

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION
29 MARCH 2018
7.30 - 8.10 PM**



Present:

Councillors Leake (Chairman), Angell (Vice-Chairman), Allen, Mrs Angell, Mrs Birch, Brossard, Finnie, Mrs McCracken, Peacey, Mrs Temperton, Tullett and Virgo

Executive Members:

Councillors D Birch and McCracken

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Harrison and Porter

In Attendance:

Timothy Wheadon, Chief Executive
Alison Sanders, Director of Resources
Nikki Gibbons, Chief Officer: Human Resources
Abby Thomas, Head of Transformation and Engagement

44. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minute 42 regarding The Council's Budget Consultation it was clarified that South Hill Park had a two year agreement.

RESOLVED that, subject to the clarification above, the minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 25 January 2018 be approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

45. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

Councillor Mrs Birch declared a personal interest as the spouse of the Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing.

Councillor Mrs McCracken declared a personal interest as the spouse of the Executive Member for Culture, Resources and Public Protection.

There were no indications that members would be participating while under the party whip.

46. Urgent Items of Business

There were no items of urgent business.

47. Public Participation

No submissions had been made by members of the public under the Council's Public Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny.

48. **Quarterly Service Reports (QSRs)**

The Commission noted the latest trends, priorities and pressures in terms of departmental performance as reported in the QSRs for the third quarter of 2017/18 (October to December 2017) relating to the Resources Directorate.

As a result of Members' comments and questions, the following points were made:

- Councillor Finnie had requested information regarding the Volunteer Handbook which had been developed.
- It was clarified that the work supporting L064 'Debt outstanding as percentage of gross debt' was an ongoing process to recover monies and could be recovered in large amounts such as CIL invoices from developers. It was noted that the team was working hard to recover outstanding funds.
- It was explained that the complaints figures in L257 related to the whole Council and therefore were not directly related to the figures in L261 and L262 which related to staff sickness absence and voluntary staff turnover.
- In relation L261, Level of sickness, although the Quarter 3 figure (1.71) was above the target of 1.62 days this was a low target. It was acknowledged that staff in Resources had been supporting the delivery of other transformation projects during the proceeding six months and working to tight timescales. It was reported that this figure was good compared to other local authorities. Work was ongoing to support Resources staff and improve morale.
- Due to the contractual nature of the issue raised in relation to 7.2.30 'Providing project management which supports the delivery and development of Coral Reef' about additional fees it was not possible to provide a full answer in the public meeting. It was acknowledged that the RAG rating should be Red rather than Amber status and that an update would be circulated outside of the meeting when it was available.
- Concerns were raised about the absence of detailed sickness and vacancy reporting in Quarterly Service Reports. It was noted that these were due to be reported as part of the Corporate Performance Overview Report but that this had a later publication date so was not available for consideration at this meeting. This was considered by members of the Commission to be an important measure of staff wellbeing and data would therefore always be out of date as the publication sequencing did not work with the meetings schedule. It was agreed that this needed to be discussed outside of the meeting.
- Regarding 7.2.37, Agree a clear way forward for the Cooper's Hill site, it was clarified that this was a complex site and officers were working through tricky covenant issues but the Green status reflected that discussions were underway with projections for future use looking more positive.
- It was explained that changing financial rules did not affect income in the Property Investment Strategy (1.3.07) in the next financial year as it impacted on accounting processes but not yield. The Borough Treasurer would provide a more detailed response to the query.
- There had been a challenging situation with the delivery of the Crematorium New Chapel due to issues with contractor workmanship and performance but they had not been significant enough to trigger compensation discussions but initial issues had now been resolved.
- The information provided in the Quarterly Service Report about 5.2 'The right levels and types of housing are both approved and delivered' related only to Council purchases for homelessness.
- It was noted that the Downshire Homes Board were intending to provide an annual report and mid year update to Council.

49. **Transformation Programme Update**

The Head of Transformation and Engagement, Abby Thomas, provided a brief summary on the progress of each review within the Transformation Programme

- £2.4m was taken out of the 2017/18 budget and £6.3m would be taken out of the 2018/19 budget as a result of the transformation programme
- Three new reviews had started in 2017-18 e.g. Planning & Building Control; Parks and Countryside and Children's services transformation programme
- The 2016/17 reviews had been implemented including the Leisure Services Review with the contract with Everybody Active commencing on 1 March 2018
- The Council would be considering an invest to save project at Bracknell Leisure Centre at an Extraordinary Council meeting on 23 May 2018.
- The new technology would be in place in Binfield, Birch Hill and Sandhurst libraries during May / June
- Staff would be trained in the new system, Bibliotech so that they can show other staff and customers
- The Adult Social Care project was managing down demand during the previous six months. It was noted here was a significant pressure in 2018/19 and there were identified risks and dependencies on the programme as there are a number of partnership projects.
- The next service review would be undertaken in Transport Development and Highways.

Arising from questions and debate it was noted that:

- In response to a query regarding voluntary sector capacity to deliver Adult Social Care project it was reported that the Directorate were working to give targeted support to smaller organisations
- There had been some unease at the prospect of removing the issuing desks at Libraries but advice on behaviour change was that this would help with the transition
- It was confirmed that computers would still be available in the libraries to support residents go online
- Over 100 volunteers had signed up to support the service all working for different periods. The gaps were on evenings and Saturdays and particularly at Binfield, Whitegrove and Crowthorne libraries. Recruitment was being targeted through local magazines and ward councillors.
- The final Council meeting would be held in Easthampstead House on 25 April before moving to Time Square

The Chairman requested that an updated roadmap of progress be circulated to Commission members.

50. **Proposed merger of Overview and Scrutiny Panels**

The Commission considered a report from the Working Group which had been formed to consider whether combining the work of the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel with the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel would be logical, beneficial and more effective and then the logistics of such a merger.

The Commission noted that the principle of merging the panels was agreed and considered the Working Group's suggestions including updating the terms of reference for the Panels which would need to be reported to Council.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel be combined into a single panel called Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel;
- (ii) the logistics of the new panel would be as set out in agenda report paragraphs 5.5 to 5.10;
- (iii) the terms of reference for Overview and Scrutiny Panels be updated as set out in Appendix A of the report;
- (iv) this change to panels and their terms of reference be reported by the Chairman of the Commission to Council;
- (v) these changes would take effect from the Annual Council meeting on 23 May 2018 and would be reviewed before May 2019; and
- (vi) it was recommended to Council that the Constitution be amended to reflect these changes as set out in Appendix A of the report.

51. Work Programme and Panel Activity Update

The Commission noted progress against the Overview and scrutiny work programme for 2017-18 and the reports from Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chairman (where provided). It was noted that the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership had a different RAG rating in two places on the report but the Chairman considered this to be an example of why the merger was necessary.

The lead member for the working group on Houses in Multiple Occupation met with Democratic Services officer providing support and agreed remaining meetings required to move the working group forward.

The Working Group on Primary Care Patient Experience was also going to be supported by Democratic Services to help it progress.

52. Executive Forward Plan

Members received and noted the scheduled Key and Non-Key Executive Decisions of a corporate nature.

CHAIRMAN