



**MINUTES of  
FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE  
14 JUNE 2017**

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**PRESENT**

Chairman	Councillor D M Sismey
Vice-Chairman	Councillor I E Dobson
Councillors	Mrs B F Acevedo, J P F Archer, P G L Elliott, A S Fluker, M S Heard and Miss M R Lewis

**143. CHAIRMAN'S NOTICES**

The Chairman drew attention to the list of notices published on the back of the agenda.

**144. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B S Beale MBE and M F L Durham, CC.

**145. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**RESOLVED**

- (i) that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 April 2017 be received.

**Minute 1246 – Millfields Caravan Park, Burnham-on-Crouch**

Councillor A S Fluker advised that the fourth paragraph of this Minute should be amended to read "...request a personal guarantee from a Director from the Birch company...". This was duly agreed.

**RESOLVED**

- (ii) that subject to the above amendment, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 April 2017 be confirmed.

**146. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Councillor D M Sismey disclosed an interest in Agenda Item 12 – Annual Treasury Outturn Report 2016 / 17 advising that he would leave the meeting for this item of business as he was an employee of Goldman Sachs.

**147. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No requests had been received.

**148. CHAIRMAN'S GOOD NEWS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were none.

**149. RESOURCES DIRECTORATE**

It was agreed that the Committee would not receive a presentation but copies of the slides would be circulated.

**150. 2016 / 17 REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive giving details of performance against targets set for 2016 / 17 and to ensure that progress was being achieved towards the corporate goals and objectives detailed in the Corporate Plan 2015 / 19 adopted by the Council.

The Key corporate activities assessed as being “behind schedule” or “at risk of not being achieved” along with indicators which had not achieved their end of year target were set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

**RESOLVED** that performance against the targets set for 2016 / 17 be noted.

**151. HUMAN RESOURCES STATISTICS - QUARTER FOUR 2016 / 17**

The Committee received and noted the report of the Director of Resources presenting Human Resources statistics for the period 1 January to 31 March 2017.

Statistics and updates relating to the following areas were detailed in the report:

- Labour Turnover;
- Recruitment;
- Job Vacancies;
- Staff Sickness Levels
- Workforce Statistics – attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

Members noted that staff sickness levels had decreased from Quarter Three, although a slight increase in short term absences was shown. Some concern was raised regarding the current sickness levels and information was provided by the Group Manager - People, Performance and Policy in respect of work undertaken to reduce these levels. An update was provided on the current position of Quarter One to 8 June 2017, with an overall reduction in total days lost from 2.77 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) to 1.96 FTE (difference of 154 days). The Group Manager - People, Performance and Policy

advised that it was anticipated that further long term sickness cases would be shortly closing.

In response to a request, the Group Manager - People, Performance and Policy agreed to circulate to all Committee Members the number of current vacancies in the Council.

Some discussion ensued regarding sickness information requested for new employees and in response the Group Manager - People, Performance and Policy outlined the policy applied by the Council in respect of new employees and when reference requests were received for past employees.

It was confirmed that the Leader of the Council attended all staff inductions.

Members were advised that Human Resources would refer staff to Occupational Health in respect of stress and any identified stress was always investigated. The Group Manager - People, Performance and Policy outlined a number of tools available to staff to assist with stress management and highlighted that stress was an overall problem for organisations across the country.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

## **152. ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Resources reporting on any complaints made under the Whistleblowing Policy for 2016 / 17.

The Director of Resources advised that no reports had been made under the Whistleblowing for the year 2016 / 17. It was noted that a review of Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure would take place during the 2017 / 18 municipal year.

**RESOLVED** that the content of the report be noted;

## **153. LEVEL ONE BUSINESS PLAN 2017 / 18 - RESOURCES DIRECTORATE**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive seeking Members' approval of the Level One Business Plan 2017 / 18 for the Resources Director (attached as Appendix 1 to the report).

The report reminded Members of the existing Corporate Plan for the period 2015 – 2019 which set the vision and corporate goals that the Council agreed to focus on over the four year period along with a suite of high level outcomes associated with each goal. The Level 1 Business Plan provided the priorities and targets within the Resources Directorates for the next 12 months.

**RESOLVED** that the part of the Business Plan for the Resources Directorate for 2017 / 18 be agreed.

Following his earlier declaration Councillor D M Sismey left the meeting at this point.

**154. ANNUAL TREASURY OUTTURN REPORT 2016 / 17**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Resources seeking Members' approval of the annual report (attached as Appendix A to the report), in accordance with the code of practice on Treasury Management.

The Director of Resources advised that she would be bringing a report to the next meeting of this Committee to look at further maximising the Council's investment income.

**RECOMMENDED** that annual Treasury Management Report for 2016 / 17 attached at **APPENDIX 1** to these Minutes be approved.

Councillor Sismey returned to the chamber.

