

FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2019 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Scholey (Chairman)

Cllr. Eyre (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Mrs. Bayley, Dr. Canet, Esler, Kelly, Lake and Pett

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. C. Barnes, Bosley and Pearsall

53. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Advisory Committee held on 29 January 2019 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

54. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

55. Actions from Previous Meeting

The actions were noted.

56. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder, and Chairman advised that after 12 years, he would not be standing as a District Councillor in the upcoming election. He thanked Members of the Committee for their hard work and also thanked members of staff which included the Finance department and Democratic Services for their help over the years.

Members of the Committee wished to place on record their thanks to the Portfolio Holder and Chairman for his hard work and that he would be missed.

The Portfolio Holder advised that the process for setting the budget had been completed. He reported that this was an important but routine matter.

He also reported that the future financing of two of the District's leisure centres in Edenbridge and Swanley, would be financially challenging. He believed the Chief Finance Officer and his team would be working on these issues over the next few years.

57. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit committee

There were none.

58. Carry Forward Requests 2018/19

The Head of Finance presented the report which sought approval from Cabinet for carry forward requests for 2018/19.

The Head of Finance explained each carry forward request in detail and Members requested the number of devices in R2 and further details for R3. The Chief Finance Officer advised that the customer redesign project aimed to improve the service to the council's customer's by enhancing the level of detail provided at the first point of contact.

Members also queried why the amounts mentioned in the carry forward requests were 'up to...' rather than a specified amount. The Chief Finance Officer advised that the carry forward requests were being considered at an earlier meeting due to the shorter time that Finance would have for the preparation of the annual accounts. This meant that final figures for the requests were still uncertain and may be "up to" the sums advised.

Action 1 - The Head of Finance to provide the number of devices requested in carry forward request R2 and further details for carry forward request R3.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that

- a) the Revenue 'carry forward' requests totalling up to £314,000 as set out in paragraph three of the report be approved subject to the comments raised.
- b) the Capital carry forward request totalling £8,869 as set out in paragraph four of the report be approved.

59. Financial Performance Indicators 2018/19 - to the end of January 2019

The Head of Finance presented a report which detailed the internally set performance indicators as at the end of January 2019, which Members considered.

He advised that the Sundry debts over 21 days were below target, whilst Sundry debts over 61 days were also below target due to work increasing on pursuing debts.

The Chairman advised that the Finance department were looking to change the 21 day Sundry debt target to 30 days and would be changed for the next financial year.

Action 2 - The Chief Finance Officer to provide details of how the Council Tax collection rate compares to other authorities.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

60. Financial Results 2018/19 - to the end of January 2019

The Head of Finance presented a report on the Council's 2018/19 financial results to the end of January 2019, which showed the year end position forecast to be an unfavourable variance of £138,000.

He advised that since the report had been published as at the end of February, the unfavourable variance had been reduced to £76,000.

Members of the Committee queried why the unfavourable variance had decreased in one month. The Head of Finance advised that this was due to various factors, which included additional business rates, court costs and enforcement income being received.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

61. Work Plan

The work plan was noted.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 7.46 PM

CHAIRMAN

