

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Performance
and Finance Scrutiny Committee held at
Council Chamber, Surrey Heath House,
Knoll Road, Camberley, GU15 3HD on 19
January 2022**

+ Cllr Sashi Mylvaganam (Chairman)
+ Cllr Valerie White (Vice Chairman)

+ Cllr Graham Alleway	+ Cllr Edward Hawkins
+ Cllr Stuart Black	+ Cllr Darryl Ratiram
+* Cllr Vivienne Chapman	+ Cllr Morgan Rise
+ Cllr Sarah Jane Croke	- Cllr Graham Tapper
+ Cllr Paul Deach	+ Cllr Victoria Wheeler
+ Cllr Sharon Galliford	

+ Present

- Apologies for absence presented

* In attendance virtually

Members in Attendance: Cllr David Mansfield, Portfolio Holder: Environment & Health
Cllr Adrian Page, Portfolio Holder: Planning & People

Officers Present: Keiran Bartlett, Senior Planning Officer
Sarah Beck, Operations Manager (West), Joint Waste Solutions
Jo Chauhan, Head of Operations, Joint Waste Solutions
Gavin Chinniah, Head of Planning
Anna Godleman, Climate Change Officer
Kelly Goldsmith, Partnership Director, Joint Waste Solutions
Louise Livingston, Head of HR, Performance & Communications
Damian Roberts, Chief Executive
James Robinson, Senior Environmental Health Officer
Nick Steevens, Strategic Director: Environment & Community:
Ben Sword, Engagement, Wellbeing & Events Manager
Bob Watson, Strategic Director: Section 151 Officer
Darren Williams, Corporate Head of Community Services

27/PF Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee held on 10th November 2021 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

28/PF Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

29/PF Environment and Health Executive Portfolio Update

The Committee received and noted a report summarising the Council's work over the past twelve months which were encompassed by the Environment and Health Executive Portfolio; a portfolio which included community services, waste and recycling, emergency planning and business continuity, air quality and health and wellbeing.

30/PF Joint Waste Solutions Update

Kelly Goldsmith, Partnership Director and Jo Chauhan, Operations Director, gave a presentation in respect of Joint Waste Solutions' (JWS) work to manage the Borough's waste collection services which were provided through a partnership agreement with Elmbridge, Mole Valley and Woking Councils with a single operational team managing the contract with Amey.

It was reported that the Covid-19 pandemic had continued to impact on waste collections in the Borough over the past year with increasing levels of household waste being collected at the kerbside. A national shortage of HGV drivers, during the second half of 2021, had heavily impacted the joint contract area and whilst it had been possible to maintain collections of residual, dry mixed recycling (DMR) and food waste by redeploying managers and other depot staff with HGV licences and loaning drivers across the joint contract area, there had been insufficient drivers available to maintain a full garden waste collection service. Consequently, in line with DEFRA guidance, the garden waste service had been suspended in August 2021. Garden waste collections had since been reinstated on a reduced cyclical basis and Amey and JWS were working hard to reinstate a full service as soon as possible. Whilst it was hoped that a regular garden waste collection service would be resumed in February 2022 this would not be confirmed until JWS and Amey were certain that it would be sustainable. All subscribers to the Garden Waste Service had been offered the option to extend their subscription on a pro-rata basis for the length of time that collections had not taken place.

The Committee was informed that there were currently 17 driver vacancies across the contract area and Amey had managed to secure the services of eight agency drivers, reducing the overall number of vacancies across the joint contract area to nine. In an effort to ameliorate the shortage of HGV drivers a package of initiatives including intensive HGV driver training courses, a new recruitment and retention scheme and the payment of a market supplement to HGV drivers had been put in place. Amey was also working closely with recruitment agencies to identify drivers. It was agreed that a breakdown of driver vacancies in Surrey Heath each quarter for the past four years would be circulated.

It was noted that the contract's performance was measured against a number of performance indicators which were reported on a quarterly basis to the Joint Waste Collection Services Committee, with more generalised trend data being presented to the Surrey Environment Partnership on a quarterly basis. It was reported that the service was currently performing well against its agreed target of 80 missed bins per 100,000 with 38.7 bins missed in the third quarter of 2021 (October to December 2021). With regards to street cleansing, during the third quarter of 2021 only 0.5% of the 300 street transects surveyed were rated as falling below the agreed Grade B standards (under the NI195 Methodology) against a target of 4%.