**155. FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2016 / 17**

The Committee received the report of the Director of Resources providing information on the outturn position for the 2016 / 17 financial year and also movements in relation to the Council's General Fund / Earmarked Reserves and Capital Commitments as at 31 March 2017. Appendix 1 to the report gave details of the salary budgets and actual expenditure at the end of the financial year and Appendix 2 detailed the Earmarked Reserves and the movements in 2015 / 16.

Concern was raised regarding underspend on capital budgets and it was commented that budgeting needed improving with Directors having to justify why a particular budget may not have been spent. In response these and further concerns particularly in relation to capital projects, the Chairman requested that a report be brought to the next meeting of this Committee identifying the current status of all capital projects, why they may not be proceeding as planned and when it was known that the project was not going to happen so that monies could have been reinvested elsewhere. The Committee requested that Directors and senior Managers have tighter scrutiny on capital projects in the future. It was further agreed that the Committee would receive quarterly updates on all capital projects.

**RESOLVED**

- (i) That the information in relation to the estimated outturn position for the 2016 / 17 financial year be noted, including movement in general / earmarked reserves and capital commitments.
- (ii) That a report be brought to the next meeting of this Committee identifying the current status of projects, why they may not be proceeding as planned and when it was known that the project was not going to happen so that monies could have been reinvested elsewhere.

- (iii) That the Finance and Corporate Services Committee receive quarterly updates on all capital projects.

#### **156. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES AND VIREMENTS: 1 APRIL - 19 MAY 2017**

The Committee received the report of the Director of Resources, reporting virements and supplementary estimates agreed under delegated powers and procurement exemptions granted.

Members were advised that there had been:

- no virements or procurement exemptions for this period.
- one supplementary revenue estimate for sickness cover arrangements.
- two procurement exemptions from the Customers and Communities Directorate relating to a replacement vehicle and safety surfacing around play equipment at the Promenade Park.

The Chairman drew Members' attention to an addendum to this report which had been circulated, advising that the content of the addendum was confidential.

In response to a question regarding the procurement exemption relating to the Galleon and why only one supplier was available, the Director of Resources advised she would provide Members with information regarding this outside of the meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the following supplementary estimate and procurement exemptions granted during the period, be noted.

- Supplementary estimate for sickness cover (£10,000);
- Procurement exemption for purchase of a second-hand Land Rover (£33,950 ex. VAT);
- Procurement exemption for supply and installation of safety surfacing around the Galleon at Promenade Park (£6,003 ex. VAT).

In light of the addendum contents being confidential the Chairman suggested that the public and press be excluded whilst Members' considered this item of business. The exclusion of the public and press was proposed by Councillor I E Dobson and duly seconded.

#### **157. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that this satisfies the public interest test.

**158. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES AND VIREMENTS: 1 APRIL - 19 MAY**

The Committee considered the addendum which sought Members' approval of a Supplementary Revenue Estimate to cover recruitment costs.

It was noted that a table contained within the report detailing recruitment costs was incorrect and a corrected table was made available on screen to Members at the meeting. It was noted that the corrections did not change the total figure detailed.

A lengthy debate ensued and detailed information was provided by the Group Manager - People, Performance and Policy in response to a number of questions.

**RESOLVED** that subject to the updated table of costs viewed at the meeting, the one-off Supplementary Revenue Estimate of £90,800 to cover recruitment costs, be approved.

**159. RESUMPTION OF BUSINESS IN OPEN SESSION**

**RESOLVED** that the meeting resumes in open session.

**160. STRATEGIC AND FINANCIAL PLANNING PROCESS**

The Committee received the report of the Director of Resources seeking agreement to the annual Strategic and Financial Planning Process (S&FPP) for 2018 / 19 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

It was noted that the Strategic and Financial Planning Process aimed to ensure available resources were effectively directed towards achievement of the Council's agreed corporate goals.

**RESOLVED** that the Strategic and Financial Planning Process for 2018 / 19, be approved.

**161. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON LIAISON COMMITTEES / PANELS**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive seeking Members' consideration of appointments to the Committees / Panels as set out in the report for the ensuing municipal year.

It was noted that the work of the Council Chamber Member Task and Finish Working Group had finished and this should therefore be removed.

**RESOLVED** that Members are appointed as representatives to the bodies as detailed below, for the ensuing municipal year.

<b>Body</b>	<b>2017 / 18 Representative</b>
Building Control Task and Finish Working Group	Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee (no provision for subs) <i>(plus representatives from the Planning &amp; Licensing Committee)</i>
Economic Prosperity and Tourism Working Group (Minute 1002 – 15/04/14)	Councillors Miss Lewis and P G L Elliott
Leisure Contract Task and Finish Working Group	Councillors A S Fluker and D M Sismey
Strengthening Community Member Task and Finish Working Group (Minute 710 - 17/12/15)	Councillors Mrs B F Acevedo and A S Fluker <i>(plus representatives from the Community Services and Planning &amp; Licensing Committees)</i>

There being no further items of business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45 pm.

D M SISMEY  
CHAIRMAN