

Notes of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee
Finance and Performance Working Group
12th February 2014

Present: Councillors: Leonard Crosbie (Chairman) John Bailey, George Cockman, Frances Haigh

Apologies: Councillors: John Chidlow, Brian Donnelly, Jim Goddard, Brian O'Connell, Stuart Ritchie

Also present: Councillors: Christian Mitchell

Officers: Julie McKenzie, Performance Manager
Sue McMillan, Head of Financial and Legal Services
Jill Scarfield, Head of Strategic Planning and Enforcement

1. TO APPROVE AS CORRECT THE RECORD OF THE FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE WORKING GROUP MEETING ON 5TH FEBRUARY 2014

The notes of the meeting held 5th February 2014 were noted; Members agreed that as these notes were a record of the finance meeting of the Working Group, it would therefore be more suitable if they were approved at the next finance meeting which was scheduled for 14th May 2014, rather than at the performance meeting today.

The Group then discussed the timing of the meetings in conjunction with the availability of both the budget and performance reports. Members also discussed whether the combination of the two elements into one working group was still appropriate. It was agreed that this would be readdressed with the Chairman of the Working Group, the Chairman of Scrutiny and Overview Committee and the relevant officers.

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM CHAIRMAN OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chairman announced that he had met with the Chief Executive and the Directors who had explained that a review of the performance indicators was being undertaken. The Working Group requested that the new indicators be presented to the next performance meeting on 19th May 2014.

4. **COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS –
MONITORING AND LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1
OCTOBER TO 31 DECEMBER 2013**

The Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions, Monitoring and Learning Report for the period 1st October to 31st December 2013 was presented to the Working Group.

Members noted the complaints figures, which were very similar to the previous quarter.

At the last meeting Members had requested details of stage three complaints; these were provided in the report.

Members were pleased to see that compliments had more than doubled since the previous quarter.

5. **MEMBER OVERVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S USE OF THE
REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000**

The Working Group noted that the Council had not used the powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 in the past quarter.

6. **REPORT ON OUR DISTRICT PLAN PRIORITIES PROGRESS,
PROJECTS AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR QUARTER 3
2013/14**

The Performance Manager presented the Key Performance Indicator Report for Quarter 3.

Members noted the performance analysis; the Performance Manager highlighted the positives and the performance issues. Members noted that the number of households in temporary accommodation had increased but it was anticipated that this number would fall following the recent opening of Bridge House.

Members questioned whether Bridge House offered permanent or temporary accommodation for homeless, the officers would report back on this.

The Members discussed the Monitoring Report and highlighted the following areas:

DM02a and b: The number of planning enforcement cases received and closed. Members noted that a report would be circulated to the Working Group at a future meeting on planning enforcement, as it had been flagged up with Cabinet and raised at the last performance meeting. It continued to be an area of concern.

The Group was concerned about the processes within the department and also the number of enforcement cases started.

It was suggested that the Scrutiny and Overview Committee receive a presentation on planning enforcement.

DM09: Percentage of planning appeals allowed. The Head of Strategic Planning and Performance circulated a note on planning appeal statistics following a request at the last meeting on the number of appeals allowed, delegated and Committee decisions, broken down by quarter and compared to the previous year, however Members felt that they needed more contextual information to support the figures. This information would be provided.

DM21: Percentage of all major applications allowed at appeal within the assessment period. Members were concerned as no data had been provided against this indicator, the Group requested that an officer from Development Management attend the next performance meeting of the Working Group.

EH06: National Food Hygiene Scheme. The Working Group requested a further breakdown of these figures, 89% of businesses had been given a rating of level three or above, however Members wanted to see this broken down further, into levels three, four and five. Members questioned how many establishments were represented in the outstanding 11% which had received lower than a level three, and what action would be taken to reduce this figure of 11% and also what action taken against an establishment which received lower than a level three rating.

HS09: Housing: Number of Tenancy Deposit Loans issued. Members felt that the department should be commended on the Tenancy Deposit Loan scheme and its success, along with HS17: Number of homelessness preventions, Members wished to highlight the success of the scheme whereby the Council had been working with landlords in order to prevent homelessness. This would be raised at the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and with Cabinet.

LS03: Attendance at the Capitol. Members noted that performance against targets varied greatly under this indicator as it was often not possible to forecast film availability and booking in advance, and performance depended on the selection of films screened. It was noted that targets would now be set quarterly to take account of this.

OP13(i): Household refuse to landfill from Acornplus. This indicator was highlighted as the figures were low, but it may be partly accounted for by delayed tonnage information coming in from West Sussex County Council. The Working Group would monitor this and if the figures continued to remain low in the next quarterly report, the Group may request further explanation. These figures were received from West Sussex County Council, one month in arrears.

OP13(iii) Total blue topped bin recycling collected (includes rejects) and OP13(v) Blue topped bin recycling rejects. Members were concerned about the 10% rejected blue topped bins.

PP08: Number of FOI requests received. Members noted the significant increase in the number and complexity of FOI requests; the Strategic Department in particular had been receiving more complex requests.

PS11c: Total sickness. The Working Group noted that long term sickness was high, but recognised that this was being addressed by the Personnel Committee.

TS02: Parking: Total paid car park users. The Group was concerned that no performance data had been received since October 2013; Members were informed that there had been IT problems with downloading the data from the handheld equipment. As soon as the data was available it would be circulated to Members.

CD14: Anti social behaviour incidents. Members noted that the increase in figures was likely to be because the period had taken into account the school summer holidays.

The Working Group moved on to the CMT Tracked Projects List for Quarter 3 2013/14 Summary Report.

6b Leisure Management Provision (Capital Works)

Members asked that whilst the Pavilions swimming pool was closed for works, the opportunity be taken to carry out a deep clean as there had been a number of complaints about the cleanliness of the pool.

Members were concerned and questioned how the Chief Executive would ensure the delivery of the Council's projects when key members of staff, including Heads of Service left the Council in the forthcoming months.

7e Improvements to Hop Oast Depot

Members questioned whether there were sufficient funds in the budget for these improvements.

14 Horsham Town Vision

The Members had requested a breakdown of phase two of the West Street Improvement Plan at the finance meeting of the Working Group. Also, additional data on parking figures had been requested at the finance meeting.

18 Neighbourhood Plans

Members were updated that 13 parishes have had their area designated.

The Working Group discussed the District Plan Priorities Quarter 3 2013/14.

Members noted that most of the priorities had been covered in the CMT Tracked Project list.

Members commented on the Think Family programme under Theme 6: Safer and Healthier, and how this had been a successful piece of work, bringing together a number of agencies.

7. **CENSUS JOINT COMMITTEE MINUTES FROM THE MEETING
HELD 13TH DECEMBER 2013**

The minutes of the CenSus Joint Committee held 13th December 2013 were noted by the Working Group.

The Chairman of the Group would ask the Working Group at the next finance meeting, whether or not it should consider a review into the CenSus partnership, as it was a significant cost item in the budget which appeared to be growing each year. The Members noted that it was a multi-council partnership.

The meeting ended at 7.31 p.m. having commenced at 5.30 p.m.

CHAIRMAN