Analysis of waste collections in the Borough showed that whilst total volumes of waste were higher than in previous years there had been a significant reduction in the volume of recyclates collected in the Borough during the latter part of 2021 a reduction which was primarily attributed to the suspension of garden waste collections. Notwithstanding this decrease, Surrey Heath was currently ranked fifth nationally for its recycling rates.

Contamination of DMR, particularly in flatted developments, had an impact on the Council's recycling rates and JWS's Low Performing Areas Team was working to address this both directly residents and households where multiple incidents of contamination had been identified, through the use of targeted communications and new style bins, and with collection crews to improve their understanding of the importance of preventing

contamination entering the waste stream with the introduction of Recycling Champions and crew education videos. Moves which had resulted in a significant reduction in the number of loads being rejected by Materials Recycling Facilities (MRF).

The Committee expressed their frustration with the quality of the communications with residents over the suspension of the garden waste service. Members drew officers' attention to particular concerns over the delays in informing residents that services were being suspended and the wording of the letter sent to residents telling them that if they asked for a refund of their subscription then they would be unable to rejoin the scheme at a later date.

The Committee's criticism was accepted and it was clarified that the future shape of the garden waste collection service at the time of the service suspension was not yet clear and JWS and Amey had been reluctant to promise a service that it may not be possible to provide in the future. Notwithstanding this it was acknowledged that the wording of the letters sent to residents could have been improved. It was agreed that information regarding the number of refunds provided to residents would be circulated.

In response to a query about what arrangements were in place to ensure that waste collection requirements of new developments were considered at the planning stage, it was confirmed that ensuring waste collections were taken into account by developers was an ongoing issue. It was agreed that clarification would be provided on what dialogue had taken place with the Council's planning section in an effort to improve the provision for waste receptacles.

The Committee noted the proposed targets for recycling rates in 2022/23 was lower than it had been in 2019/20 and 2020/21 and it was requested that these be reviewed to ensure that they were sufficiently challenging.

The Committee thanked officers for the update.

31/PF Community Services Update

The Committee received a presentation from Darren Williams, Corporate Head of Community Services, on the work of the Community Services Partnership across Surrey Heath.

In November 2020, the Executive had agreed to enter into a partnership arrangement with Runnymede Borough Council to provide community services to residents across Surrey Heath and Runnymede. The Partnership, overseen by a joint partnership board with representatives from both local authorities, shared all financial risks and rewards and the service was accountable to both Runnymede and Surrey Heath. Over the past twelve months a significant amount of work had taken place to TUPE staff into the new arrangements, develop new team dynamics and implement a new governance framework and develop new ways of working. The Council's Internal Audit function had conducted an audit of the implementation of the partnership and whilst the final report was still awaited, it was reported that interim feedback had highlighted that there was evidence of a strong partnership arrangement and good governance frameworks in place.

The Community Services Partnership provided a range of services including: community alarms and telecare, community transport, a handy man services, a hospital discharge service, meals at home, social prescribing and day care centres. Whilst the Partnership was administered through a central service based in Runnymede the services themselves were delivered from local bases. The Partnership also worked closely with other council

services to assist residents in accessing related services for example Personal Independence Grants and recreational activities.

The Community Services Team's relationship with health and social care partners enabled it to play a key role in the development of preventative services for residents and over the past year there had been improved engagement with partners both locally and across the wider Frimley Integrated Care System

As part of work to ensure the most efficient and effective use of services on offer the partnership was exploring different ways of delivering services to residents, for example currently both Surrey Heath and Runnymede leased vans to deliver meals to residents with hot meals being delivered at lunch time and a sandwich supper. Moving to a system where some residents are provided with a hot supper and a sandwich lunch whilst others were provided with a hot lunch and a sandwich supper meant that vans were not being left unused for large parts of the day and fewer vans were needed across the partnership area.

Although the Government's restrictions during the pandemic had impacted heavily on community services with the closure of day centres and a reduced number of community transport journeys booked there had also been an increase in the number of residents utilising the Meals at Home Service. As restrictions had been eased the number of journey provided by the Community Transport had increased from 926 in quarter 1 of 2021/22 to 2,007 in quarter 3 of 2021/22, Windle Valley Day Centre had reopened and a new Homesafe Plus service for Surrey Heath residents leaving hospital and a handyman referral service had been launched.

