutes of a Meeting of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, Surrey Heath House, Knoll Road, Camberley, GU15 3HD on 17 July 2019

+ Cllr David Lewis (Chairman)
+ Cllr Shaun Garrett (Vice Chairman)

+ Cllr Graham Alleway	+ Cllr David Mansfield
+ Cllr Cliff Betton	+ Cllr Sashi Mylvaganam
+ Cllr Sarah Jane Croke	+ Cllr Darryl Ratiram
Cllr Colin Dougan	+ Cllr Kristian Wrenn
+ Cllr Edward Hawkins	+ Cllr Victoria Wheeler
+ Cllr Sam Kay	

+ Present
- Apologies for absence presented

Members in Attendance: Councillors Adams, Brooks, Chapman, Fitzgerald, McGrath, Perry and White

Officers Present: Sarah Bainbridge, Senior Organisational Development Advisor
Leshia Chetty, Head of Investment and Development
Adrian Flynn, Chief Accountant
Daniel Harrison, Executive Head: Business
Julia Hutley-Savage, Interim Head of Legal
Louise Livingston, Executive Head: Transformation
Kelvin Menon, Executive Head: Finance
Tim Pashen, Executive Head: Community
Richard Payne, Executive Head: Corporate
Jenny Rickard, Executive Head: Regulatory
Karen Whelan, Chief Executive

1/PF Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee held on 20th March 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2/PF Annual Performance Report 2018/19

The Committee considered the Council's Annual Performance Report. The report summarised the performance and achievements of the Council against its stated objectives, priorities and success measures at the end of the 2018/19 Municipal Year.

Key achievements during 2018/19 included: completion of phase 1 of the refurbishment of The Square, completion of the procurement process for a preferred partner for the London Road Development, the launch of social prescribing to support the health needs of residents, the expansion of the meals at home and community alarms services, work with the Hope Hub to improve the support given to homeless residents, improving facilities at Lightwater Country Park and the refurbishment of play areas at Briar Avenue and Cheylesmore Drive.

Arising from the Committee's questions and comments the following points were noted:

- The number of parking bays on level 3A of the Main Square car park had been reduced to assist with the redevelopment of Ashwood House. This combined with the remarking of spaces to accommodate the larger size of modern cars had resulted in a reduction in the overall number of parking spaces available. Consequently, whilst occupancy rates had risen, income from the car park had reduced. Future performance reports would see the replacement of the average car park occupancy rates with a customer satisfaction rate. To assist with this a baseline survey had been carried out and future performance would be benchmarked against this survey.
- Details of the interventions offered as part of the social prescribing initiative would be circulated.
- Details of the due diligence checks carried out on organisations involved in the delivery of the social prescribing initiative would be circulated.
- The introduction of the Villages Working Group was welcomed.
- Details of the final destination of waste plastic collected by the Council would be circulated.

The Committee noted the report.

3/PF Council Finance Report 2018/19

The Committee considered a report that provided a high level view of the Council's financial performance during the 2018/19 financial year.

It was reported that 2018/19 had been a challenging year for the Council with pressure on income and increasing costs due to inflation. Notwithstanding this, the Council had had a successful year with the majority of services coming in on or under budget. At the end of the reporting period the Council had investments of £29.9million in a variety of banks, building societies and funds and £175million had been borrowed to fund property acquisitions.

Arising from Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- The decision to support the House of Fraser store had been taken with a view to supporting local jobs as well as retaining a major retailer in the town. The deal had been made for a one year period and meant that the Council continued receiving rental income as well as Business Rates. Acquiring the site's leasehold ensured that the services on the roof and insurance costs would be paid for.
- It was clarified that the Equalisation Fund was a cashback reserve and as such was classified in the accounts as either an investment or as cash.
- The £13,000 set aside for Atrium Public Art was for the maintenance of the art already in situ; to date the maintenance had not cost as much as anticipated and consequently the fund had been transferred in the 2018/19 accounts.
- The Insurance Reserve Fund had been set up to meet the costs of any municipal insurance fund payments for example in the event of an asbestosis claim. It was acknowledged that whilst claims had not been as large as anticipated and there was scope to review the amount in the fund there did need to be a fund available to cover any future claims.
- It was clarified that the £17,000 balance attributed to the Old Dean Toddlers' playground was made up of funds provided by the developer to cover any ongoing maintenance costs.
- A training session focusing on how the accounts were compiled had been scheduled for 25th September 2019 as part of the Member Induction Programme.

The Committee noted the report.

4/PF Work Programme

The Committee considered a report setting out a proposed work programme for the Performance and Scrutiny Committee for the 2019/20 municipal year.

It was noted that changes could be made to the work programme as the year progressed.

RESOLVED that the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee's work programme as set out in annex A of the report be approved.

5/PF Exclusion of Public and Press

RESOLVED that, subject to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business:

Item 8. Performance of Major Property Acquisitions

On the ground that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act:

3. Information relation to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

6/PF Performance of Major Property Acquisitions

The Committee considered a report summarising the performance of the Council's major property acquisitions during the 2018/19 financial year.

It was noted that the properties acquired by the Council fell into two categories; those acquired with the primary purpose of supporting the regeneration of Camberley town centre and those properties acquired either to support economic growth, through the retention of key employment sites, or to deliver an income to support the continued delivery of council services.

The Committee noted the report.

7/PF Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee would take place on Wednesday 4th September 2019 at 7pm.

Chairman

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