

Census Joint Committee
(Central Sussex Partnership)
17 JUNE 2016

Present: Councillors:
Gordon Lindsay, Neil Parkin, Jonathan Ash-Edwards and
Dan Humphreys (Worthing Borough Council)

Apologies: Councillors:
Brian Donnelly, Carson Albury, Gary Marsh and Mark Nolan (Worthing
District Council)

Also Present: Dave Briggs, Head of Digital & Design, Adur and Worthing Councils
Jane Eaton, Director of Corporate Resources, Horsham District Council
Liz de Pauley, Democratic Services Officer, Horsham District Council
Peter Stuart, Head of Finance: CenSus CFO, Mid Sussex District Council
Paul Tonking, Head of Revenue & Benefits, Adur & Worthing Councils

1 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE FOR 2016/17**

RESOLVED

That Councillor Gordon Lindsay be elected Chairman of the Joint
Committee for the ensuing Council year.

2 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings of the Joint Committee held 18th March 2016 were
approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

4 **CENSUS OUTTURN FOR 2015/16**

The Head of Finance: CenSus Chief Finance Officer presented the report which
outlined the outturn position for the two services under the remit of the
Committee.

The ICT service had overspent by £266,000 on account of staffing and agency
costs which had been incurred to maintain levels of service. All the revenue
projects had been completed apart from the implementation of Redhat Linux
and the cloud-based back-up projects. With regards to capital expenditure
projects, the server migration project was almost completed. Because of the

delay with Redhat Linux the capital budget of £160,000 had been carried forward to 2016/17 together with the unspent budget for the Disaster Recovery Project.

The Revenues and Benefits service was very close to being on target, and the main variances, as set out in the report, were noted.

RESOLVED

That the CenSus Joint Committee note the contents of the report.

5 **QUARTERLY ICT SERVICE UPDATE**

The Director of Corporate Resources presented the report, which outlined service performance and the budget position at the end of the last Financial Year. Details of service interruptions, the status of ICT project portfolios and structural and process developments were also included.

Members were advised that CenSus ICT was working well, with targets being achieved.

John Ross, Head of CenSus ICT, would be leaving at the end of the week and it had been agreed that his post would not be re-recruited immediately. This would allow for an assessment of future digital requirements, including a survey of cloud readiness across the Partnership Councils. There were currently three good team leaders and the current year's projects had been prioritised and were progressing.

Members of the Committee thanked John Ross for all his work and achievements in significantly improving the CenSus ICT service.

The Committee discussed the three service interruptions that had occurred in Adur Worthing in the last quarter. The Head of Digital & Design had met with Capita and the contract with them had been improved as a result, with clear actions being implemented to increase resilience of service.

With regards to the performance statistics, it was requested that statistics should be given in absolute numbers instead of percentages to give more clarity to the findings. It was agreed that this would be fed back to A&W.

Members were advised that new software was being procured which would improve the quality of data collected regarding help desk calls.

RESOLVED

That the Joint Committee note:

- (i) The operational performance of the CenSus ICT service.

- (ii) The current status of the CenSus & site specific ICT project progress.
- (iii) The proposed Project Portfolio for 2016/17.
- (iv) Progress to date on ICT process development & restructuring of the team.
- (v) The status of major ICT incident occurrence within the last quarter.

6 **CENSUS REVENUES AND BENEFITS REPORT**

The Head of Finance: CenSus Chief Finance Officer presented the report outlining performance, activity and progress made by CenSus Revenues and Benefits since the last report in March 2016.

Members were advised that the service was generally working well, although it was important to monitor the collection rate for NDRs (non-domestic rates).

It was reported that the current Council Tax Reports Scheme would need to be reassessed, with a simplified means test being advisable. This would be looked into during the year and would cover HDC as well as MSDC.

RESOLVED

That the performance and activities of the CenSus Revenues and Benefits service be noted.

7 **(UPDATE ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF ADUR FROM THE CENSUS REVENUES AND BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP**

The Head of Finance: CenSus Chief Finance Officer reminded Members that Adur would be withdrawing from the Revenue & Benefits Partnership in 15 months' time, and that it had been agreed that only matters of concern or problems that arose would be reported to the Committee.

Two consultants working with The Welfare Reform Club had been chosen to help with the process which would concentrate on Adur's withdrawal in the first instance, and then on the future of the Revenues and Benefits Partnership once they have left.

The meeting closed at 10.45 am having commenced at 10.15 am

CHAIRMAN