

Minutes

Governance Committee

13th January 2016



Councillors	Present	Councillors	Present
M Dunn	Yes	Miss V Santomauro	Yes
J Elliott (Chairman)	Apologies	Miss M Thorogood	Yes
J Goodman	Apologies	R van Dulken	Yes
D Hufton-Rees	Apologies		

In attendance:

Chris Fleetham Corporate Director
Chloe Glock Governance and Members Officer
Adam Hill Governance and Members Apprentice
Ian Hunt Head of Governance
Phil Myers Financial Services Manager
Trevor Wilson Head of Finance

Lisa Clampin BDO (External Auditors)

23 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

INFORMATION: There were no questions asked, or statements made.

24 **MINUTES**

DECISION: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Governance Committee held on 16th September 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

INFORMATION: There were no interests declared.

26 **SECOND QUARTER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT 2015-16**

INFORMATION: Members were advised that progress in the second quarter had been steady. Seven projects had been completed and 32 projects were on track to meet their target dates. One project had an amber status.

For performance indicators at the end of the second quarter, nine had met target and seven had not met target. Of the seven performance indicators that had not met target, four had missed target by less than 5% and three had missed target by more than 5%.

The processing of planning applications had achieved 69.33% against a target of 72%. The collection rates for Council Tax and Business Rates had missed target in the second quarter by less than 1%. Members were advised that the collection rates were now above target and doing well for the time of year.

Members were advised that recycling performance had remained challenging. The lower recycling rate was reflected across the county and recycling rates had been continuing to decline. Action was being taken to increase recycling rates by introducing recycling to flats and schools across the district.

The number of passenger journeys on the community transport scheme had not met target in the second quarter. There had been a reduction in all journey types and various factors contributing to the reduction. The scheme was being actively promoted.

The number of empty homes returned to use had not met target in the second quarter. The empty homes officer had been working with empty home owners to encourage the homes back in to use.

Members were updated on areas that had been performing well, these included;

- The Council had continued to clear 100% of fly tips across the District within 24 hours of them being reported.
- The number of visits to leisure facilities had exceeded targets.
- The number of affordable homes being delivered was on target for the year; Members were also informed that the four year target had been exceeded.
- The percentage of enquiries that had been resolved at first point of contact within the customer service centre was at 96% against a target of 85%.
- The average response time for calls to be answered was at 13 seconds.
- The percentage of avoidable contact within the Council was at its lowest at 9.63%.

DECISION: That the report be noted.

27 **KEY FINANCIAL INDICATORS – 30TH NOVEMBER 2015**

INFORMATION: Members considered a report on Key Financial Indicators which provided information on performance for the financial year to 30th November 2015.

DECISION: That the report on the Key Financial Indicators as at 30th November 2015 be accepted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To provide evidence that the Council adopts good practice in actively monitoring its financial performance and actively manages issues that may arise.

28 **DRAFT TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2016-17**

INFORMATION: Members of the Committee put forward some suggestions to officers to be passed on to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, these included;

- As a result of low interest rates, the possibility of a review of cash balances should be looked at with a view for additional stock market investments.
- With additional funds going in to either one of the three equity funds or the one property fund the option for investing in other funds should be looked at, including bond funds.

DECISION: The Committee agreed:

1. That the Committee reviewed the draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement and;
2. The Committee did not wish to propose any amendments, however they did provide some comments, stated above, which the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance could take into account when presenting the final Treasury Management Strategy Statement to Cabinet and Full Council Purpose

REASON FOR DECISION: The Council's Constitution requires that prior to consideration by Cabinet and Full Council, the draft Treasury Management Strategy Statement is reviewed and scrutinised by the Governance Committee.

29 **ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2014-2015**

INFORMATION: Members were advised that during the annual audit there had been no significant issues raised. One material misstatement had been identified this was however, a disclosure misstatement. There had been no unadjusted differences during the audit, and no calls had been received by auditors to exercise powers under the Audit Commission Act.

DECISION: That the Annual Audit Letter for 2014/2015 be received.

REASON FOR DECISION: For Members to receive the Annual Audit Letter for 2014/2015

30 **INTERNAL AUDIT – ACTIVITY REPORT FOR THE PERIOD TO 14TH DECEMBER 2015**

DECISION: That the activity report for the period 1st September to 14th December 2015 be accepted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To advise Members of the audit assignments completed for the period 1st September to 14th December 2015.

31 **STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT**

DECISION: That the Strategic Risk Register and the Action Plans for managing the high rated risks be noted and endorsed.

REASON FOR DECISION: For members of the Governance Committee to be assured that the Council's strategic and operational risks, with a high risk rating, are being actively managed.

32 **MONITORING OFFICER'S ANNUAL STANDARDS REPORT FOR 2015**

INFORMATION: Members considered the Annual Report of the standards regime for the Governance Committees which included the activities of the Monitoring Officer for the period from January to December 2015

DECISION: That the report be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: The Monitoring Officer is required to report to the Governance Committee on the discharge of the standards regime.

33 **FORWARD LOOK – TWELVE MONTHS TO JANUARY 2017**

INFORMATION: Consideration was given to a schedule of routine audit and accounts reports and governance reports which would be presented to the Governance Committee during the forthcoming 12 months. Ad-hoc reports would be presented to the Committee as required.

In discussing this item, it was reported that the Council's current External Auditor BDO would not be represented at meetings of the Governance Committee beyond January 2016 as Ernst and Young would be taking on the External Auditor role. This handover had been carried out in accordance with a defined protocol.

DECISION: That the Governance Committee report schedule for the next 12 month period be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To agree the work and reports to be undertaken by and presented to the Governance Committee over the coming 12 months.

The meeting commenced at 7.15pm and closed at 8.36pm.

Councillor V Santomauro
(Chairman)