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Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Monday, 11th January, 2016 at 6.00 pm
Conference Room, Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham

Councillors:

Leonard Crosbie (Chairman)	
David Coldwell (Vice-Chairman)	
Alan Britten	Nigel Jupp
John Chidlow	Tim Lloyd
Paul Clarke	Brian O'Connell
Roger Clarke	David Skipp
Jonathan Dancer	Ben Staines
Matthew French	Michael Willett
Tony Hogben	

You are summoned to the meeting to transact the following business

Agenda

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1. Apologies for Absence	
2. Minutes of previous meeting	1 - 8
To approve as correct the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 th November 2015	
3. To receive any declarations of interest from Members	
4. To receive any announcements from the Chairman of the Committee or the Chief Executive	
5. To receive any replies from Cabinet/Council regarding Scrutiny and Overview Recommendations	9 - 10
Reply from Council to the recommendation made by the Committee to revise the planning determination process	
6. Business Improvement Working Group	11 - 14
Notes of the meeting held 10 th November (attached)	

7. Crime and Disorder Working Group 15 - 18
Notes of the meeting held 14th December 2015 (attached)
8. Finance and Performance Working Group 19 - 22
Notes of the meeting held 18th November 2015 (attached)
9. Social Inclusion Working Group 23 - 26
Notes of the meeting held 30th November 2015 (attached)
10. Health Provision Working Group
Next meeting date to be confirmed – Chairman’s update
11. To receive any suggestions for the Scrutiny and Overview Work Programme
None to receive
12. Items not on the agenda which the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as urgent because of the special circumstances

SCRUTINY & OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
9TH NOVEMBER 2015

Present: Councillors: Leonard Crosbie (Chairman), David Coldwell (Vice-Chairman) Alan Britten, John Chidlow, Paul Clarke, Roger Clarke, Matthew French, Nigel Jupp, Tim Lloyd, David Skipp, Michael Willett

Apologies: Councillors: Jonathan Dancer, Tony Hogben, Brian O'Connell, Ben Staines

Officers: Katharine Eberhart, Director of Corporate Resources
Chris Lyons, Director of Planning, Economic Development & Property
Paul Cummins, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Also present: Councillors: Christian Mitchell, Mike Morgan, Godfrey Newman, Tricia Youtan

SO/30 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14th September 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

SO/31 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

SO/32 **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

There were no announcements.

SO/33 **REPLIES FROM CABINET/COUNCIL REGARDING SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS**

There were no replies from Cabinet or Council.

SO/34 **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT WORKING GROUP – NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD 13TH OCTOBER 2015**

A Member of the Business Improvement Working Group presented the notes of the meeting held 13th October 2015.

The Committee noted that the Working Group was proposing to commence an entire review of the S106 process. The Committee noted the terms of reference drawn up specifically for this review and commented that the financial element of the S106 process should also be included as part of the review. Following discussions, it was proposed that the following term of reference be added:

SO/34 Business Improvement Working Group – Notes of the meeting held 13th October 2015 (cont.)

“Financial appraisal of S106 outcomes in relation to affordable homes ratio.”

The Committee suggested that the review also include a comparison of Horsham’s S106 process to that of other councils, along with a review of how the Council drafted its S106 agreements. Members also proposed that specialist lawyers also be involved with this review, and agreed the following also be added to the terms of reference:

“Commission an immediate comparison analysis of S106 agreements, supported by contributions from officers and a specialist firm of suitably qualified external legal advisers”.

The Business Improvement Working Group could agree how to incorporate this into its review or whether it should be a separate review.

The Committee noted the Working Group’s review of the Council’s planning appeals process. In his absence, the Chairman of the Working Group had submitted a note to support the discussions from the Group’s meeting and to reflect the concerns of the Councillors.