During 2022/23 the Community Services Team's priorities would focus on continuing to rebuild services following the pandemic, identifying and developing new service opportunities both internally and with partner organisations as well as continuing to grow and develop new team structures and operational processes.

The Committee thanked Darren Williams for his update.

32/PF Air Quality Annual Report 2021

The Committee received a report detailing a review of air quality across the Borough during 2020/21.

The annual Air Quality Review formed part of the Council's statutory requirements in relation to Local Air Quality Management under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995. The report set out the results of air quality monitoring work, detailed the activities and strategies employed by the Council to improve air quality and reviewed the progress made in this area.

The Council monitored air quality at 51 locations across the Borough with the majority of monitoring stations being located in built up areas near busy roads. The World Health Organisation had defined a limit of 40micrograms per cubic metre limit for NO₂ particulate as being the optimum level for protecting the health of asthmatic children in urban areas and it was reported that mean NO₂ particulate levels had in 2020 fallen below this limit at all the diffusion tube monitoring locations in the Borough and there had been no exceedance of the hourly mean NO₂ objective of 200microgrammes per cubic metre. Analysis of the air quality in the vicinity of the M3 had found that NO₂ particulate levels had fallen at all monitoring locations when compared against the levels measured before the M3 was converted to a smart motorway. Whilst these changes were considered to be positive it was stressed that pandemic restrictions had significantly impacted on traffic

levels for significant periods of time in 2020 and they should be treated with caution until more data became available in the coming years.

It was queried where the monitoring stations in the south of the Borough and in the vicinity of the A331 were located and it was agreed that this would be clarified.

It was agreed that the possibility of publishing a whole borough map showing the locations of monitoring stations on the Council's website would be explored.

The Committee noted the report.

33/PF Climate Change Working Group Update

The Committee received a report providing an update on the work that had taken place to deliver the actions and priorities contained within the Council's Climate Change Action Plan.

The Action Plan included 65 actions that if implemented in their entirety would contribute to delivering the Council's ambition to achieve a net zero carbon emission target by 2030. It was recognised that whilst the agreed actions had been categorised as being either high, medium or low priority the addition of deadlines would be useful.

It was recognised that the Council had a key role to play in helping residents to take steps to reduce their own carbon emissions and consideration needed to be given to incorporating this into Council decisions for example improving the provision of secure bike parks.

It was noted it would be necessary for the Council to supplement the £45,000 budget allocated to climate change initiatives to be supplemented by grants and many of the agreed actions would require the Council to work in partnership with other organisations in order for them to be achieved. It was agreed that the funding of climate change initiatives would be followed up outside the meeting.

The Committee thanked officers for their work.

34/PF Local Plan Local Authority Monitoring Report

The Committee received a report containing the Local Plan Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) for 2020/21.

The AMR had been produced in line with the requirements set out in the Localism Act 2011 and set out the actions that had been taken to implement the Local Development Plan and the Local Development Scheme, the extent to which policies in the Surrey Heath Local Plan have been achieved and identified any solutions and changes where targets were not being met.

It was acknowledged that the lack of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) capacity was one of the main barriers to development, particularly in the west of the Borough. It was clarified that where SANG capacity was provided outside the Borough, for example in Hawley Meadows in Hart and Shephards Meadow in Bracknell Forest, the Council was responsible for collecting developer contributions for SANG funding on a quarterly basis and passing this on to the appropriate planning authority, an arrangement that was cost neutral to the Council.

It was agreed that information pertaining to the proportion of SANG funding used to provide car parking would be circulated.

The Committee was informed that a new Town Centre Strategy was being developed and this would supersede the Town Centre Area Action Plan.

The Committee noted the report and thanked officers for the work that had been done to develop the new draft Local Plan.

