

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Tuesday 14 December 2021 at 7.00 pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present:

Axam, Butler, Crookes, Dorn, Drage, Farmer, Harward, Smith and Worlock
(Chairman)

In attendance:

Councillor Butcher
Councillor Forster
Councillor Wildsmith

Officers:

Emma Foy, Head of Corporate Services & S151 Officer
John Elson, Head of Environment & Technical Services
Mark Jaggard, Head of Place
Kirsty Jenkins, Head of Community
Jenny Humphreys, Committee Services Officer

76 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

A member wanted a sentence included in November's Overview and Scrutiny Minutes on Odiham car parking charges (minute 67).

The member wanted it noted that they had mentioned that Odiham car parking charges had increased, and as a result the number of people buying tickets and revenue had gone down.

The Minutes of the meeting of 16 November 2021 were otherwise confirmed and signed as a correct record.

A member asked if there could be a 'matters arising' item on future agendas for Overview and Scrutiny meetings. The member also discussed version numbers and dates on agendas and the Chairman confirmed that this was something the Joint Chief Executive and officers were still discussing.

77 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Davies and Collins. Councillor Butler attended as a substitute for Councillor Davies.

Councillor Wildsmith attended via Teams video.

78 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Forster declared a personal interest as a nominated sub-contractor on the Kent Framework.

79 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that Committee Services and the Joint Chief Executive had received a communication from a resident requesting that points raised within this communication could be addressed at tonight's meeting.

The Chairman then highlighted the correct procedures with respect of public participation at the meeting. The Council allows residents to make statements and raise questions at meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It is less formal than the Council arrangements. The rules, however, require the person making the statement, or raising the questions, to attend the meeting in person. This is because there is an expectation that members of the committee and officers can question the person making the statement or asking questions. Attendance can be either by coming to the meeting or by joining virtually via Teams.

In this case, the person asking the question had chosen not to attend. The points therefore could not be put to the committee, and neither could the individual be questioned. However, the Chairman confirmed that she had asked the Head of Corporate Services to address any relevant points in her presentation of the Budget Monitoring paper (agenda item 11).

The Chairman moved agenda item 8 before item 6.

80 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)

None.

81 ENVIRONMENT & TECHNICAL SERVICE PANEL UPDATE

Members summarised that the meeting was well run, the team were working very well together, and they are confident a good job is being done.

Members highlighted the following amber items as ones to watch:

- Developing a proposal for the installation of electrical vehicle charging points.
- The replacement of Hart's vehicle fleet with electric cars.
- Delivery of Phase 1 works at Edenbrook Country Park.

Members requested to see Quarter 2 data for CCTV, and the Head of Environment & Technical confirmed that the figures are above target but they are still awaiting to receive this data officially from Rushmoor Borough Council.

Councillor Forster left the meeting due to a personal interest (19:14).

A member questioned the use of the word 'tendering' for the Kent Framework project.

The Head of Environment & Technical Services will change the word 'tendering' to 'procuring'. This is due to the process not being a competitive one but a selection.

A member queried the progress of work on Odiham Common and the Head of Environment & Technical Services confirmed this project, as far as he was aware was on track.

82 PLACE SERVICE PANEL UPDATE

Members summarised that the service is working very hard and key individuals are very busy, with resource constraints curbing output across the very wide range of tasks.

Members stressed that prioritising the 32 service priorities so the team can focus on certain ones at different times could be more beneficial.

Members discussed fly-tipping and questioned the current figures and KPI's and how they were recorded.

The Chairman and Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider changing the format and template for all service areas if it is deemed that extra information and prioritisation on tasks needs to occur.

83 COMMUNITY SERVICE PANEL UPDATE

Members reported that the meeting was very positive and commended the Head of Community for also providing written answers to questions that were asked at the meeting.

84 PROJECT INTEGRA JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Head of Corporate Services explained that the report sets out the new Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) proposed by Hampshire County Council.

This will be supported by a new operational partnership agreement and detailed action plan to take Project Integra (PI) forward including meeting the requirements of the Environment Bill.

Councillor Forster re-joined the meeting (19:26)

Members discussed:

- When the Environment Bill will become law.
- The project's financial costs and implications.
- The uncertainty of timescales.
- The "twin-stream" approach to recycling and how different proposed ones in the Strategy are to Hart's current one.
- The significant new recycling facilities that would be needed for this project and how these would be funded. For example, yoghurt pots, tin foil, and food waste.
- Increasing residents' education of recycling and engaging more with them on what they would like to see introduced to Hart's recycling service.
- Plastic pollution and plastic recycling.
- The Sky Ocean Rescue initiative.

