

Cabinet
Wednesday 7 February 2018

Comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission
at its meeting on Monday 5 February 2018
OSC/265

1. Cabinet Agenda Item 6 – 2018/19 Budget and Council Tax

Comments and Recommendations

The Commission considered report FIN/434 of the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits.

During the discussion, the following points were expressed:

- Confirmation was provided regarding the revenue support grant and retained business rates together with further explanation as to the associated costs linked to the town hall.
- Recognition that replacement/enhancement of equipment at the Hawth and K2 Crawley as detailed in the capital programme was the council's responsibility and may assist in generating additional income.
- Clarity sought over the proposed capital programme and recognition that further schemes included the district heat network and the town hall. Should the town hall project proceed, the financial projections would be amended as these would impact on the budget.
- Acknowledgement that the ICT senior management funding proposed an additional Head of Service, required to address the increasing complex service demands and improve the current infrastructure.
- Support for the pay policy statement and the recent reviews that were undertaken. It was noted that councils were required to publicise these on their websites.
- Support for the shrub bed project which would see several renovated within the town. However clarity was sought regarding the removal of beds and whether public consultation could take place should this be proposed.
- Members commended officers from the Finance Team for their excellent work in producing the budget report.

RESOLVED

That the Commission supported the recommendations to the Cabinet.

2. Cabinet Agenda Item 7 – Treasury Management Strategy 2018/2019

Comments and Recommendations

The Commission considered report FIN/433 of the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits.

Members made the following comments:

- Acknowledgement of the increase in interest rates, which marked a rise in borrowing costs.
- Recognition that the Council's policy was to remain debt free, investing accordingly whilst providing an appropriate balance between security, liquidity, yield and ethical. Whilst the fourth criteria had been applied, an investment had not been undertaken as a result of its consideration.
- Support for the amended Section 151 Officer responsibilities.

RESOLVED

That the Commission agreed to support the recommendations to the Cabinet.

3. Cabinet Agenda Item 8 – Allocating Monies Collected Through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – Infrastructure Business Plan and Governance

Comments and Recommendations

The Commission considered report PES/264 of the Head of Economic and Environmental Services.

During the discussion, the following points were expressed:

- Confirmation sought regarding the governance proposals in relation to the CIL Member Advisory Group. Concern was expressed that whilst this would operate through the existing Economic Regeneration Working Group it would be beneficial if the information was more transparent and accessible.
- Recognition that the Crawley Growth Board represented good partnership working, however clarity was sought on its constitution and how the CIL spend arrangements would be delivered. It was important that there was a robust governance structure in place and the proposals, allocation and spend could be reviewed annually.
- Acknowledgement that the projects allocated within the Strategic Infrastructure Strand would be reviewed annually.
- Support for the Strategic Infrastructure Strand, together with the Neighbourhood Improvement Strand and Crowdfunding platform. It was felt it would be beneficial to promote the latter town-wide.

RESOLVED

That the Commission supported the recommendations to the Cabinet.

Councillor Brenda Smith
Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Commission
5 February 2018