

Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 4 April 2018 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00pm.

Present: Councillor Cain, Davies, Gallagher, Gifford, Mrs Hill, Mrs Knight, Illingworth, Margrave, Mrs Stevens, Quinney and Wright.

Also present: Councillors Butler, Mobbs, Phillips, Rhead, Thompson and Whiting.

133. Apologies and Substitutes

- (a) No apologies for absence were received; and
- (b) Councillor Mrs Knight substituted for Councillor Barrott, Councillor Mrs Hill substituted for Councillor Howe and Councillor Mrs Stevens substituted for Councillor Noone.

134. Declarations of Interest

Minute 138 - Executive Agenda (Non-Confidential Items & Reports – Thursday 5 April 2018)

Councillor Gifford declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest on Item 17 Europa Way because he was a Warwickshire County Councillor.

135. Executive Agenda (Non-Confidential Items & Reports – Thursday 5 April 2018)

The Committee considered the following non-confidential items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Thursday 5 April 2018.

Item 14 - Significant Business Risk Register

The Committee suggested that a further mitigation for risk 3 should be regular monitoring of Parent Company Guarantees (PCG), even as a short term measure while the issue of PCG's in our procurement policy are investigated further.

Item 7 - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Revised Regulation 123 List for 2018/19

The Committee welcomed the fact that the Portfolio Holder would be recommending to the Executive that all Councillors should scrutinise the 123 list regularly to ensure sufficient funds were available to deliver the 123 list schemes in their wards.

The Committee also suggested that the 123 list should include the Ward name or names in which each project was located.

The Committee would discuss at their next meeting the interest in establishing a working Party of the Committee to scrutinise the CIL123 list.

136. Procurement Strategy Annual Review

The Committee considered a report from Finance that updated the Committee on the procurement activity across the Council.

The report was presented to the Committee to provide visibility of all the Council's procurement activity.

The report provided a snap shot on how procurement was organised within Warwick District Council and the resources that were utilised to deliver effective procurement.

In response to questions from the Committee they were assured that with respect to the Pump Rooms Garden contract an error had occurred in the scoring but there was no risk to the contract award.

The Committee took the opportunity to wish the retiring Procurement Manager all the best for his retirement and noted that without his work the Council would not have received the award from the Federation of Small Businesses.

Resolved that

- (1) an annual update on the progress of procurement and the procurement strategy, be noted; and
- (2) progress across the procurement function, set out at Appendices One to Seven of the report, over the past 12 months be noted.

137. Review of contracts register – Health & Community protection

The Committee considered a report from Health & Community Protection that set out the process for the review by Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee of the Head of Health and Community Protection's Contracts Register.

The review of Head of Health and Community Protection's Contract Register allowed the Committee to consider the robustness of the register, make appropriate suggestions on how the register could be improved, and consider the document within the context of promoting sound procurement practice across the Council.

The Regulatory Manager & Portfolio Holder for Health & Community Protection responded to questions explaining that:

- the vet contract was now signed and secured, but it was noted that the criteria of vets to undertake this work was set very high so at present there was only a single practitioner in the District who met the criteria;

- the Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) contracts were now out to tender;
- there was now a service level agreement in place for with the Local Resilience Forum;
- the CSE training was subject to a joint procurement exercise;
- the Electric car procurement was being considered following the initial trial;
- a written contract was now in place with Staffordshire;
- the need for satellite phones was being reviewed and the contract may be terminated; and
- the contract with Chubb was being followed up.

Resolved that the contracts register be noted.

138. **Executive Agenda (Non-Confidential Items & Reports – Thursday 5 April 2018)**

The Committee considered the following non-confidential items which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Thursday 5 April 2018.

Item 5 - Service Area Plans for 2018/19 & Annual Performance Reports for 2017/18

The Committee reviewed the annual reports by Health & Community Protection (alongside the contracts register) and

- suggested positioning the end of year summary as the first paper in the report;
- welcomed the performance measures summary of KPI's;
- invited other service areas to include a similar analysis in the future (as the rolling annual reviews get under way) – perhaps using slide presentation; and
- suggested further work to see if the future plans report could be condensed.

Item 12 - Cycle Tour 2017 and 2018 Update

The Committee welcomed the relocated finish line from Parade to a nearby road adjacent to Parade.

The Committee had concerns that the report did not include key background information for last year's event to enable an informed judgement to be made –

- comparative footfall figures
- comparative car park income
- TV and other media exposure 'value'
- views of local businesses, both individual and collective about the impact of the event, alongside the organisers' own assessment

The Committee suggested these – and especially the first three - could then be used as baseline figures to assess this year's events.

The Committee questioned the balance of funding priorities between supporting this national event and the lack of funding for many locally organised events; and welcomed the review which would shortly address this issue.

The Committee suggested that the figure of £80,000 in recommendation 2.1 was removed because the values were covered in (1) and (2).

Item 8 - Regeneration of the Leper Hospital Site, Saltisford, Birmingham Road, Warwick (St Michael's Chapel and Master's House)

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Item 6 - Corporate Property Repair and Planned & Preventative Maintenance Programme 2018/19

The Committee noted the report but

- expressed concern at the scale and persistence of 'slippage' in completing planned works – in particular the £180k slipped over two years;
- as an example raised concern with regard to the Abbey Barn roof which had been slipped for two years as a specific issue with possible safety and cumulative cost implications which should be looked at further;
- understood the need however to retain flexibility in setting and reacting to priorities in-year; and
- welcomed the expectation that resource issues were being resolved and slippage would be reduced over the coming 12 months.

Item 13 - Royal Naval Club, Adelaide Road, Royal Leamington Spa

The Committee noted the recommendations in the report. Members agreed that recommendation 2.5 should be given particular priority so that the building should be let at the earliest possible opportunity and left empty for as little time as possible to meet local needs, maximise revenue and minimise further deterioration of the fabric.

The Committee looked forward to seeing future details about the plans for this area as part of the Creative Quarter.

Item 10 - New Village Hall at Norton Lindsey

The Committee supported the recommendation including the revised recommendation, as circulated at the meeting.

Item 3 - Information Governance Framework

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

139. **Public and Press**

Resolved that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as set out below.

(Councillor Gifford left the meeting at the conclusion of this item)

138. **Executive Agenda (Confidential Items & Reports – Thursday 5 April 2018)**

The Committee considered the following confidential item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Executive on Thursday 5 April 2018.

Item 17 - Europa Way

The comment of the Committee will be detailed in the confidential minutes of the meeting.

139. **Review of reserves**

The Committee considered a report from Finance that set out the current financial reserves of the Council.

The Head of Finance & Portfolio Holder for Finance explained that there would be a full review of the current reserves, their balances and the need for them. This would be fed into the budget process later in the year. In response to questions he explained that:

- the Building Regulations Reserve had been identified as one which needed to be scrutinised in detail as part of the shared service delivery;
- the Council did not have sufficient within reserves to undertake the major capital works that were or would be needed;
- the financial position of the Council restricted the ability of the Council to increase funds for capital reserves;
- the Planning Appeal reserve was now often named the Planning Reserve to cover additional unexpected costs to the service area. However renaming to ensure the title was appropriate would form part of the review; and
- there was a need for a review of the cemetery land acquisition reserve to be undertaken because the land for cemeteries was limited and more would be needed at some stage.

Resolved that the report be noted and its contents be accepted.

140. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2018 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

141. **Public & Press**

Resolved that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local

142. **Confidential Minutes**

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2018 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

143. **End of term report**

The Committee considered a report from Democratic Services that set out an end of term report to the Council on the work the Committee had undertaken during the 2017/18 municipal year.

Recommended that Council approves the Committees annual report for 2017/18 be approved, subject to the items being considered this evening to be added it to it.

144. **Review of the Work Programme, Forward Plan Comments from the Executive**

The Committee received a report from Democratic Services that set out its current work programme, the Forward Plan and responses from the comments made by the Committee to the Executive in March.

Resolved that

- (1) the forward plan be noted;
- (2) the comments from the Executive be noted;
- (3) the work plan be amended to include a joint report to both scrutiny committees on the stock condition survey in May 2018 and the scrutiny of accounts meeting that will take place on 30 July 2018.

(The meeting ended at 9.41 pm)