

SHOPSHIRE COUNCIL

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2016

2.00 - 3.40 pm in the Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate,
Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Responsible Officer: Julie Fildes

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Present

Councillor Claire Wild (Chairman)

Councillors Steve Davenport (Vice Chairman), Gerald Dakin, Roger Evans, Vince Hunt, Miles Kenny, David Lloyd, Alan Mosley and Dave Tremellen

11 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs J Barrow [Councillor Mrs P Mullock attended as substitute].

12 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None were declared.

13 Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2016

It was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June would be deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.

14 Public Question Time

No questions had been received from members of the public.

15 Member Question Time

Councillor R Evans submitted the following question:

'I note that another Scrutiny Committee is setting up a Task and Finish Group to look at just two parts of the planning process.

I understood a joint Task and Finish Group was to be set up looking at all things to do with planning including performance, which would include looking at what happens from when an application is first submitted to when a decision is finally made. How communications with members and Parish Councils are carried out. How information concerning planning appeals is disseminated. How this can be improved at minimum cost.

Can an explanation be provided of when this request, which was agreed a long long time ago is to be carried out'.

The Chairman of the Enterprise and Growth Scrutiny Committee stated that a joint Task and Finish Group comprising members of the Enterprise and Growth Scrutiny Committee and the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee was being established with a view to starting its work in September 2016. He acknowledged that the 'customer face' and communications aspect of the Planning Service could be improved.

16 Quarter 4 Performance Report 2014 - 2015

The Performance Manager presented the report on the Council's performance against its Key Outcomes for Quarter 4 2015/2016. He commented that a review of the performance management framework was underway to ensure that it linked directly to the refreshed Outcomes Framework for the Council and the development of the new Corporate Plan.

Members considered the slides within each of the four technical dashboards, as follows:

- 'Your Money' Outcome Dashboard
- 'Your Environment' Outcome Dashboard
- 'Your Life' Outcome Dashboard
- 'Your Health' Outcome Dashboard

'Your Money' Outcome Dashboard

- Those who live and work in the county earn less than those who live in the county and work outside the county
- The structure of Shropshire's economy has an impact - the county has a low level of industry and less highly paid jobs
- Broadband is improving the situation as people can work all over the world without having to move
- Shropshire has seen a growth in the number of small businesses
- Falling unemployment rates in the county
- The effect of the minimum wage had an impact and the next set of figures could be interesting
- House Price Index – showed an increase particularly in Shrewsbury and in the south of the county

'Your Environment' Outcome Dashboard

- Road safety – numbers killed or seriously injured – figure noted as higher than the national average. Also greater proportion of slight injury accidents in the county partly due to the nature of the roads and the influx of motorcyclists riding from the West Midlands area to Wales
- Issue with statistics here – the degree of 'variance' is important i.e. the proportion of the increase.
- Turning off street lights not known to have an effect on the accident statistics. Lights on main roads remained the same so therefore no impact – this to be monitored as part of the new reporting framework
- Annual net number of new homes – query re those taking up new homes – local people or people moving in from elsewhere.
- Keeping Shropshire's streets clean – concerns re levels of cleanliness and the inspection regime – Chair of Environment and Services Scrutiny Committee agreed to investigate the matter further.

- Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting – the impact of the food waste collection service would be interesting to monitor in future
- Visitors to theatres, museums, leisure facilities, libraries – figures not dissimilar to those from the previous year

'Your Life' Outcome Dashboard

- Number of referrals to Children's Social Care consistently reducing – reflection of the investment and development of these services
- Percentage of children with a second or subsequent Child Protection Plan within 2 years of previous one ceasing – figures here are affected by small numbers as tends to be one or two families creating a spike in the figures
- Noted a sizeable reduction in the number of permanent adult admissions into residential/nursing care homes

'Your Health' Outcome Dashboard

- Noted that percentage of older people still at home 91 days after hospital discharge showed a positive picture in line or better than national and regional trends

RESOLVED:

- i) That the key underlying and emerging issues in the report and appendices be noted; and
- ii) That any performance areas be identified for consideration in greater detail or referral to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

17 Financial Strategy Task and Finish Group - Interim Report

The Commissioning Support Manager presented the report detailing the findings of the Financial Strategy Task and Finish Group.

In answer to a Member's query, the Chief Executive reported that Parish/Town Councils had been asked to give consideration to services they may be interested and willing to take over; plans from Parish/Town Councils were expected to be received no later than 31 March 2017. Referring to heritage and country parks, the Chairman of the Environment and Services Scrutiny Committee commented that a presentation had been received at that Committee's last meeting and this had illustrated that these facilities were becoming self-funding.

