

**Minutes of a meeting of Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Finance
and Performance
held on Wednesday, 18th May, 2022
from 6.00 - 7.29 pm**

Present:

M Pulfer (Vice-Chair)

A Bennett	S Hicks	C Trumble
H Brunsdon	R Jackson	A Boutrup
P Coote	Andrew Lea	J Dabell
A Eves	C Phillips	D Sweatman
J Henwood	L Stockwell	

Absent: Councillors J Knight, S Smith and R Whittaker

Also Present: Councillors R Clarke, R de Mierre and S Hillier

Also Present as Cabinet Members: Councillors Cromie and J Belsey

1 ROLL CALL AND VIRTUAL MEETINGS EXPLANATION.

In the absence of Councillor Knight, Councillor Pulfer assumed the role of Chairman and with the agreement of Members he appointed Councillor Stockwell as Vice-Chairman for this meeting.

The Solicitor to the Council provided information on the reasons for the virtual meeting and carried out a roll call to establish attendance.

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

Councillor Dabell substituted for Councillor Knight, Councillor Boutrup substituted for Councillor Smith and Councillor Sweatman substituted for Councillor Whittaker.

3 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Councillors Knight, Smith and Whittaker, Brunsdon, Henwood and Trumble.

**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 27 MARCH 2022.

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2022 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 2021/22.

Neal Barton, Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager introduced the report noting that overall performance was generally good with 71% of indicators green. He noted that services continue to be affected by the pandemic and that Appendix A includes three years of data to illustrate a pre-pandemic comparison. Appendix B includes proposed changes to the KPI's which takes into account comments made by the Committee.

The Chairman took Members through each section of the report for comment.

Discussion was held on levels of satisfaction with the grounds maintenance service and the move to conducting on-line surveys. Members also discussed the waste collection services including the small electrical items collection. Rob Anderton, Divisional Leader for Commercial Services and Contracts confirmed that the recycling rate includes everything collected from the doorstep and noted that the collection of electrical items is progressing well. He acknowledged that there had been past issues with some waste electrical items not being collected and urged anyone experiencing this issue to report it so that it can be investigated further.

A Member commented on the improved return on tenanted non-residential property portfolio for 2021/22 compared to the previous years. A Member also queried if that KPI should be amended to reflect the cost to the Council in terms of the cost expended to produce the capital receipt, and whether it would include the effect of void properties as well. Peter Stuart, Head of Corporate Resources explained that this indicator involved consideration of the rents received, which had stood up well during the pandemic, and comparison with the commercial value of the Council's property assets. He undertook to provide further information to the Scrutiny Committee on the calculation of the rate of return.

The increase of pay and display transactions made by cashless payments was discussed, along with the installation of new electric vehicle charging points. The Divisional Leader Commercial Services and Contracts commented that there were transaction costs associated with more payments by card and mobile phone app, but savings had been made from reduced costs of cash collection from the pay and display machines. Emma Sheridan, Business Unit Leader for Community Services, Policy and Performance provided an update on the programme of new electric vehicle installations through the new Countywide contract. She also confirmed that a communications plan is being implemented to publicise the new charging points and promote their use. This also includes improved signage and enforcement measures to ensure proper use of allocated parking spaces for electric vehicle charging. Discussion was held around planning enforcement and whether Ward Members are informed when enforcement is taking place in their area. It was agreed that this could be considered by the Cabinet Member.

The figures regarding homelessness and temporary accommodation were discussed, including the impact of the rise in the cost of living and Ukrainian refugees requiring accommodation. Judy Holmes, Assistant Chief Executive noted that there is a direct correlation to the state of the economy and the number of people applying for assistance and an increase in anticipated. With regards to the Homes for Ukrainian's

Scheme, the Government is aware that some arrangements break down and are looking at rematching, however ultimately if it does not work, the Council will be responsible for assisting under the homeless legislation.

The Committee discussed the Customer Services indicators, including the recording of complaints, measurement of customer satisfaction and the impact of working from home on the provision of services. A Member also requested further information on the costs related to responding to Freedom of Information requests.

Simon Hughes, Head of Digital and Customer Services confirmed that the new telephone system means that staff have the same ability to receive calls whether working remotely or in the office, with no impact on the capacity to respond. In terms of customer satisfaction related to other methods of contacting the Council he confirmed that the Council carries out 'deep-dives' on particular aspects of services in order to make improvements, and there is detailed analytics from the website in order to help shape and improve the information available. He noted that work is underway to improve reporting across the Council and that work is in the pipeline to develop new ways to contact people to measure satisfaction levels.

Members discussed staff sickness levels and the leisure centre contract arrangements in the context of rising energy prices.

The new indicators proposed in Appendix B were discussed. A Member requested further reporting on the number of employees who have an Armed Forces connection. It was noted that this was reported to a separate Scrutiny Committee as part of an Equality report and that it is a difficult area to measure as there is no obligation for staff to provide that information.

A Member asked if the KPI relating to fly-tipping could also include the number of enforcement actions carried out. The Divisional Leader agreed to consider how that could be provided. A Member requested a new indicator to show the number of applicants on the Housing Register. This was supported by the Committee and the Assistant Chief Executive agreed that an overarching indicator could be included.

The Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendations contained in the report which were agreed, with the inclusion of a new performance indicator for the number of applicants on the Housing Register.

RESOLVED

The Scrutiny Committee:

- (i) Noted the Council's outturn performance for 2021/22 and identified any areas where further reporting or information is required;
- (ii) Advised the Cabinet of any issues that the Committee considers should be given particular consideration at the Cabinet meeting on 6th June 2022; and
- (iii) Agreed the changes to the bundle of indicators to be monitored by the Committee in 2022/23 with the inclusion of a new performance indicator for the number of applicants on the Housing Register.

8 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LEADER, FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23.

The Solicitor to the Council introduced the report.

A Member sought clarification on where elements of the Leader's portfolio would be considered for scrutiny, particularly Clair Hall, The Orchards, Burgess Hill Town Centre and Gatwick and asked if reports on these items could be scheduled. It was agreed that in light of the new Cabinet Portfolio areas, further discussion was required on the responsibilities of the three Scrutiny Committees so that the remits are clear.

A Member sought to confirm the future start time of this committee as it moves back to being held in the Council Chamber. The Solicitor to the Council noted that the start times are agreed in consultation with the Chairman and as Councillor Knight is currently away, this will be clarified on his return.

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

RESOLVED

The Scrutiny Committee agreed the indicative Work Programme as set out at paragraph 5 of the report.

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

None.

The meeting finished at 7.29 pm

Chairman