

**Minutes of a Meeting of the
Performance and Audit Scrutiny
Committee - Scrutiny Meeting held at
Surrey Heath House on 28 January
2015**

+ Cllr John May (Chairman)
+ Cllr David Allen (Vice Chairman)

+ Cllr Tim Dodds	- Cllr Joanne Potter
+ Cllr Alastair Graham	+ Cllr Wynne Price
+ Cllr Beverley Harding	+ Cllr Audrey Roxburgh
- Cllr Edward Hawkins	+ Cllr Pat Tedder
+ Cllr Paul Ilnicki	- Cllr Alan Whittart
- Cllr Lexie Kemp	+ Cllr John Winterton
- Cllr Chris Pitt	

+ Present
- Apologies for absence presented

Substitutes: Cllr Rodney Bates (In place of Cllr Alan Whittart) and Cllr Ian Sams (In place of Lexie Kemp)

In Attendance: Kelvin Menon, Alex Middleton, Andrew Crawford and Karen Limmer.

40/P Minutes

The minutes of the Scrutiny meeting of the Committee, held on 5 November 2014, were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

41/P Scrutiny of Portfolio Holders

Councillor Charlotte Morley briefed Members on the areas covered by her Portfolio, including the following:

- Children Champion
- Community Grants
- Complaints Procedure/ Ombudsman Matters
- Communications & Marketing
- Contact Centre
- Democratic Services
- Elections
- Equalities
- Human Resources
- Post & Payments

She highlighted in particular:

- (i) Democratic Services - The trial of Modern.Gov was going well, with Portfolio Holders using Tablets to facilitate paperless Executive meetings. It was expected that the trial would be expanded in due course. Surrey County

Council used Modern.Gov and County Councillors were now able to access Borough Council reports through their Tablets.

- (ii) Electoral Services – The change to Individual Elector Registration (IER) had gone well. The Council had achieved a better match percentage than expected with the DWP and well above the Authority average. The Service was also prepared in the event of the expected Surrey Police Precept referendum. The Electoral Commission had coordinated IER publicity across all Councils using standard and consistent messages.

In terms of anti-fraud measures, these were being addressed by the Returning Officer, in line with recommendations from the Electoral Commission.

- (iii) Media and Marketing – A new web/social media-based system was being developed by the Marketing Team, providing more vehicles for residents to interact with the Council. Further work would be required to increase throughput through the Contact Centre.

Web based communications and social media were intended to enhance and expand on existing routes, such as Heathscene, which was delivered to every household in the Borough. Councillor Morley noted Member suggestions on using existing local noticeboards, use of electronic noticeboards, GP surgeries, post offices and local radio stations.

- (iv) Children's Champion – She and the Mayor had hosted a large number of school children as part of Local Democracy Week, including a mock Council meeting. She had also attended 'Google Hangout' with British and French students and had attended the recent Junior Citizen Scheme event.

Resolved, that the presentation be noted

42/P 2014/15 Mid-Year Performance Report

The Transformation Team Manager provided an update on the Council's mid-year performance data, covering the period 1 April to 30 September 2014. She noted that the Council had set 4 key priorities and that the report demonstrated how individual services met the requirements thereof against milestones and performance targets. She highlighted a number of successes during the period, including the Surrey Heath Business Awards, becoming a dementia friendly organisation, development of the Supporting Families scheme and the Wellbeing Centre at Windle Valley.

It was noted that the number of residents receiving telecare and meals on wheels had risen and planning targets had been exceeded. A number of areas previously shown as red (target not met) under the traffic lights system, notably Libor and ICT Licenses, had now been transferred to green (on track). Some indicators, covering seasonal services, such as the Theatre subsidy and heritage visits, would be better reported annually.

In consideration, Members highlighted the following:

- (i) Traffic Lights – Concern was expressed that the colours indicated for some targets seemed to be at odds with the written script;
- (ii) Public Realm Strategy – Assurances were sought and given that no additional cost to the Council resulted from the re-writing consultant's draft Public Realm Strategy. The Strategy was now out for consultation;
- (iii) Affordable Housing – There had been a small increase in the number of households in temporary accommodation. Where possible, this should be minimised; and

Notwithstanding the proposed minor adjustments, Members welcomed the new simplified format.

Resolved, that the 2014/15 Mid-Year Performance Report be noted.

43/P Corporate Risk Register

The Executive Head of Finance presented a report providing an update on the Corporate Risk Register, which the committee reviews every year in January.

The Register covered higher level corporate risks to the Council. The left hand column indicated risk if no mitigation was in place. The right hand column indicated mitigating measures and the impact that this had on the risk levels.

Business continuity plans had been reviewed following the severe fire damage to the South Oxfordshire Council buildings as a result of an arson attack.

Members recognised that the Council was obliged by statute to provide a number of services to the public but had used its discretionary powers to provide additional services in a number of areas. Given the potential for severe reductions to future funding and increased requirements, the Committee considered that it was important to ensure that residents understood the distinction and were aware of the potential impact of funding cuts, especially on discretionary services, to ensure that expectations were maintained at a realistic level.

- (i) **Resolved, that**
 - (a) **The Corporate Risk Register be approved; and**
 - (b) **The Register be reviewed by the Committee in 12 months' time.**
- (ii) **Advised the Executive to raise public awareness, through Heathscene and other media vehicles, of additional funding cuts and the impact these may have on the Council's discretionary services i.e. Those which it is not obliged to provide by statute.**

44/P Committee Work Programme 2014/15

The Committee noted the work programme for the remainder of 2014/15.

Members noted a reference on grants obtainable had been considered by the Executive. This and Council Assets could now come off the work programme. The Committee agreed that, without fettering the future Committee, Members would consider a work programme for 2015/16 at the Committee's March 2015 meeting.

RESOLVED, that the Committee Work Programme for the remainder of 2014/15, attached at Annex A and as amended, be agreed.

Chairman