DECISION

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended to Cabinet the endorsement of a "twin-stream" approach to recycling, (not **the** "twin-stream" approach that is detailed in the report) to improve performance. Noting the clear proviso, that no commitment can yet be made to it, until the requirements of the Environment Bill and the associated financial arrangements are made clear, and agreement is reached on any revision to Project Integra with Hampshire County Council.

This to include the following comments (if possible):

- Timescales for the project to be listed.
- Funding and who would pay for aspects of the project.
- The project should be one that can respond easily to environmental and climate change factors when they arise, to support Hart's Climate Emergency commitment.
- In Appendix 1 (page 10 of the Strategy) Hart's recycling should be listed as 'alternate weekly' instead of fortnightly.

The Chairman to agree further comments with the Committee via email before Cabinet in January.

The Chairman also relayed a message from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council on the welfare of Hart employees who had transferred as part of the waste management transition. Officers at Basingstoke said: "staff that have transferred have integrated well."

85 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2021/22 (HALF YEAR REPORT)

The Head of Corporate Services summarised the Council's Treasury Management activities and performance during the first six months of the 2021/22 financial year (April-September 2021).

The Head of Corporate Services added that the report was due to come to November's Overview & Scrutiny meeting but was postponed due to that meeting's very full agenda.

Members discussions included:

- The risks and potential exposures of borrowing.
- Increasing the Barclays Counterparty limit from £5 million to £10 million and why this amount had been proposed.
- Operational Boundary and what it involved.

DECISION

The Committee endorsed the recommendation to Cabinet to increase the Barclays Counterparty limit to £10m until 31 March, to accommodate the investment in the Barclays Green Investment fund.

The Committee endorsed the recommendation that following the acquisition of Centenary House, to increase the Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit as detailed in paragraph 4.3.

The Head of Corporate Services to include percentage of assets and net spends in the Cabinet report and to circulate to members beforehand.

86 QUARTER TWO BUDGET MONITORING

The Head of Corporate Services summarised the revenue outturn and capital outturn for the first six months of the year ending 30 September 2021.

She highlighted that when the report was prepared the level of sales, fees and charges compensation had not been confirmed so this is not reflected.

The cost of Services Budget set by Cabinet in February was £107948.

Members discussions included:

- The net cost of waste transferring from Environment & Technical Services to Corporate Services.
- Car parking income decreasing due to the pandemic.
- Place service receiving increased fees from planning applications and increased work on Building Control.
- The retention of the dog warden van and why the Council has earmarked £24,000 for a potentially new electric vehicle for this service.
- Covid-19 grants/compensation from the government.
- Accounting Treatment and its definition.
- The loss of revenue due to the temporary closure of the Hart Leisure Centre during lockdowns.

The Head of Corporate Services agreed to provide more details on the dog warden van in the future.

Members also questioned if the Head of Corporate Services had answered all the resident's questions that had been submitted in a statement prior to the meeting.

The Head of Corporate Services confirmed she had answered all the points in the statement that referred to the Budget report, waste transfer and the earmarked reserves.

DECISION

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the revised projections and main revenue variances highlighted in Paragraph 4.1 and Appendices 1 and 2.
2. The Committee noted the provisional full year revenue outturn position as at 30 September 2021 of a £612,000 overspend as detailed in Table 4.3.
3. The Committee noted capital outturn position as at 30th September 2021.

87 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

Members questioned why the upcoming Annual Parking report is scheduled to include details of car parking income as it was already included in the budget papers.

The Head of Corporate Services to investigate this with the Joint Chief Executive and to find out more about what parking proposals these are referring to.

88 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

In addition to a verbal discussion, members were keen to see a report and presentation for the item on 'Renewable Energy Policy for Hart', due to come to February's Overview and Scrutiny meeting.

The Chairman agreed that an accompanying presentation on this topic and separate meetings were being considered by the Portfolio Holder for Place and Head of Place.

The Chairman also confirmed that the Renewable Energy Policy was planning policy.

The Chairman reminded the Committee that the Work Programme is a living document and items will be added continuously.

The meeting closed at 9.02 pm