The Committee noted the Chairman of the Working Group’s comments and supported the suggestions; the Committee discussed the timing of when the decision on a planning appeal should be deferred for determination by full Council and agreed that at the point that the Development Control Committee appears to be leaning towards a decision which is contrary to the planning officers’ recommendation and it would appear that substantial costs could be incurred if the application went to appeal, the case would be deferred for determination by full Council. It could not be deferred following formal rejection of the application as this would be too late. Therefore, if the vote was carried the decision of the Committee would be a recommendation to Full Council to refuse the application and would not be a determination of the application.

The Committee also agreed that it would be full Council that would make the final decision.

Members agreed the proposed method would lead to a more democratic process.

The Committee accepted the recommendation made by the Working Group subject to the removal of the words “...or another group of elected Members”.

The Committee agreed that “significant costs” would have to be determined on a case by case basis; it would prove difficult to define a figure or threshold after which cases would be referred but that it would normally be if the officer was of the opinion that the reasons for refusal could not be substantiated with evidence.

SO/34 Business Improvement Working Group – Notes of the meeting held 13th October 2015 (cont.)

Referring back to the notes of the Working Group, the Committee congratulated officers on the work involved in the Business Transformation Programme.

In relation to the Group's item on the Property and Asset Management Review, the Committee suggested that a programme of inspection be drawn up and adhered to.

The Committee also noted that additional Members would be added to the Working Group for the duration of the S106 review, Councillors Matthew French, Nigel Jupp and David Coldwell volunteered to take part in this review.

It was also agreed that a defined programme of meetings should be drawn up for the S106 review, so that Members know the meeting dates and times in advance and also to help achieve an efficient and timely review.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

That the Council should agree a change to the Council's Constitution so that, in the event of a planning Committee proposing a decision that could not be justified on planning grounds and would be likely to incur significant costs at appeal, a process is established whereby the decision can be deferred for determination by full Council.

SO/35 **CRIME AND DISORDER WORKING GROUP – TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman of the Crime and Disorder Working Group updated the Committee on the Working Group.

The next meeting of the Working Group had been rescheduled in order to accommodate the representatives from Sussex Police, to enable them to attend and present their update on their Community Safety Partnership Action Plan. The Working Group felt strongly about having this representation at the meeting and to present the update reports.

The Committee also noted the recent changes to policing arrangements in the District and how Horsham would now appear under the same District Commander as Worthing and Adur. It was anticipated that Horsham would benefit from this new merger.

SO/35 Crime and Disorder Working Group – To receive an update from the Chairman (cont.)

RESOLVED

That an update from the Crime and Disorder Working Group be received.

REASON

All updates from Working Groups are to be received by the Committee.

SO/36 **FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE WORKING GROUP – TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

The Committee noted that there had been no further meetings of the Working Group.

RESOLVED

That an update from the Finance and Performance Working Group be received.

REASON

All updates from Working Groups are to be received by the Committee.

SO/37 **SOCIAL INCLUSION WORKING GROUP – NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD 28TH SEPTEMBER 2015**

The Chairman of the Social Inclusion Working Group presented the notes of the meeting held 28th September 2015.

At the meeting the Working Group had reviewed the replies it had received in response to the Group's recommendations, following the review of the effectiveness of the provision for local residents suffering financial hardship. The Group discussed the responses and highlighted several points.

The Working Group had also received a report on Digital Inclusion in the District. The Members were awaiting an action plan on the Digital Inclusion Strategy at its next meeting.

The Committee supported the Group's review into this as the Council relied heavily on use of the internet for many of its services.

SO/37 Social Inclusion Working Group – Notes of the meeting held 28th September 2015 (cont.)

RESOLVED

That the notes of the Social Inclusion Working Group meeting held on 28th September 2015, be received

REASON

All notes of Working Group meetings are to be received by the Committee

SO/38 **HEALTH PROVISION WORKING GROUP –NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28TH OCTOBER 2015**

The Chairman of the Health Provision Working Group presented the notes of the meeting held 28th October 2015.

The Group had invited two local GPs to discuss their plans regarding the future provision of health care in Horsham.

The Committee noted that the GPs were positive about Horsham Hospital and the services it offered.

The Committee noted that a seminar from the Coastal CCG had been organised for 8th December 2015, following a request from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee. In addition, on 2nd December 2015, Members were invited to attend a meeting with the local GPs on the local primary care provision in Horsham.

