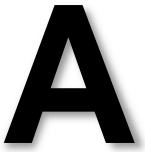


Crawley Borough Council



Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission Monday 6 February 2017 at 7.00pm

Present:

Councillor B A Smith (Chair)
Councillor R G Burgess (Vice-Chair)
Councillors M L Ayling, T G Belben, Dr H S Bloom, C A Cheshire, I T Irvine, R A Lanzer, T Rana, K Sudan and L Vitler

Also in Attendance:

Councillors B J Burgess, D Crow, C R Eade, K L Jaggard, M G Jones, P K Lamb, T Lunnon, B McCrow, A C Skudder, J Tarrant, G Thomas and K J Trussell

Apologies for Absence: None

Officers Present:

Peter Browning Deputy Chief Executive
Heather Girling Democratic Services Officer
Chris Harris Head of Community Services
Karen Hayes Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits
Nigel Sheehan Head of Partnership Services
Paul Windust Corporate Accounting & Treasury Services Manager
Vicky Wise Community Services Manager

74. Members' Disclosure of Interests and Whipping Declarations

The following disclosures of interests were made by Members:-

Member	Minute Number	Subject	Type and Nature of Disclosure
Councillor R A Lanzer	77	2017/18 Budget and Council Tax	Personal Interest – Member of LGPS

75. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on [9 January 2017](#) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair. Councillor Lanzer raised a matter on item 70 (Cabinet Member Discussion with the Cabinet Member for Housing). It was noted that the Commission had discussed various issues in relation to affordable housing and in reference to 'specific delegation 2' regarding a variation in the percentage and/or tenure mix being

sought. There had been previous planning applications evaluated by the District Valuer which have not met viability requirements in full.

76. Public Question Time

No questions from the public were asked.

77. 2017/18 Budget and Council Tax

The Commission considered report [FIN/401](#) with the Leader and the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits. The report set out the proposed Budget and Council Tax for 2017/18 taking into account factors such savings and growth, latest investment interest projections and income estimates.

The following topics were discussed:

- Amendment in section 5.1, Revenue Support Grant for 2016/2017 to read £1.78m.
- Recognition of the reduced cost of employers pension contributions.
- In light of other increases in general living expenses comments were received regarding the pay award assumption of 1%.
- It was felt that the criteria in relation to the capital programme that future bids should be based on expenditure required to maintain the council's assets could possibly be broadened.
- Concern voiced regarding vacancies within the Community Wardens service given the important nature of the work. However due to a review of the service acceptable staffing provision had been justified.
- Concern expressed that other town assets that do not provide an income stream should not become neglected.
- Acknowledgement that a restatement of capital budget and treasury management position where impacted should be received if report DCE/02 be approved.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report and would look forward to the discussion at Full Council on 22 February 2017.

78. Treasury Management Strategy 2017/2018

The Commission considered report [FIN/404](#) of the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits on the Treasury Management Strategy for 2017/2018 which the Council was required to approve before the start of the financial year in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management and the Council's financial regulations.

During the discussion with The Leader, Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits and the Corporate Accounting and Treasury Services Manager, the main discussion areas included:

- It was commented that should report DCE/02 be approved this would affect future reports.
- Whilst Members had no further comments on the report they took the opportunity to thank the Corporate Accounting & Treasury Services Manager for the work undertaken and regular attendance at the Commission's meetings.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report to the Cabinet.

79. **Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policy 2017**

The Commission considered report [HCS/03](#) of the Head of Community Services which had been updated due to changes in legislation.

During the discussion with the Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Community Engagement, Head of Community Services and the Community Services Manager the following discussion areas were highlighted:

- Acknowledgement of the lead safeguarding and lead designated safeguarding officers, together with the process for referral and reporting all concerns.
- Clarification sought and obtained on allegation categories, disclosures and future actions, including maintaining records with a further explanation requested from a Member in relation to the Data Protection Act and the Humans Rights Act with confirmation required from Legal Services regarding the period of time records are held. OSC Members would opt out for non-receipt of this verification statement.
- Comments that cases of historical abuse were once current abuse and any investigation into patterns of behaviour could contribute in the collection of evidence. It was also felt that training and learning would assist from any complaints.
- Recognition that awareness campaigns take place with partners in relation to various initiatives such as FGM, CSE and E-safety and that public awareness tends to be quite high. In addition, CSE awareness training had previously been offered to all licensed taxi/private hire drivers in Crawley.
- In terms of the Prevent agenda, the council is required to protect and prevent all vulnerable people, including children, young people and adults at risk from being drawn into radicalisation, terrorism and non-violent extremism. The council is required to address vulnerabilities to radicalisation in all its forms.
- It was recommended that Members receive an update/further training on the Prevent Duty.

RESOLVED

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

80. **Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASC)**

An update was provided from the most recent HASC meeting. Key items of discussion included:

- The HASC received an update on the Care Act 2014 and was assured the council was Care Act compliant.
- There had been issues surrounding recruitment and retention of care workers and whilst there had been successful recruitment campaigns, these needed to be repeated across the county.
- Procurement of the Reablement Service had been called-in for further scrutiny. Timescales were a factor in terms of procurement. A competitive procurement process would commence late February/early March for commencement of the new service from 1 October 2017.
- The Safeguarding Adults Board Report 2015/2016 was considered.

81. Forward Plan – March 2017 and Provisional List of Reports for the following meetings of the Commission

The Commission confirmed the following reports for its February meeting:

- Town Centre Regeneration Programme (Phase 2) - Queensway and The Pavement
- Sheltered Housing Service Review

82. Fostering Interest in Local Government

Members were reminded that the All Member Workshop regarding 'Fostering Interest in Local Government' was currently scheduled for 15 February 2017.

83. Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraphs specified against the item.

84. Crawley Town Hall

(Exempt Paragraphs 3 & 5)

Information relating to financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information); and

Information in respect of which a claim to legal privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

The Commission considered report DCE/02 of the Deputy Chief Executive on the Crawley Town Hall Site Redevelopment Scheme. The report considered options and recommendations on a preferred scheme for the redevelopment of the Town Hall building and site.

During the discussion Members commended officers in the compilation of the report and raised the following issues. It was recognised that should report DCE/02 be approved:

- A restatement of capital budget and treasury management position where impacted should be received.
- A new town hall building was a preferred option as it would provide new homes (including affordable housing element), quality office space, district heat network, public square and a fit for purpose building for staff, Members and customers. This would achieve significant savings and generate additional income.
- Recognition that the use of flexible space in the Council Chamber area provided the most opportunity but there was a need to ensure a balance was achieved between flexibility and a sense of civic pride.

- Support for the memorabilia within the current Town Hall to be retained where appropriate.
- All consultation (staff, Member and public) should be planned and undertaken accordingly.
- There was an appreciation that the Town Hall is a landmark site and further work was required to ensure that the final design was one of quality but also cost effective.
- Recognition that the timetable and any risks would need to be monitored closely. It would be important to keep implications for staff, Members and customers to a minimum.
- Recognition that future refurbishment would be required to maintain grade A commercial offices.
- Acknowledgement that it was important to ensure there is sufficient parking to meet the needs of the development.
- Support for continuation of Members' seminars, focused on specific issues.

RESOLVED

That the Commission supported the recommendations to the Cabinet but requested the comments and issues above be addressed as the design development progresses, specifically that the capital budget and treasury management position be amended where impacted.

85. Closure of Meeting

The meeting ended at 9.35pm.

B A Smith
Chair