35/PF Draft Annual Plan 2022/23

The Committee considered a report setting out the Council's draft Annual Plan for 2022/23. The draft Annual Plan set out the key goals, projects and performance targets for the Council during the 2022/23 financial year to deliver the goals and ambitions set out in the Council's new Five Year Strategy. A final draft would be presented to the Executive for approval in March 2022. Arising from the Committee's questions and comments the following points were noted:

- It was confirmed that the draft Annual Plan had been developed with input from the Council's finance team and Corporate Management team to ensure that all projects were fully budgeted for.
- Clarification would be sought on the progress of the ESO fuel pipeline and the potential implications for Turf Hill car park improvement works.
- The target for the collection of dry mixed recycling would be reviewed and adjusted to ensure that it was sufficiently ambitious.
- It was agreed that current performance levels would be added to enable performance improvements to be monitored.

It was stated that more context needed to be provided about previous performance and targets to enable consideration of the proposed targets for performance indicators for 2022/23. It was requested that Chobham be added to the areas supported by the Community Support Working Group to address Poverty, and also that references be included to Surrey Heartlands health partners where appropriate

The Committee noted the report.

36/PF Corporate Risk Register

The Committee received a report setting out the Council's key corporate risks and the actions being taken to mitigate their potential impact.

It was confirmed that the Council's Property Management Strategy had been implemented three or four years ago.

The Committee noted the report.

37/PF Public Realm Task and Finish Group

It was noted that consideration of this item would be deferred to the next meeting due to the late availability of the report.

38/PF ISO 9001

The Committee considered a report exploring the potential application of ISO9001 standards and principles to services being delivered by the Council.

Following the Grenfell Tower fire a national initiative had been launched for all Building Control functions to acquire ISO9001 accreditation and whilst a number of local authorities, in particular large scale county or unitary authorities, held ISO certification for services which traded commercially alongside private sector organisations none held ISO accreditation for their services in their entirety. Furthermore, there was no widespread use of the standards found in central government.

The Committee was informed that no evidence had been found to support a link between ISO accreditation and local government performance and it was stressed that given the time, staffing and financial resources that would be required to acquire and maintain ISO9001 accreditation a clear business case would be required before any decisions to pursue accreditation were taken. Notwithstanding this, it was acknowledged that a number of the key principles underpinning the ISO9001 standard could have some applicability to local government and could be applied without having to pursue official accreditation.

However, it was stressed that a significant number of the Borough Council's services and functions were already overseen by external bodies who applied their own quality management standards and reporting frameworks to the Council's work. Consequently, the Committee sought assurances that if the principles of ISO9001 were adopted then the Council would need to ensure that care would be needed to ensure that unnecessary additional administrative and monitoring burdens were not placed on services, that assessing and measuring a service's conformance to ISO9001 principles did not come at the expense of either doing valuable work or measuring and understanding process performance and that services here demand was variable were not forced into incurring additional costs in trying to meet standardised processes.

The Committee stressed that the cost of any work to embed ISO9001 principles into Council practice had to be balanced against any improvements that achieving the standards would bring to the services in question and that care had to be taken to ensure that applying the principles of ISO9001 to council services tangibly improved processes and did not simply become an audit of the service.

It was noted the pursuing ISO9001 accreditation was estimated to cost between £225,000 and £265,000 with money needing to be spent on additional staffing costs, consultants, documentation and external accreditation costs. The Committee stressed that in the current financial climate this level of expenditure could not be justified.

The Committee acknowledged that the Council's new senior management team had only become fully staffed at the start of January and it was considered that they should be given time to become fully embedded and develop their understanding of the Council's services before any new initiatives were implemented. The Committee agreed that Option 2 (That all functions work towards accreditation of ISO9001) be removed from the list of options proposed to Full Council for consideration.

It was suggested that a hybrid option that combined Option 3 (Focus on delivering service improvements through existing mechanisms including the Council's new management structure) and Option 1 (Adopting the key principles that underpin ISO9001 and related quality frameworks to help improve performance and customer focus) could provide a suitable way forward.

The Committee agreed that a report setting out the preferred options would be presented to Full Council for consideration.

39/PF Work Programme

The Committee received and noted its work programme for the remainder of the municipal year.

It was requested that additional meetings of the Committee were scheduled to enable full and proper consideration to be given to matters being scrutinised. It was noted that the Committee's terms of reference currently only allowed for a maximum of six meetings a year and it was agreed that the matter would be raised with the Governance Working Group.

40/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 9th March 2022 at 7pm.

Chairman