The Working Group would also be looking at ambulance response times in the south east.

RESOLVED

That the notes of the Health Provision Working Group meeting held on 28th October 2015, be received

REASON

All notes of Working Group meetings are to be received and approved by the Committee.

SO/39 **TRADE WASTE WORKING GROUP – FINAL REPORT**

The Trade Waste Working Group produced its final report in 2014 with a number of recommendations. At the Committee Members received updates on the recommendations.

Councillor Coldwell took Members through the updates and highlighted the Trade Refuse and Recycling Marketing Communications Plan.

The Committee noted that the Council was continuing to offer going ahead with the trade waste service as there was a demand from small shops and businesses in the District.

It was agreed that the Committee would revisit this in 12 months for an update on the position and whether the service had been successful to that point.

RESOLVED

That the updates on the recommendations in the Trade Waste Working Group, be received

REASON

All Working Group recommendation updates are to be received and approved by the Committee.

SO/40 **RAIL PERFORMANCE WORKING GROUP – FINAL UPDATE**

The Committee noted that a short term working group to review the rail performance in the District took place in 2012; the Group had made a number of recommendations. Members felt that there were no outstanding issues with Southern Rail at this stage and it was not necessary for a working group to continue.

RESOLVED

That the Rail Performance Working Group would no longer continue.

REASON

The future of all working groups is to be determined by the Committee.

SO/41 **MEMBERSHIP OF WORKING GROUPS**

The Committee noted that when a new Scrutiny and Overview working group was established, the Group Leaders would be contacted and asked to nominate any members to sit on the working group.

It was proposed that in future, as the Committee generated its own work programme; it would be more appropriate for/ the Scrutiny and Overview Committee Chairman to nominate members to sit on the working groups.

It was not currently prescribed in the Constitution how Scrutiny working groups should be appointed and it was considered best local government practice for a Committee to nominate its own working groups. The Committee supported this proposal.

RESOLVED

That the Scrutiny and Overview Committee be responsible for nominating new working group members.

REASON

All Working Groups are to be approved by the Committee.

SO/42 **REVIEW OF WEST SUSSEX TRAFFIC ASSESSMENTS – SELECTION OF WORKING GROUP**

The Chairman of the Committee explained that the review of assessment and accountability of West Sussex County Council traffic assessments and forecasts, especially relating to major developments, was a an item raised for review by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee at its last meeting.

There had been concerns raised about the traffic assessment process undertaken by West Sussex County Council in the past, especially relating to large developments in the District.

Although the Committee had agreed to establish a working group to carry out this review the Chairman advised at the meeting that, firstly, West Sussex County Council was the statutory authority for highways and also that they were the final arbiter when it concerned highways decisions, therefore it was advised that a review carried out by a working group would have little impact on the process.

If Members expressed concerns about traffic assessments relating to new developments in the District and planning applications, they were advised to raise these directly with the County Council. Members noted that the policies were set on a national scale. In addition, there had been a number of failed attempts to gather volunteers for a new working group.

SO/42 Review of West Sussex Traffic Assessments – Selection of working group (cont.)

After discussions the Committee therefore agreed that it would be futile use of the Council's resources to engage consultants to carry out the review.

If concerns were ongoing, it was suggested that this could be raised as an item for full Council.

RESOLVED

That the Review of West Sussex Traffic Assessments Working Group would not be established.

REASON

The future of all working groups is to be determined by the Committee.

SO/43 **TO RECEIVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW WORK PROGRAMME**

There were no suggestions for the Scrutiny and Overview work programme.

SO/44 **ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA BUT CONSIDERED URGENT**

None.

The meeting finished at 8.15 pm having commenced at 6.00 pm.

CHAIRMAN

Reply from Council on 9th December 2015 to the recommendation made by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee on 9th November 2015.