A Member queried whether the investment in Children's Social Care prevention was likely to materialise. The Chief Executive commented that the Clinical Commissioning Group sought to reduce its contribution and it needed to be understood that this was a difficult area with both the Council's budget and the budgets of its partners continuing to reduce.

The Chairman thanked the Task and Finish Group for its endeavours and Members noted that the Group planned to continue its work in the Autumn 2016. She drew

particular attention to the findings to date that recognised the challenging position of the Council and specifically identified the largest budget pressure created by Adult Social Care.

RESOLVED:

That the recommendations from the Financial Strategy Task and Finish Group be supported, namely:

- i) That capital receipts are used to cover redundancy costs to free-up the redundancy reserve, and other ear-marked reserves are reviewed to identify available money of more than £2million, to provide one-off funds to help fill gaps in the budget for 2017/18, but that in doing so plans are in place to replenish them for subsequent years.
- ii) That conversations should be held with Public Sector partners with a view to establishing a co-ordinated prevention programme for vulnerable people, and help manage demand to services and enable independence.
- iii) That Preventative Services and Housing Support Services are funded to continue in 2017/18, possibly using funding from reserves, whilst work take place with public sector partners, including researching what other Councils are developing for the future.
- iv) That infrastructure projects that will benefit the economy are a component part of the work to develop the Economic Strategy.
- v) That the Passenger Transport budget is reviewed to identify the point at which commercial bus services would be affected by reduced budgets, and the gap between the remaining budget and this tipping point closed using reserves.
- vi) That the requirements of businesses from target sectors set out in the Economic Strategy to be retained and attracted to Shropshire are researched and implemented.
- vii) That those services areas whose responsiveness is critical to achieving the proposed savings are reviewed to ensure that there are sufficient resources, and to establish where external expertise could add value and pace.

18 Revenue Outturn 2015 - 2016

The Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance presented the report on the revenue outturn position for Shropshire Council for 2015/16 and provided a summary of:

- The revenue outturn for each service area

- The movements in the Council's general balance
- The Council's reserves and provisions

It was noted that the Council's financial position for 2015/16 had improved by £3.291m compared to projections made at Quarter 3 resulting in a net underspend of £2.816m. In answer to a Member's query, the Committee Chairman commented that this figure would be likely to change at the end of the financial year. The Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance added that commissioning of services would create a variation.

RESOLVED:

- i) That it be noted that the Outturn for the Revenue Budget for 2015/16 is an underspend of £2.816m, this represents 0.5% of the original gross budget of £594m.
- ii) That it be noted that the level of general balance stands at £18.370m, which is above the anticipated level included within the Financial Strategy.
- iii) That it be noted that the Outturn for the Housing Revenue Account for 2015/16 is an underspend of £1.031m and the level of the Housing Revenue Account reserve stands at £5.824m (2014/15 £3.076m).
- iv) That it be noted the increase in the level of Earmarked Reserves and Provisions (excluding delegated school balances) of £4.175m in 2015/16.
- v) That it be noted that the level of school balances stand at £7.173m (2014/15 £3.957m).

19 Capital Outturn 2015 - 2016

The Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance presented the report detailing the final outturn position for the Council's 2015/16 capital programme and the current position regarding the 2016/17 to 2018/19 programme. Members commented that the report provided a very clear picture of the stark reality of the situation.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the net budget variations of £0.490m to the 2015/16 capital programme, detailed in Appendix 1/Table 1 and the re-profiled 2015/16 capital budget of £51.9m be approved.
- ii) That the re-profiled capital budgets of £70.4m for 2016/17, including slippage of £7.4m from 2015/16, £36.4m for 2017/18 and £16.2m for 2018/19 be approved as detailed in Appendix 1/Table 4.
- iii) That the outturn expenditure set out in Appendix 1 of £44.4m, representing 85.7% of the revised capital budget for 2015/16 be accepted.

iv) That retention of a balance of capital receipts set aside of £17m as at 31st March 2016 to generate a one-off Minimum Revenue Provision saving of £377,500 in 2016/17 be approved.

20 Performance Management Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

RESOLVED:

- i) That the establishment of the Joint Task and Finish Group on planning matters [with the Enterprise and Growth Scrutiny Committee] be added to the Committee’s Work Programme. The Task and Finish Group to start its work in September 2016.

- ii) That the Committee’s Work Programme be approved.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: