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Resources and Services Overview and
Scrutiny Committee

17 December 2018

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE,
HELD ON MONDAY, 17TH DECEMBER, 2018 AT 9.30 AM
IN THE CONNAUGHT ROOM - CONNAUGHT ROOM**

Present:	Councillors Stephenson (Chairman), Alexander (Vice-Chairman), Amos, Baker, Scott and Steady
Also Present:	Councillors Bush, G V Guglielmi (Finance and Corporate Resources Portfolio Holder)(except item 51 (part)) and Pemberton (except item 51 (part))
In Attendance:	Ian Davidson (Chief Executive)(except item 51 (part)), Anastasia Simpson (Head of People, Performance and Projects), Richard Barrett (Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits Services & Section 151 Officer) and Ian Ford (Committee Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer)

47. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Broderick (with no substitute), M Brown (with no substitute), Everett (with no substitute) and Newton (with no substitute).

48. MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2018

The Minutes of the special meeting of the Committee, held on 29 November 2018, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none at this time.

50. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 37

There were none on this occasion.

51. UPDATED FINANCIAL FORECAST/BUDGET 2019/20

The Committee's comments were sought on the updated Financial Forecast/Budget 2019/20, which had been approved at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 14 December 2018. The Committee was aware that an updated financial forecast for 2019/20 had been prepared which reflected changes since Members had last considered the forecast in November 2018.

The Chief Executive (Ian Davidson) attended the meeting and informed the Committee that the Local Government Finance Settlement had now been received from the Government. Whilst the Settlement would be difficult for those authorities who had adult social care responsibilities (such as County Councils and Unitary Councils), Tendring

District Council had been pretty accurate in its predictions and therefore no major changes were required to the Cabinet's initial budget proposals. He stated that this Council's move to a 'rolling' ten year financial forecast had proved to be a 'boon' in that it had helped to protect a lot of frontline services with its ability to average out savings across the ten year profile. Mr Davidson was pleased to report that the Council had met its £300,000 savings target for 2019/20 and that the ongoing aim was to beat this on an annual basis.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Executive for his attendance and Mr Davidson then left the meeting.

The Finance and Corporate Resources Portfolio Holder (Councillor G V Guglielmi) attended the meeting and stated that he was pleased that the Council's bold approach and robust ten year financial forecast had enabled it to meet its savings target over the last two years more than comfortably. This had enabled the Council to invest in the following:-

- (1) Phase 3A Broadband;
- (2) Harwich Realm, and
- (3) Garden Communities.

In addition, the Council had monies in reserve to meet any difficulties arising with Universal Credit and the business rates retention. Councillor Guglielmi referred to the new culture of constant review of expenditure where by cost pressures and areas for potential savings which required hard decisions could be identified and actioned with no cuts to services. Finally, Councillor Guglielmi referred to the level of planning income which had plateaued due to a decline in the number of planning applications.

Councillor Guglielmi then responded to questions put to him by Members. The Chairman thanked Councillor Guglielmi for his attendance and Councillor Guglielmi then left the meeting.

The Head of Finance, Revenues & Benefits Services (Richard Barrett), outlined the changes in the financial forecast since it had last been considered plus the possible implications for the future. Mr Barrett also informed the Committee that a New Homes Bonus of £1.18 million was available for one-off expenditure by the Cabinet.

Mr Barrett, together with the Head of People, Performance and Projects (Anastasia Simpson), then responded to Members' questions.

The Committee then adjourned for lunch (Noon – 12.50 p.m.). Following that adjournment the Committee resumed and considered the following matters:-

Mr Barrett outlined to the Committee the Initial Net Savings Items 2019/20 and responded to Members' questions thereon.

Mr Barrett then drew to the Committee's attention the Updated Cost pressure Summary for 2019/20 and responded to Members' questions thereon.

Councillors Baker and Stephenson each declared a Personal Interest when the Committee's discussions touched on the subject of Disabled Facilities Grants insofar as both had close family members who had been in receipt of a Disabled Facilities Grant.

Following a discussion of the day's events the Chairman adjourned the meeting until 9.30 a.m. on Thursday 3 January 2019 at which time the Committee would ask questions of members of the Cabinet with regards to service delivery matters related to items in the Financial Forecast that were relevant to their respective portfolios. The Committee would then decide what comments and/or recommendations it wished to submit to Cabinet in relation to the updated Financial Forecast/Budget 2019/20.

The meeting was declared closed at 2.34 pm

Chairman

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