

# Minutes

## Policy Development Scrutiny Committee



<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday, 18 June 2014
<b>Venue:</b>	Town Hall, St Annes
<b>Committee members:</b>	Chairman: Councillor Fabian Craig-Wilson Vice-Chairman: Councillor Len Davies  Councillors Frank Andrews, Susan Ashton, Maxine Chew, John Davies, David Donaldson, Charlie Duffy, Howard Henshaw, Barbara Nash, Edward Nash, Richard Redcliffe and Vivienne Willder.
<b>Officers:</b>	Allan Oldfield, Tracy Morrison, Paul Walker, Paul O'Donoghue, Alex Scrivens and Katharine McDonnell

### Public Platform

There were no members of the public in attendance on this occasion.

#### 1. Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that any disclosable pecuniary interests should be declared as required by the Localism Act 2011 and any personal or prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

#### 2. Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Policy Development Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 24 April 2014, be approved as a correct record.

#### 3. Substitute members

The following substitutions were reported under Council procedure rule 23(c):

Councillor Howard Henshaw substituted for Councillor Karen Henshaw

Councillor Barbara Nash substituted for Councillor Ben Aitken

#### 4. The Corporate Plan 2013-2016 (Actions Update)

Allan Oldfield (Chief Executive) presented the actions update from the short term priorities section of the Corporate Plan 2013-2016. Allan explained that the Corporate Plan medium term targets and long term outcomes had been approved at full Council in 2013, and were presented to Committee for information with only minor changes to percentage targets based on current performance and recommendations from scrutiny.

Allan explained that the short term actions changed annually and these high level priority actions, derived from the Service Planning procedure, would contribute to the delivery of the medium and long term targets.

In response to questions from the committee, Allan provided information regarding the collation of different data sets to enable target setting. He also explained how the Council had an important role in working with partners to influence outcomes. For example whilst the Council may not be directly responsible for an outcome but it was to the benefit of residents, inclusion of that outcome was therefore important for the Corporate Plan.

Tracy Morrison (Director of Resources), responding to questions from committee, provided a broad overview of the Committee Management Information System (CMIS), and explained that the Council would be working closely with the Food Standards Agency and other coastal authorities regarding the cockle beds.

Following a lengthy discussion the committee AGREED the updated key actions in the Corporate Plan and recommend the actions to Cabinet.

#### 5. Year-End Performance Exception Report

Alex Scrivens (Corporate Performance Officer) presented the year-end performance exception report for 2013/2014. He explained that 28% of indicators were worse than target limits and 25% of indicators were better than target limits. Alex directed the committee to the narrative for each indicator, which provided an explanation as to why performance was better or worse than the target.

Alex drew the committee's attention to proposals to delete a number of indicators. He explained that some were to be replaced having been reworded for clarity or deleted as the action being measured was no longer applicable. Finally he drew the committee's attention to two new indicators for planning as required by central government.

The committee requested that PM97a be amended to state a measure of weeks, rather than "length of time" to be consistent with other indicators.

It was AGREED;

1. To delete performance measures PM30, PM63 and PM75;
2. To approve a change to performance indicator PM4 from "percentage of complaints responded to within 5 working days" to 'the number of complaints not responded to within five working days'; and
3. That the officers amend performance indicator PM97a to read 'The number of weeks applicants were on the waiting list for a Disabled Facility Grant'.

#### 6. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) General Fund Revenue, Capital Programme and Treasury Management Financial Outturn Position for 2013/14

Paul O'Donoghue (Chief Financial Officer) presented the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) General Fund Revenue, Capital Programme and Treasury Management Financial Outturn Position for 2013/14.

Paul outlined the General Fund Revenue position advising that there had been a favourable variance in the net expenditure of £0.594 million and an additional £0.609 million in financing received for the year. This meant there was a surplus of £1.203 million and Paul provided information how this surplus would be distributed into reserves. He advised that the favourable variance in net expenditure was due to both prudent decisions by budget holders and one-off savings and items of additional income received during the year. A large proportion of the additional financing was from a

grant in relation to the Business Rate Retention Scheme which was to be set aside in a reserve to offset the deficit on the collection fund caused by the doubling of small business rate relief offered to businesses, and income from Non Domestic Ratepayers over and above the budgeted safety net level.

In regards to the Capital Outturn position, Paul referred the committee to Table 5 in the report, which detailed the net underspend for the year, less the slippage of a number of projects. He also referred committee to Tables 6 and 7 in the report which detailed the Usable Capital Receipts and Proposed Capital Financing respectively.

Finally Paul outlined the Treasury Management position. He advised there had been no additional borrowing in 2013/14, so the gross borrowing remained at £3.8 million.

Paul concluded his report advising that there was improvement in the General Fund Revenue Forecast balances position and this was helpful given future financial challenges.

The committee sought clarification on a number of points regarding the level of reserves, the gross borrowing and the investment periods for internally managed funds.

Paul advised that the current reserves were £5.0 million; that gross borrowing of £1.5 million was due to be repaid before the end of the current financial year; and whilst the return rate for longer investment periods would be higher, that had to be balanced against increased risk, together with security and liquidity of the investments. He advised that the Council's investment policy was risk averse.

In considering the report, the committee stated that their thanks be passed on to all staff involved in managing budgets and exercising sound financial management and prudence. With no further recommendations or comments to make, it was AGREED that the report be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 25 June 2014.

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