

**Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
10 November 2015**

Present:

Councillor A.E. Friday (Chairman)

Councillors:

S.J. Burkmar	I.T.E. Harvey	O. Rybinski
S. Capes	A.T. Jones	B.B. Spoor
R. Chandler	J.G. Kavanagh	H.R.D. Williams
K. Flurry	S.C. Mooney	

Apologies: Councillors D. Patel and A. Neale

283/15 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

284/15 Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

285/15 Call-in of Cabinet decisions

No Cabinet decisions had been called in for review.

286/15 Assets and Income Generation

The Staines-upon-Thames Regeneration Manager and Joint Head of Asset Management gave a presentation (attached to these minutes), outlining how the Council is using its assets for income generation and the impact on car park provision in the Borough.

They set out the latest position with regards to current and potential projects and explained that the income from these would help enable the Council to:

- balance its books over the medium term, through re-investment;
- build and strengthen the asset base through purchasing property for investment;

- provide benefits to local communities, e.g. environmental, facilities, housing on an invest to save basis;
- set up development company(ies) to deliver various types of housing and possibly other assets.

In the longer term the use of the Council's assets for income generation would bring opportunities to place shape communities, improve service provision for residents and make the Council self-sustaining.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Fixed Assets, Councillor Nick Gething, advised the Committee that reducing income from central government grants meant that the Council needed to continue to find ways to fund services to residents and not have to worry about cuts to them in the future.

Resolved to note the presentation on assets and income presentation in conjunction with the following presentation on the 2016/17 budget.

287/15 2016-17 Budget and beyond: The challenge of delivering a sustainable financial future

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Tim Evans, supported by the Chief Finance Officer, gave a presentation (attached to these minutes) outlining the context of the budget for 2016/17 and the challenges of delivering a sustainable financial future due to both the known demands and pressures on the budget and those that were difficult to forecast.

He reminded the Committee that the Council had a statutory obligation to balance the budget but in doing so its main purpose was to be able to have a Council that is sustainable and can provide the services and housing to residents that they need.

In order to achieve this sustainable future, Councillor Evans summarised the three areas of focus as:

- income generation through maximising investment returns and obtaining value and ongoing income from assets;
- relocating the Council offices to cheaper more flexible accommodation and generating housing rental income on the current site; and
- looking at alternative delivery models for some services.

Members of the Committee queried how the Council planned to make its contribution to the £40m shortfall sought by the Environment Agency from affected neighbouring authorities and local partners to fund the River Thames Scheme. The Deputy Chief Executive, Terry Collier informed the Committee that the Council was very much involved in discussions about the Scheme and had already built a small share, of the total contribution required, into the budget of £49k per annum for this and the next four years to help progress the detailed planning of the Scheme. He agreed to the request that a statement be published to raise awareness of the Council's involvement in the scheme.

Resolved that the Committee:

1. expresses concern that proper provision is made to provide adequate flood prevention measures for the Borough and
2. accepts the vital importance of the Towards a Sustainable Future programme and urges the Cabinet to use the inevitable delay caused by the change in Leadership to ensure that detailed policies are in place to enable implementation of this strategy as swiftly as possible.

288/15 Capital Monitoring Report

The Committee received the Capital Monitoring report covering the period April to August 2015.

The Committee noted that for the period ending August 2015, capital expenditure including commitments was £350k (17.9%) of the original budget and (17.1%) of the revised budget (excluding the Knowle Green and Housing opportunity projects).

Resolved to note the current capital spend position.

289/15 Revenue Monitoring Report

The Committee received the Revenue Monitoring Report providing the net revenue spend figures to the end of August 2015.

The Committee noted the forecast outturn at net expenditure level was £14.290m against the revised budget of £14.536m; which was a projected favourable variance of £246k. The Committee noted that after taking into account the use of carry forwards, the net position is approximately £245k favourable variance.

Resolved to note the current net revenue spend and forecast position.

290/15 Leader's Task Groups

The Committee received an update on progress with the work of the Leader's Sub-Task Group for Assets and Regeneration in relation to Knowle Green from the chairman of the Group, Councillor Harvey.

The Portfolio Holder, Councillor Gething, noted that the Council would need to buy in professional expertise to acquire and develop the sites we were looking to develop in the future, as it had not employed staff with such skills for many years.

Resolved to note the work undertaken to date by the Leader's Task Group.

291/15 Cabinet Forward Plan

The Committee received the Cabinet Forward Plan.

Resolved to note the Forward Plan.

292/15 Work Programme

The Chairman referred to a topic identified by the Committee at its July meeting for inclusion in the work programme which was due to be considered at the January 2016 meeting, on a performance review of the Council's main contracts. He read out a list of the Council's main contracts which it was proposed to be included in the report:

1. Grounds maintenance
2. Vehicle supply – including contract for the hire of street cleansing and refuse collection vehicles
3. Leisure centres management
4. CCTV - Agreement for the provision of monitoring and maintenance services
5. Contract for the provision of general office cleaning at Knowle Green, Car Park Office, Fordbridge and Greeno Day Centres
6. Contract for the management of Staines Market
7. Provision of services for bulking, processing and disposal of co-mingled dry recyclables
8. Replacement of roof at Greeno Centre, Shepperton
9. Contract for the hire of vehicles for the Council's Meals on Wheels service

The Committee agreed the inclusion of all these contracts, with the exception of replacement of roof at Greeno Centre, Shepperton, in the report for the January 2016 meeting.

Resolved to note the Committee's Work Programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year.