

Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
22 February 2018

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held on Thursday 22 February 2018 at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE.

PRESENT: Councillors N.Pace (Chairman)

T.Bailey, M.Birleson, H.Bower, C.Gillett, S.Markiewicz,  
G.Michaelides, S.Roberts

ALSO

PRESENT: D Bell (Executive Member, Resources)

CO-OPTED

MEMBERS: J.Corson and D.Fuller (Tenants' Panel Representatives)

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Executive Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) (K. Ng)  
Finance Manager (J.Cika)

Client Support Services Manager (F.Cantel) (for items 36-41)  
Senior Performance and Strategy Officer (G.Crawford) (for items 36-41)  
Steria Account Manager (D.Singh) (for items 36-41)  
Governance Services Manager (G.Seal)

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36. APOLOGY

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J.Boulton.

37. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

38. ACTIONS UPDATE

The status of action agreed at the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 18 January 2018 in the report of the Executive Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) was noted.

The Executive Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) reported that the date of the Council Tax recovery workshop would be considered and the Committee and Executive Member invited to attend.

39. SOPRA STERIA CONTRACT PERFORMANCE - 2017/18

Report of the Executive Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) providing the Committee with an analysis of the service performance

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for Sopra Steria against contractual key performance indicators and service level targets.

In response to a question about the days taken to process new benefit claims, the Client Support Services Manager explained that this included having to go back to claimants to ask for further information to verify claims. The target of sixteen days was previously a national performance indicator which the Council had chosen to continue with.

RESOLVED:

That the analysis of the contract service performance be noted.

#### 40. PERFORMANCE INDICATOR REPORT

Report of the Executive Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) providing the Committee with performance indicator data for the services within its remit.

In reply to a question about the settling and payment of grants to voluntary bodies, the Executive Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) stated that there was a robust monitoring framework and no delays in payments. The quarterly performance information was included in the budget monitoring reports as part of invoices paid.

It was noted that the service comment on performance indicator 2 - the level of Council Tax collected as a percentage of the total due in respect of the effects of the welfare reform changes which made it increasingly difficult to collect Council Tax from households with "less" income, should read "low" income.

Further information was requested about performance indicator 5 – the number of employee working days lost due to sickness absence, per full time equivalent member of staff and this would be provided in writing to the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the performance indicator data collected and reported be noted.

#### 41. REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING AT QUARTER 3

Report of the Executive Director (Resources, Environment and Cultural Services) presenting the General Revenue Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme forecast positions as at the end of Quarter 3 (31 December 2017) for the financial year 2017/18. These reports were noted at the Cabinet meeting on 6 February 2018.

It was noted that the revenue contribution to earmarked revenues was a cushion against uncertainty, for example the need to fell mature Lombardy Poplars.

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It was reported that the Weltech centre was 100% occupied and it was noted that a possible "Weltech 2" project was being looked at with the University of Hertfordshire.

Having regard to Campus West, the Executive Board had agreed that a further review of operations and staffing would take place and the marketing part of the service had been moved into the Council's Policy and Communications team.

Government legislation about a Council property company had changed which meant that it would not now be possible to borrow to fund acquisitions outside of the Borough. There was however a total of £10M of capital funding to enable the Council to pursue property investments within the Borough.

There was a confidential agreement with a potential company to progress with Splashlands and it was hoped to have an update on this for the Member Board soon.

It was agreed that written answers would be circulated to the Committee about third party payments, recycling services and garage rents arrears.

It was noted that the one invoice under dispute of nearly £115,000 was between Sopra Steria and Broxbourne Borough Council and had now been resolved.

RESOLVED:

That the budget monitoring reports for Quarter 3 of the 2017/18 financial year be noted.

42. COMMITTEE OVERVIEW WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18

A new pro-forma which set out the Committee's overview work programme would be set at its first meeting of the new municipal year.

Meeting ended 8.35pm  
GS