

**Minutes of a meeting of Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Finance
and Performance
held on Wednesday, 19th May, 2021
from 5.00 - 6.28 pm**

Present: J Knight (Chair)
M Pulfer (Vice-Chair)

A Bennett	I Gibson	Andrew Lea
H Brunsdon	S Hicks	L Stockwell
P Coote	J Henwood	C Trumble
A Eves	R Jackson	R Whittaker

Absent: Councillors R Cromie, J Ash-Edwards (Cabinet Member)

Also Present: Councillors P Brown, R de Mierre, S Hillier and N Webster

**Also Present
as Cabinet
Members:** Councillors J Llewellyn-Burke

1 ROLL CALL AND VIRTUAL MEETINGS EXPLANATION.

The Chairman carried out a roll call to establish attendance at the meeting. The Solicitor to the Council provided information on the virtual format of the meeting.

**2 TO NOTE SUBSTITUTES IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE
RULE 4 - SUBSTITUTES AT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES ETC.**

Councillor Clarke substituted for Councillor Cromie.

3 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Councillor Cromie and Councillor Ash-Edwards.

**4 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT
OF ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA.**

None.

**5 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 MARCH AND 28
APRIL 2021.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 March and 28 April 2021 were agreed as a correct record and electronically signed by the Chairman.

6 TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT BUSINESS.

None.

7 PERFORMANCE OUTTURN 2020/21.

Neal Barton, Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager introduced the report noting that 74% of performance indicators and 7 out of 8 priority projects were on or above target at the end of the year despite the notable impacts of the pandemic.

The Committee discussed the tender for electric car charging points. It was confirmed that, following legal advice, it had been necessary to abandon the original County wide procurement process because of the winning bidder changing what they were willing to agree at the final contract stages. The Council is required to follow proper procurement rules on contracts over a certain value, and the new tender in conjunction with West Sussex County Council and other Districts and Boroughs will allow for economies of scale and provide a coordinated network for customers to benefit from. The new tender will include a service level agreement and will specify a rapid charger at the Triangle, which together with 26 other named charge sites in Mid Sussex to be installed, subject to site assessments, as a priority during the first phase of contract implementation.

Members discussed the mechanisms in place for setting performance targets, and the definition of 'health check' indicators. In some instances, such as the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting the indicators reflect how they are reported to the Government.

The Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager clarified queries relating to the staff sickness value, figures for attendance at leisure centres and the target relating to e-forms received from residents. It was also noted that Environmental Health, Revenues and Benefits and the Legal team had experienced a high volume of work over the past year. With the Land Charges team, the turnaround time has slipped slightly but the volume of work has increased, and income is up 34%.

Discussion was held on the rate of return for tenanted non-residential properties and the footfall in the Orchards Shopping Centre. The Head of Corporate Resources agreed to provide a written response to confirm the amount of rent collected and its implication for the budget. A written response was also agreed on the cost related to time spent in temporary accommodation, and how that compares to the budget. Discussion was held on the ability of the Council to hold developers to their agreement to provide affordable housing.

The Committee discussed the Full Fibre project. The Head of Digital and Customer Service confirmed that work is underway, and the Council is keen to engage providers early on so connection can begin before the whole route is completed. The Deputy Leader confirmed that the gigabyte voucher scheme is operational and statistics on the full fibre roll out are available on www.burgesshill.net. A Member Workshop will be arranged to provide a full briefing.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendations contained in the report which were agreed.

RESOLVED

The Committee:

- (i) Noted the Council's outturn performance and progress with Council Priority Projects in 2020/21 and identified any areas where further reporting or information is required; and
- (ii) Advised the Cabinet of any issues that the Committee considers should be given particular consideration at the Cabinet meeting on 7th June 2021.

8 COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT AND ASSET TRANSFER POLICY.

Elaine Clarke, Community Facilities Project Officer introduced the report which sets out a formal process on how Council owned properties are leased to external groups to manage for community benefit.

Members requested that Cabinet consider amending the diversity criteria on p.33 to add '...and comply with all relevant employment and equality legislation'. Also to amend the criteria on p.34 regarding the site being transferred, so that it states '...no reduction of recreation space available to residents unless in exceptional circumstances'.

Members discussed the financial ability and efficacy of the organisation taking on a lease. It was confirmed that Community Services will continue to support local groups in setting up the appropriate infrastructure to enable them to take on the lease successfully and secure the asset for community use in the long term. It was requested that Cabinet consider the Council's contingency capacity, in the event that it is necessary to take a building back from a failed lease agreement.

Discussion was held on the clause prohibiting asset transfers to groups promoting political or religious beliefs, in order to keep the asset available and inclusive for the whole community. It was noted that a religious group could set up a social enterprise to run a building as long as the building remained inclusive for all to attend or they could hire space to run services and activities.

In response to a Member's query on S106 funds, the Community Facilities Project Officer confirmed that the Council is bound by rules set out in Planning Policy documents but acknowledged that multiple S106 contributions sometimes made it harder to deliver on larger projects. With regards to asset purchasing, this would require a business case in the same way as any new asset acquisition.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that the policy formalises current practice and will increase transparency. The Council is keen for community groups to flourish and will provide help to ensure that they can succeed when taking on the lease of a community asset.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendations contained in the report which were unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED

The Committee:

- i) considered the policy principles and process and agreed any comments or recommendations that it wishes to make prior to consideration by Cabinet and Council.

9 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22.

The Solicitor to the Council introduced the report noting that the budget and performance measures are the main focus of business for this committee.

Councillor Andrew Lea proposed a motion to amend the start time of this Committee to 6pm for a virtual meeting and 7pm for an in-person meeting. This was seconded by Councillor Henwood.

The Chairman took Members to a vote on this motion which was agreed with 12 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention.

The Chairman took Members to a vote on the original recommendations contained in the report and the agreed motion on start times. This was agreed with 13 in favour and 1 abstention.

RESOLVED

The Committee agreed the indicative Work Programme as set out at paragraph 5 of the report and agreed the start time of 6pm for a virtual meeting and 7pm for an in-person meeting of this committee.

10 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2 DUE NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN.

None.

The meeting finished at 6.28 pm

Chairman