CO/60

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE SCRUTINY & OVERVIEW COMMITTEE TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION TO INCLUDE A REVISION OF THE PLANNING DETERMINATION PROCESS

The Chairman of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee reported that the Committee had recommended to Council a change to the Council's Constitution so that, in the event of a Development Control Committee proposing a decision that would be likely to have significant costs implications for the Council, the decision could be referred for determination by full Council.

The recommendation had been triggered by discussions and concerns raised initially by Members of the Finance & Performance Working Group of 18th June 2015 and subsequently by the Business Improvement Working Group on 13th October 2015.

Both Working Groups were concerned that the Council had incurred significant costs in recent years arising from decisions made by both Development Control Committees that could not be justified on planning grounds. The applicants in these cases had then been successful at appeal, including obtaining significant costs awards against the Council. The Members of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee at their meeting on 9th November 2015 echoed these concerns and made the above recommendation to Council with a view to preventing some potential future appeal costs.

Under the proposed process the full Council would determine planning applications referred to it by the Director of Planning, Economic Development and Property if he was of the opinion that the relevant Development Control Committee was minded to make a decision where there were likely to be significant cost implications.

Details of a proposed amendment to Article 4 of the Constitution and a short procedure note, which would give effect to the Committee's recommendation, were included in the report.

RESOLVED

That Article 4 of the Constitution be revised by the insertion of a new paragraph 4.2(l) as follows: “*To determine planning applications referred to it by the Director of Planning, Economic Development and Property if he is of the opinion that the relevant Development Control Committee is minded to make a decision in which there are likely to be significant cost implications.*” and the renumbering of the existing paragraph 4.2(l) to 4.2(m) and that the procedure note set out in the appendix to these minutes be agreed.

REASONS

- (i) That the Council receive the recommendation of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee pursuant to part 4C of the Council’s Constitution.
- (ii) To ensure where a decision is made in respect of a planning application in which there is a likelihood of the Council incurring significant costs that such decision is taken by the full Council given the effect of large costs awards on the Council’s overall budget.

Notes of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee **Business Improvement Working Group** **10th November 2015**

Present: Councillors: Brian O'Connell (Chairman), John Chidlow (Vice-Chairman), Paul Clarke, Nigel Jupp, Godfrey Newman, Michael Willett

Apologies: Councillors: David Coldwell, Jonathan Dancer, Matthew French, Tony Hogben, David Jenkins,

Also present: Councillors: Leonard Crosbie (Chairman of Scrutiny & Overview Committee), Christian Mitchell

Officers: Aidan Thatcher, Development Manager

1. **TO APPROVE AS CORRECT THE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13TH OCTOBER 2015**

The notes of the meeting held on 13th October were approved as a correct record, subject to an amendment to the terms of reference for the S106 Review on page 3. The second point should read 'Review West of Horsham strategic site...' instead of 'West of Southwater'.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chairman announced that three additional Members had been co-opted to the Business Improvement Working Group for the duration of the S106 Review, and welcomed David Coldwell, Matthew French and Nigel Jupp to the working group.

4. **REVIEW OF THE S106 PROCESS**

The Chairman advised that the working group should aim to complete the review by the end of April 2016 and additional meetings would be scheduled so that there were monthly meetings from January to April.

The Scrutiny & Overview Committee, which had met on the 9th November, agreed that two additional items should be added to the terms of reference for the review:

4. Review of the s106 Process (Cont.)

- Financial appraisal of S106 outcomes in relation to affordable homes ratio;
- Commission an immediate comparison analysis of S106 agreements, supported by contributions from officers and a specialist firm of suitably qualified external legal advisers.

The Chairman advised that the purpose of this meeting was to concentrate on establishing and clarifying the existing process, with a view to producing a briefing that could be issued to Parish Council Clerks and District Councillors.

The Development Manager presented a S106 Schedule outlining the existing process from receiving a planning application through to the grossment of the finalised S106 agreement.

Once finalised, the S106 agreement had to be monitored for trigger points within the agreement (eg for financial contributions). The Development Manager advised that a new post of Planning Obligations Officer was being recruited shortly, which would provide a dedicated resource for monitoring.

Members talked through the Schedule, in particular the 21 day consultation period after which instructions were sent to Legal for the drafting of the agreement. During this period consultation responses from both external and internal consultees should be received. It was noted that the 21 days was best practice but not always practicable and an extension was often agreed with the applicant.

Members discussed aspects of the process and sought clarification on a number of points. It was noted that whilst it was appropriate for Members to contact the Case Officer during the consultation period to put their comments forward and discuss the proposed terms of any S106 agreement, this was not widely known by Members.

- It was therefore recommended that Members should be reminded of their right to contact the Case Officer of an application in their Ward during the consultation period.
- It was also recommended that when Members are advised of planning applications in their Ward they should be advised if the application were likely to be subject to an S106 agreement.

The discussion highlighted the need for an opportunity for Ward Members to discuss the proposed contents of a S106 agreement before it was drafted by the Legal Department.

4. Review of the s106 Process (Cont.)

- It was therefore recommended that Ward Members be given the proposed heads of terms requirements of the S106 agreement at the point when the Legal Department are instructed to draft an agreement.

Other issues discussed included the extent to which Members could influence the terms of a S106 agreement. Financial contributions and the proportion of affordable homes were calculated through formula relating to the scale of a development to establish maximum requirements which must relate in scale and kind to the development, and the proportion of affordable homes were a planning policy requirement. Thus Member involvement would be limited to establishing these facts.

The working group discussed occasions where a developer submitted a viability study to justify a reduction in the number of affordable homes or size of a contribution. The Development Manager confirmed that viability studies, which were technically complex documents, were reviewed by a professional outside body and that Members were entitled to look at a viability study and its review and discuss it with a Case Officer.

The Chairman reminded Members that any renegotiated S106 agreement would be open to scrutiny and Members would have the opportunity to comment during the consultation period or when considered by Committee.

- The working group agreed that the S106 Schedule that had been considered by the meeting would be amended to reflect the conclusions of the meeting, in particular the need for the Heads of Terms of the agreement to be circulated to ward Members at the point of instruction to Legal.
- The amended schedule would be brought to the next Business Improvement Working Group meeting in January for approval for submission to the Scrutiny & Overview Committee. Once agreed, the document would be shared with Parish and District Councillors.

The meeting finished at 7.40pm having commenced at 6.00pm

CHAIRMAN

Notes of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee **Crime and Disorder Working Group** **14th December 2015**

- Present:** Councillors: Roger Clarke (Chairman) Jim Sanson
- Apologies:** Councillors: Alan Britten, David Coldwell, Adrian Lee, Tim Lloyd, David Skipp
- Also present:** Councillor: Leonard Crosbie
- Officers:** Greg Charman, Community Safety Manager
Neil Worth, Community Safety Officer

1. **TO APPROVE AS CORRECT THE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22ND JUNE 2015**

The notes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2015 were approved as a correct record.

2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

There were no announcements.

4. **PROTOCOL FOR THE SCRUTINY OF CRIME AND DISORDER MATTERS**

The Working Group noted the protocol which outlined the key provisions of the relevant legislation, the Terms of Reference of the Working Group, its duty to meet at least once a year, the role of scrutinising the CSP Plan and performance reports, the ability to give notice to responsible authorities to require their representatives to attend Working Group meetings or to provide information required for Scrutiny.

5. REVIEW OF THE HORSHAM DISTRICT COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (HDCSP) ACTION PLANS FOR THE 2015-2016

The Community Safety Manager presented an updated Alcohol and Drugs Priority Action Plan. The Community Safety Partnership was three quarters of the way through its delivery year.

The Community Safety Manager reported on the updates for each action.

At the end of delivery year in April 2016 the officers would review performance against the previous year to examine whether there had been an improvement and whether the Partnership had made an impact.

Members noted that there had been a lot of activity since the last update and most of the Key Performance Indicators were heading in the right direction. The Group noted the progress of the action plan for this priority.

Chief Inspector Howard Hodges from Sussex Police attended the meeting to present the Action Plan for the Vulnerable Victims Priority.

The Chief Inspector talked Members through the report and the Working Group noted the progress which had been achieved to date under each action.

The Community Safety Officer presented the Action Plan for Casualty Reduction and Road Safety Priority. Members noted the strategic objectives of this priority and the progress which had been made under each action.

The Working Group was pleased with all the achievements to date under each of the action plans. The next update would be in April 2016.

6. RESPONSE FROM THE SUSSEX POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

One Member of the Council had raised a question, following a presentation from the Police and Crime Commissioner, the response was presented to the Working Group. Members noted the response.

Agenda Item 7

Crime and Disorder Working Group
14th December 2015

7. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Scrutiny and Committee Support Officer would arrange the next meeting for April 2016, to review progress of the action plans at the year end and discuss the plans for the forthcoming year.

The meeting finished at 6.47 p.m. having commenced at 5.30 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

Agenda Item 7

Crime and Disorder Working Group

14th December 2015

Notes of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee **Finance and Performance Working Group** **18th November 2015**

Present: Councillors: Stuart Ritchie (Chairman), John Bailey, Leonard Crosbie, Nigel Jupp, Ben Staines

Apologies: Councillors: John Chidlow, Jonathan Dancer, Brian O'Connell, Michael Willett

Also present: Councillor: Roy Cornell, Brian Donnelly, Godfrey Newman

Officers: Katharine Eberhart, Director of Corporate Resources
Roger Dennis, Joint Procurement Adviser
Paul Cummins, Head of Legal & Democratic Services
Mark Pritchard, Commissioning and Performance Manager
Dominic Bradley, Head of Finance

1. **TO APPROVE AS CORRECT THE RECORD OF THE FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE WORKING GROUP MEETING ON 26TH AUGUST 2015**

The notes of the Finance and Performance Working Group meeting held on 26th August 2015 were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

It was noted that one action outstanding relating to Members requesting an update on Section 106 monies, including amounts spent and outstanding monies be presented at the next meeting.

Action: Head of Finance to circulate an update before the next meeting.

2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM CHAIRMAN OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chairman discussed the importance of the Finance and Performance District Plan Priorities and Key Projects for Quarter report and how presenting this at the beginning of meetings would help re focus and streamline meetings.

The Chairman Suggested that some Agenda Items could be cut down and possibly merged where applicable.

The Chairman proposed that Members continue to submit queries and comments to Officers in advance so that any responses may be brought to meetings.

4. **REPORT ON THE COUNCIL'S FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE, DISTRICT PLAN PRIORITIES AND KEY PROJECTS FOR QUARTER 2, 2015/16**

Before discussions began on the Finance and Performance report, the Cabinet Member for Waste Recycling and Cleansing provided some information on trade waste following a request by the Working Group at the last meeting.

The Director of Corporate Resources presented the report on the Council's Finance and Performance, District Plan Priorities and Key Projects for Quarter 2, 2015/16.

This report detailed the finance and performance figures for Quarter 2 2015/16. It was noted that the report had been restructured to include further summary information on performance and the District Plan.

The Head of Finance presented a summary on income and expenditure for Quarter 2 2015/16 and reported that a slight overspend of £129k was forecast at year-end, in part from the unforeseen cost of planning appeal costs awarded against the Council.

Members suggested that the revenue summary appendix be re-ordered by significance rather than Directorate to aid their review of the papers.

Action: Head of Finance to consider re-ordering the revenue summary appendix when producing the Q3 report.

The Director of Corporate Resources talked the Working Group through the Budget and Key Performance Indicators.

The Head of Legal and Democratic services summarised the appeal process and cost of appeals to the Council.

Members discussed how Development Control decisions are handled within the Council.

It was proposed that four factors relating to housing be presented as a separate service area within the quarter 3 Finance and Performance report.

Action: Head of Finance to include in Q3 report.

Members discussed revenue grants and spending related to the New Homes Bonus.

Members discussed the key projects and requested further information on the Town Centre improvements in West Street, relating to progress on wi-fi and grants to shop owners for improving the shop frontages.

Action: Update requested from the officer responsible for the project; Town Centres & Events Manager.

5. REVISIONS TO HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL'S PROCUREMENT CODE

The Joint Procurement Adviser introduced the draft report on Revisions to Horsham District Council's Procurement Code.

Members noted responses to questions raised by other Councillors on the revisions to the Council's Procurement Code.

It was reported that the draft Procurement Code promoted greater transparency.

6. COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS – MONITORING AND LEARNING REPORT FOR QUARTER 2

The Working Group noted the figures for the quarter which were detailed in the Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions report.

The Members noted the complaints figures for the quarter, along with the annual figures.

The report detailed a breakdown of the figures for the Working Group.

7. ANALYSIS OF REQUESTS MADE UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION REGULATIONS 2015

The Working Group noted the contents of the Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulations report.

8. CENSUS JOINT COMMITTEE MINUTES HELD ON 9TH SEPTEMBER 2015

The Members noted the Minutes of the CenSus Joint Committee held on the 9th September 2015.

The meeting ended at 8.15 p.m. having commenced at 6.00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

Agenda Item 8

Finance and Performance Working Group
18th November 2015

Notes of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee **Social Inclusion Working Group** **30th November 2015**

Present: Councillors: David Skipp (Chairman) Alan Britten, David Coldwell, Ben Staines

Apologies: Councillor: Roger Clarke, Matthew French, Tim Lloyd, Tricia Youtan

Also present: Councillor: Godfrey Newman

1. **TO APPROVE AS CORRECT THE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28TH SEPTEMBER 2015**

The minutes of 28th September 2015 were approved as a correct record of the meeting.

The Working Group noted that West Sussex County Council had employed a financial inclusion officer. The Community Development and Engagement Manager would invite him to attend a future meeting of the Working Group.

2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM CHAIRMAN OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

There were no announcements.

4. **TO RECEIVE THE DIGITAL INCLUSION REPORT BY THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENGAGEMENT MANAGER**

The Community Development and Engagement Manager presented the report on Digital Inclusion.

The Community Development Officer demonstrated how Horsham District Council was performing in terms of digital inclusion, in comparison to other local authorities, by showing the Group a number of council websites.

Agenda Item 9

Social Inclusion Working Group
30th November 2015

As the website was the main point of contact for most people, it was essential that older people and those who have a disability or were impaired have access to the Council's services on the website. The Community Development Officer explained that this could easily be achieved by having a link from the Home page to accessibility information to make accessing digital services simple.

A good example of how this was achieved was on the Crawley Borough Council website.

Members were also shown the Mid Sussex District Council and Arun District Council websites and how they compared to Horsham's website.

Members agreed that the Horsham District Council website must be accessible for everyone to use. The Group agreed that improvements could easily be made by adding link to the Home page. This would be raised with the Communications team.

The Group also agreed that although most the access to the Council's services was through the website, it was important to maintain the reception desk and face to face service, along with contact telephone numbers if people were unable to use the online facilities. By doing this it would show that the Council understood the needs of all those who access the Council's services.

Members questioned whether a digital inclusion strategy had been included in the new Corporate Plan which was being prepared for 2016.

The Working Group would invite the Business Transformation Manager about plans in terms of incorporating a strategy into the Corporate Plan and making the website more accessible to all.

The Working Group also discussed access to the internet in Horsham overall, for example better infrastructure for better internet connection in new housing developments, achieving better Wi-Fi in Horsham town centre. The Working Group would also invite the Leader to a future meeting to discuss this inclusion of a digital strategy in the Corporate Plan.

Housing associations, Henfield Hub and the Job Centre were also other organisations who could be invited to a future meeting of the Working Group to discuss their plans for the future regarding digital inclusion.

5. CENSUS REVENUES AND BENEFITS PERFORMANCE DATA

The Working Group noted the performance data on CenSus Revenues and Benefits. The Group agreed that it needed more information to support this and the Chairman would follow this up.

The meeting finished at 7.01pm having commenced at 5.30pm.

CHAIRMAN

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