

FINANCE, RESOURCES AND PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 27th November, 2017
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

Present:- Councillor Joan Winfield – in the Chair

Councillors Burgess, Fear, Frankish, Proctor,
Spence, Stubbs, S Tagg, P Waring,
Wilkes and Wright

Officers Interim Head of Paid Service- David
Adams, Jennie Baines (Customer
Relations Officer), Jayne Briscoe -
Scrutiny Officer and Executive Director
(Resources and Support Services) -
Kelvin Turner

Also in attendance Councillor T Turner,
Portfolio Holder for Finance, IT and
Customer and Councillor Naylor (Chair
of Cleaner, Greener and Safer Scrutiny
Committee and Councillor G Williams
Chair of Active and Cohesive Scrutiny
Committee.

1. APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Councillor Pickup.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2017 be
agreed as a correct record.

4. HOW COMPLAINTS ARE INVESTIGATED

The Customer Relations Officer presented this report and set out the complaints process which was published as part of the Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy, February 2016 alongside data about the number of complaints dealt with during the last financial year.

Members examined the number of complaints received and during discussions it was explained the customer promise helped to ensure that there was minimal delay in responding to complaints at the informal stage.

Complaints were analysed to drill down into the service areas to pick up any trends as every contact was a useful piece of information, including capturing avoidable contact. A member pointed out that the form on the web did not have the capabilities at present to help customers and suggested that google maps be included.

A member considered that it would be beneficial in the future to look at comparative data from our benchmark authorities.

Agreed That the report be received.

5. REVENUE BUDGET 2018/19 - FIRST DRAFT SAVINGS PLANS

The Executive Director (Resources and Support Services) presented this report which informed members of the current proposals being considered to balance the 2018/19 revenue budget.

The Councils updated Medium Term Financial Strategy and Efficiency Plan for 2018/19 to 2022/23 was considered by this Committee at the last meeting and subsequently approved by Cabinet on 18 October 2017. At this time a budget “gap” of £1.535m had been identified which required to be closed in order to produce a balanced budget.

As a result of the work carried out by the Budget Review Group alongside officers a number of savings and funding strategies had been identified and agreed with managers and these were set out in detail to enable detailed scrutiny, work was ongoing to identify further savings as a shortfall of £0.259m remained.

Members commented on the scale of the year on year savings which had been made from 2008/09 and the effect that these had made to the level of service offered to the public. The abolition of the Revenue Support Grant and the financial challenge to the Borough that this will bring was also highlighted.

Members examined the proposed savings and funding strategies and it was suggested that in respect of G3 – CCTV that the BID be asked to take on this cost.

The position in relation to the New Homes Bonus contribution would not be known until the Local Government Finance Settlement was received prior to Christmas.

Agreed That the report be received.

6. SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES

The Executive Director – Resources and Support Services presented this report which reviewed the fees and charges which the Council makes in order to keep them in line with the cost of service provision, ensure compliance with the Charging Policy and to establish the amounts to be included in the 2018/19 budget.

Members asked if, in future, the amount of revenue generated could be shown alongside the charge and also asked if the actual cost of providing a service had been calculated.

Agreed That the report be received.

7. WORK PLAN

With regard to consideration of the report of the time taken to answer calls to the Contact Centre scheduled for the 24 January meeting Members agreed, that if necessary, this item be deferred to the 12 March to allow the officer to concentrate on the (delayed) move to Castle House.

Following a member suggestion it was agreed that future scrutiny work examine the way in which this authority engages with other organisations such as the BID.

Agreed That the report be received and the changes outlined above be made to the Work Programme.

8. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

9. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Business.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 24 JANUARY 2018

The next meeting will be held on 24 January, 2018.

11. DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

Resolved That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following matter because it is likely that there will be disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

12. TRADE REFUSE FEES AND CHARGES

Agreed That the report on the proposed trade refuse fees and charges - 1 April – 31 March 2018 be noted.

COUNCILLOR JOAN WINFIELD
Chair

Meeting concluded at 8.25 pm