

SHOPSHIRE COUNCIL

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2018

2.00 - 3.55 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 (Chair)

Councillors Gwilym Butler (Vice-Chair), Karen Calder, Roger Evans, Hannah Fraser,
Alan Mosley, Cecilia Motley, Peggy Mullock, Dave Tremellen and Leslie Winwood

80 **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no apologies for absence or substitutions.

81 **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

82 **Minutes of the meetings held on 28th March and 11th April 2018**

A Member requested that at future meetings a briefing note be provided for the Digital Transformation Programme or that the minutes contained a greater depth of information for this item. This was noted.

RESOLVED:

The minutes of the meetings held on 28th March 2018 and 11th April 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

83 **Public Question Time**

There were no questions from members of the public.

84 **Member Question Time**

There were no questions from Members.

85 **Digital Transformation Programme Update**

The Head of Workforce and Transformation updated Members on progress with the Digital Transformation Programme. Members requested that the Head of Workforce and Transformation provide a concise briefing note after the meeting [copy attached to the signed minutes].

Members noted an invitation from the Head of Workforce and Transformation to see the new Customer Service software in action.

In response to a Member's query regarding the cost of a delay in the implementation in the Adults Service modules in the Social Care work stream, the Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance explained that this would increase costs by an estimated £85,000. He continued that this amount had been allowed for within the project's contingency allowance and would not result in an overspend. It was anticipated that the project would still cost around £3-4m less than the allocated budget.

The Head of Workforce and Transformation explained that some of the projected savings outlined in the project budget were starting to accrue earlier than expected as the new software and working practices were brought on-line. She confirmed that these were contained in the Out-Turn Report.

The Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance advised that the audit of the project had been undertaken and had achieved two 'reasonable' and one 'good' grades. In response to a Member's comment the Head of Finance Governance and Assurance explained that 'good' was the highest grade followed by 'reasonable', the other two possible grades were limited and unsatisfactory.

A Member expressed concern that the recent Peer Assessment had identified £6m of the projected £10m savings from the Digital Transformation Programme as high risk due to a lack of detailed plans. The Head of Finance, Governance and Assurance explained that a large number of detailed robust calculations had been undertaken to identify the anticipated savings. Calculations would be revisited as the programme progressed, and as the situation was constantly changing it was not possible to show detailed plans, but there was an overarching plan which was being worked towards.

Members heard that the work on culture change measures were being put into place with information posters and television screens positioned around Shirehall. The Head of Workforce and Transformation continued that the posters would change as the phases of the programme progressed. Members noted that the participants of the Future Leaders programme were also promoting the culture changes and staff were being encouraged to be innovative and accept the organisation's culture change.

In response to a Member's question about savings anticipated from a reduction in the establishment, the Head of Workforce and Transformation confirmed that some of the savings would come from a reduction in staff, some would come from improved productivity and efficiency. She confirmed that she was fully aware of the need for a consultation period and the identification of staff at risk of redundancy in preparation for the appropriate notices to be issued.

86 Assets and Estates Report

The Head of Business Enterprise and Commercial Services introduced the Assets and Estates Report, which set out the improvements and key activities to be undertaken. Members noted that the Council still held extensive land and property and the need to centralise its management had been recognised with the adoption of the Corporate Landlord Model in 2015. This improved the management of revenue, maintenance and income generation of the Council's property and assets portfolio.

Members noted that discussions had taken place with Public Sector partners regarding working together to best use buildings in the public sector, as it had been found that many were underutilised, often unfit for purpose and not being used for their full potential. Work was being undertaken to remove the barriers preventing organisations sharing properties across the public sector through the one public estate programme which the Council was leading on.

The Head of Business Enterprise and Commercial Services explained that a new project evaluation framework, known as 'Hopper' had been adopted to inform and prioritise investment decisions and to consider how the Council used and acquired land and property. Each improvement plan would incorporate an assessment of opportunity and risk for each investment project proposal and improvement activity. This was indicative of the movement away from the previous strategy where assets were disposed of to generate capital receipts.

Members noted that an assets and estates investment programme was being brought forward to identify land and property that could be used to leverage return and generate income to underpin the financial strategy.

To enable this, the Assets and Estates Service required restructuring with officers in post who had the right skills, experience and capacity to deliver the innovation, place shaping and leadership required. To achieve this two new key posts had been created as set out in section 5.5 of the report. In addition to this, it was proposed to recruit to a commercial/development specialist on a fixed term contract as set out in section 6.2 of the report. The Chief Executive observed that the Council did not always have the capacity in-house to act as the intelligent client and that a fixed-term contract might not attract the individual with all the necessary experience and skills to fully perform the function required. He commented that despite recent changes in legislation the Council was not fully in the commercial arena and had to be mindful to operate within its powers.

Members discussed this post and it was suggested that no appointment should be made but specialist contractors recruited as required specific to each project.

Members discussed the importance of Officer intelligence and Member involvement in situations where the strategic interests of the County conflicted with the needs and wishes of local communities. Members observed the importance of taking a whole county approach to development and investment and the importance of working with Place Plans. It was suggested that the Scrutiny Chairs should receive a briefing on future investment.

Members requested further information about the recent Peer Review finding that £2m of projected savings were judged as being high risk. The Head of Business Enterprise and Commercial Services advised that this was because detailed plans were not available at the time of their visit but a range of projects were in the process of evaluation and development and it was anticipated that the first key projects would be considered by full Council at its July meeting. The Chief Executive added that it was important to find the right investments and ensure that the Council had the legal

powers to pursue them. He continued that it could take up to a year to fully develop the investment plans.

RESOLVED:

That subject to further papers before committee having a greater emphasis on outcome; and the commercial/development specialist described in section 6.2 of the report should be commissioned, the recommendation of the report be endorsed.

87 Future Work Programme

The Statutory Scrutiny Officer confirmed that the meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs at their meeting of the previous week had considered the work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

In response to a Members query, the Statutory Scrutiny Officer advised that the Committee would consider the Quarter 4 performance data at its July meeting. He confirmed that that had been insufficient Committee time, due to a number of Call-Ins, to be able to consider the Quarter 3 data. A Member suggested that there may be a need to consider the management of future Call-Ins and performance reports.

Members requested that the Annual Complaints and Compliments report be considered in the autumn as an information item.

88 Date/Time of next meeting of the Committee

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Performance would be held at 2.00pm on Wednesday 11th July 2018,

Signed (Chairman)

Date: