

PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2013 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fittock (Chairman)

Cllr. Walshe (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Mrs. Bayley, Clark, Mrs. Cook, Davison, Gaywood, Grint, London, McGarvey and Piper

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Dickins and Firth

116. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Performance and Governance Committee held on 8 January 2013, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

117. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

118. Formal Response or Consultation Requests from the Cabinet and/or Select Committees following matters referred by the Committee

- a) Treasury Management Strategy 2013/2014
(Minute 83 Response from Cabinet 7 February 2013)

The Committee noted that the Cabinet had agreed with the recommendation to increase the opportunities for the council to broaden its options within the councils investment management strategy.

119. To receive the minutes of the Finance Advisory Group for information

Members noted the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Advisory Group held on 24 January 2013.

A Member commented that only three members of the group had been present, and for such an important group the membership was too small. It was pointed out that the governance structure was due to be considered at Council.

120. Actions from the last meeting of the Committee

The completed actions were noted. It was further noted that the Procurement Group would report back to committee later in the year.

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121. Future Business, the Work Plan 2012/13 and the Forward Plan

The work plan was noted. However in light of proposals to change the governance structure due to be considered at the next full meeting of Council, it was agreed to leave the plan as it stood except for noting that the Benefit Fraud Update would need to be reported to an appropriate committee in June.

122. Performance Report

The Committee considered a summary of Council performance along with details of all 'Red' performance indicators for the period to the end of January 2013 and updated figures for the period to the end of February 2013. The Policy and Performance Manager highlighted the improvements made within those periods.

Members discussed whether some of the targets, particularly in relation to the processing of planning applications and s.106 agreements, were realistic and achievable. The Chief Executive Designate acknowledged that there was always the danger of aiming for targets at the detriment of the result, and welcomed a review.

Members also agreed that it would be more useful to have monthly figures rather than cumulative. The Policy and Performance Manager advised that the software would be able to offer both cumulative and monthly figures by June 2013. He also reported that he would be meeting with planning and would feedback the comments. In response to a question on the timescale for new targets, he reported that objectives were being reviewed as part of service planning and at the moment draft proposals were being challenged.

The Committee was pleased to see the improvements made with regard to the garden waste collection service. The Chairman requested that the Committee's thanks and appreciation for the work undertaken to make these improvements be fed back to all relevant officers.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

123. Internal Audit Plan Q3 Progress Report

The Audit, Risk and Anti Fraud Manager presented the report which provided details of the progress of the Internal Audit Team in delivering the Annual Internal Audit Plan 2012/13 and outcomes of final reports issued since the meeting of the committee in January 2013. Since the publication of the report, three further reports had been issued; two more were at 'feedback process in progress' stage; one less fieldwork was in progress. All planned reviews for 2012/13 had either been completed, or were in various stages of completion. The Audit, Risk and Anti-Fraud manger indicated that all work- in-progress would be completed by end of April.

Resolved: That the contents of the report and the progress made by the audit team in delivering the 2012/13 Annual Internal Audit Plan, be noted.

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124. Annual Audit Plan 2013/14

The Audit, Risk and Anti Fraud Manager's presented the draft Annual Internal Audit programme for 2013/14. The Plan took account of all the Financial Systems and the IT Service. He advised Members that the last line of audit item 22 'Repair and Maintenance Arrangements' should read 'probity' not property.

Members stressed the importance of s.106 agreements being reviewed and the Audit, Risk and Anti Fraud Manager confirmed that Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) had been factored in. Members were keen that this area should be comprehensively reviewed. The Audit, Risk and Anti Fraud Manager undertook to look into licensing fee charging.

In response to a question relating to housing benefit fraud investigation The Audit, Risk and Anti-Fraud Manager advised that work was being undertaken, on Single Person Discount (SPD), in conjunction with Kent County Council (KCC) which has resulted in reducing the number of people claiming single person discounts. Thus reducing the amount of error or fraud in this area..

Action 1: The Audit, Risk and Anti Fraud Manager to prepare a draft audit brief ahead of the work on 'Review of S.106 Agreements' audit , and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to the Finance Advisory Group.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that there were no adverse equality impacts arising from this report.

Resolved: That the the draft Internal Audit Plan for 2013/14, be approved.

125. Budget Monitoring - January 2013 Figures and February 2013

The Chief Finance Officer presented the budget monitoring updated figures to February 2013. He advised that the actual year end figure for year end position is forecast to be £136,000 not £154,000 better than budget. Members considered the budget monitoring figures to date and noted the favourable year end forecast.

Members discussed possible causes for the loss of projected income in car parks, such as the recent adverse weather conditions. It was noted that generally sales of petrol were also down. However Members were keen to see whether it related to the recent increase in parking charges. The Chief Executive Designate reported that a few months ago it had been reported that there had been a reduction in length of stay.

Action 2: The Chief Finance Officer to investigate whether the loss of car park income related to the implementation of the increase in parking charges.

A Member expressed residual concerns from the recent car parking charge collection audit. The Chief Executive Designate reaffirmed that this had been fully investigated by Audit and looked at by service managers and the procedures and controls in place had been tested and audit had been satisfied. However audit could be requested to do more detailed testing.

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Action 3: Audit be requested to do more detailed testing on collection procedures for car parking income as part of their 2013/14 audit.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.13 PM

CHAIRMAN