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Resources and Services Overview and
Scrutiny Committee

11 February 2019

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE,
HELD ON MONDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY, 2019 AT 7.30 PM
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES, THORPE ROAD, WEELEY**

Present:	Councillors Stephenson (Chairman), Alexander (Vice-Chairman), Amos, Baker, Broderick, M Brown, Everett, Miles, Newton, Scott and Steady
In Attendance:	Anastasia Simpson (Head of People, Performance and Projects), Richard Barrett (Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits Services & Section 151 Officer), Keith Simmons (Head of Democratic Services and Elections), Michael Carran (Head of Sport and Leisure)(except items 60 - 62), John Higgins (Head of IT and Corporate Resilience)(except items 61 and 62), Ian Ford (Committee Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer) and Katie Wilkins (Human Resources and Business Manager)(except items 61 and 62)

55. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no apologies for absence submitted on this occasion and there were no substitutions.

56. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2018 AND CONTINUED ON 3 JANUARY 2019

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 December 2018 and continued on 3 January 2019 were approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman, subject to Councillor Baker's declaration of interest under Minute 53 being amended to read as follows [alteration shown in bold]:-

*"Councillor Baker declared that he has a family member **potentially to be** in receipt of a Disabled Facilities Grant."*

The Committee had had circulated to them (both by email and by paper copy) prior to the commencement of the meeting written responses to Members' questions from those Portfolio Holders who had not been able to attend the Committee's budget scrutiny meeting on 3 January 2019.

57. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none made at this time.

58. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 37

There were no such questions on this occasion.

59. REVIEW OF BESIDE THE SEASIDE FESTIVALS 2018

The Council's Head of Sport and Leisure (Mike Carran) attended the meeting and gave a presentation to the Committee which reviewed the Beside the Seaside Festivals in 2018.

Mr Carran's presentation included the following matters:-

(1) Objectives

- Maximisation of tourist opportunities through events;
- "book-end" the summer season with the Clacton Air Show;
- Raise the profile of the 'Blue Flag' beach in Dovercourt Bay; and
- Work with partners.

(2) The Event

- Traditional seaside entertainment;
- Live music/entertainment;
- 'Have a Go' activities; and
- Engagement with community groups.

(3) The 'Big Issues'

- An additional community event in Frinton-on-Sea;
- Recycling money;
- Attendance;
- Cost of the event;
- Economic impact on the local economy; and
- The weather.

(4) Learning points for 2019

- Revert to an earlier month for Clacton (i.e. June rather than July);
- Work closely with local businesses;
- Dovercourt event was too 'spaced out';
- Work towards financial sustainability; and
- Investigate possibilities of linking with other events.

Mr Carran then responded to Members' questions on his presentation.

The Chairman then thanked Mr Carran for his attendance and the information that he had provided to the Committee.

**60. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE - A.1 - PERFORMANCE REPORT
2018/19 THIRD QUARTER**

The Committee had before it a report of the Deputy Chief Executive which presented the Performance Report for Quarter Three (October to December 2018), including the Corporate Plan and Priorities and Projects 2018/19.

Appendix A to that report contained details of the 18 indicators and projects where performance was measured. Of those, 12 (67%) were on, or above, their expected target and 6 (33%) were not currently in line with the expected performance.

Members were informed that the Performance Report for Quarter Three would be presented to Cabinet on 15 February 2019 and that in that report the Local Plan and Garden Community indicators would be shown as “On Target” (rather than “Behind Target”) following the recent approval of the Council’s revised Local Development Scheme by the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee. Any feedback from the Committee would be presented to a future meeting of the Cabinet as a separate reference report.

The Council’s Human Resources & Business Manager (Katie Wilkins) gave the Committee an update in respect of the indicators and projects with particular focus on those indicators that were currently listed as “Behind Target”.

Officers responded to questions raised by Members on various topics and where an answer was not immediately available, the Human Resources and Business Manager and the Head of IT and Corporate Resilience, as appropriate, undertook to respond to Members as soon as possible after the meeting.

RESOLVED (a) that this Committee recommends to Cabinet that –

- (1) in relation to the removal of Fly Tipping target future performance reports should also include details of the number of incidents requiring a specialist response and the response times provided. The Committee would also like the recycling service to confirm if there is an SLA requiring specific response times for specialist removals;
 - (2) any and all action be undertaken to ensure that, in future, the Head of IT and Corporate Resilience ‘signs off’ on all IT related procurements before any purchase of It related equipment/software etc. is made.
- (b) that this Committee comments to Cabinet that –
- (1) it is very disappointed that it has still not yet seen the proposed Recycling Booklet for the public and requires that the booklet be sent digitally to the members of the Committee before it is printed in order that Members can comment on its contents;
 - (2) an All Member briefing be arranged to give a further update to Members on the progress of the Local Plan and the NEGC following the recent approval of the Council’s Local Development Scheme by the Planning Policy and Local Plan Committee; and
 - (3) in relation to the Recycling Rate target this target should not be listed as being “On Target” if the latest quarterly performance data has not yet been received as it is misleading.

61. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE - A.2 - ANNUAL TREASURY STRATEGY 2019/20 (INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL AND TREASURY INDICATORS)

The Committee's comments were sought on the Annual Treasury Strategy for 2019/20 (including the Prudential and Treasury indicators).

It was reported that on 5 February 2019, the Finance and Corporate Resources Portfolio Holder had agreed the Annual Treasury Strategy for 2019/20 (including the Prudential and Treasury Indicators) for consultation with the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Members were aware that the Local Government Act 2003 and supporting regulations required the Council to set out its treasury strategy for borrowing, and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy (as required by Investment Guidance subsequent to the Act) that set out the Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments, "having regard" to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice. Revised editions of both those documents had been issued in December 2017.

The Committee was informed that the revised guidance issued in 2017 also required the Council to update its Capital Strategy annually. Rather than produce two separate documents and as they were closely linked the Capital Strategy had been combined with the Treasury Strategy in one document.

It was reported that the Capital Strategy element of the combined document covered the various elements surrounding capital investment decisions and the key criteria that investment decisions should be considered against.

Similarly, the Treasury Strategy element of the combined document covered the various elements that satisfied the requirements of the various codes that governed the borrowing and investment activities of the Council and had been prepared in the light of advice received from the Council's Treasury advisors and reflected the latest codes and guidance.

Members were advised that under the Prudential Code the Council had freedom over capital expenditure as long as it was prudent, affordable and sustainable. The Prudential Indicators either measured the expected activity or introduced limits upon the activity, and reflected the underlying capital appraisal systems and enabled the Council to demonstrate that it was complying with the requirements of the Prudential Code.

The Committee was reminded that the Council's investments would be undertaken in accordance with its Treasury Management Practices. Those had been expanded to include use of non-specified investment in property to yield both rental income and capital gains from 2016/17. If credit ratings remained at their current low levels it was likely that a significant proportion of the Council's investments would continue to be in Government securities such as Treasury Bills or with other Local Authorities. However, other 'quality' investment opportunities would be explored in consultation with the Council's external advisors in order to maximise returns on investments within a continuing and overall risk-averse approach.

A copy of the report submitted to the Portfolio Holder together with the proposed Annual Capital and Treasury Strategy for 2019/20 (including the Prudential and Treasury

Indicators) was attached as an appendix to item A.2 of the Report of the Deputy Chief Executive.

The Head of Finance, Revenues & Benefits Services informed the Committee that as the 2018/19 Annual Treasury Strategy had already reflected many of the new requirements only minor updates had been necessary for the 2019/20 Strategy, namely the inclusion of the Capital Strategy within the combined document. No other significant changes were proposed in the Annual Capital and Treasury Strategy for 2019/20 with limited amendments in areas such as the general economic outlook and interest rate forecasts, with the Council maintaining a very low risk appetite approach to its treasury activities.

RESOLVED that the Committee both notes the contents of the Annual Capital and Treasury Strategy for 2019/20 and agrees that it does not need to submit any comments for the Cabinet's consideration.

62. SCRUTINY OF PROPOSED DECISIONS

Pursuant to the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 13, the Committee reviewed any new and/or amended published forthcoming decisions relevant to its terms of reference with a view to deciding whether it wished to enquire into any such decision before it was taken. The relevant forthcoming decisions were before the Committee.

The Committee noted the submitted list of published forthcoming decisions.

RESOLVED (a) that, pursuant to the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 13, the Committee wishes to enquire into the following forthcoming decision before the Finance and Corporate Resources Portfolio Holder and Housing Portfolio Holder take their final joint decision on the matter:-

“Replacement of Careline Computer and Call Handling System”

(b) that Officers add to the Committee's draft work programme for 2019/2020 the scrutiny of the expenditure of the Council's £350,000 funding of the NEGC Business Plan 2019-2022.

In respect of the Committee's work programme for the next municipal year (2019/2020) the Chairman asked Members of the Committee their opinions on whether he should contact all Members of the Council for their input and suggestions for the work programme bearing in mind the Council elections on 2 May 2019 and the likelihood of a significant turnover in membership.

Following discussion it was agreed by the Committee that the Chairman should proceed with his approach.

The meeting was declared closed at 9.45 pm

Chairman

