

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 20th September 2016

Time: 10.00a.m. – 12.20p.m.

Present: Councillors Bailey, Bates, D Brown, Bullen, Cearns, Count (Chairman), Dent (substituting for the vacant UKIP position), Hickford, Hipkin, Jenkins, Leeke, McGuire, Onasanya (substituting for Councillor Whitehead), Orgee, Reeve and Walsh

Apologies: Councillors Nethsingha and Whitehead

252. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

253. MINUTES – 26TH JULY 2016 AND ACTION LOG

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th July 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. The Action Log and following updates from the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) were noted:

- the ongoing action for the Chief Executive to raise directly with the Chairman of Staffing and Appeals Committee whether a pilot report on staff performance management would be helpful to the Committee. **Action Required.**
- the letter to Government regarding Schools' Funding Formula to be co-signed by the County's MPs had been drafted. Officers were still awaiting two signatures from MPs. The Chairman reported that although Stephen Barclay MP supported the request for transformation support expressed in the letter, it was impractical to sign it given his move to the Whips Office. **Action Required.**
- the need for the CFO to still meet with the Chairman regarding the approval of the changes to the Prudential Borrowing requirement in 2015/16 following clarification of the reasons for the reduction in Section 106 funding available. **Action Required.**
- a report on action to address credit control would be presented to the next meeting. **Action Required.**

In considering the Action Log, it was suggested that any report which had been deferred to a future meeting should be included in the log. **Action Required.**

One Member expressed concern about the lack of action which had followed the recommendation regarding development of land in Rampton Road, Cottenham agreed at 14 January 2016 meeting. The Chairman of Assets and Investments Committee reported that ongoing discussions were taking place with Cottenham Parish Council regarding the formation of a Community Land Trust. The CFO added that this issue

had been raised at the last meeting of the Committee. The Chairman proposed that General Purposes Committee (GPC) should receive a briefing note on the action taken following the recommendation agreed at Committee. **Action Required.**

254. PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

255. TRANSFORMATION FUND BIDS

a) Assistive Technology in Older People's Care & Assessments

The Committee was asked to approve an investment of £260k in the expansion of the use of assistive technology in the care and assessment of older people, which would help support the delivery of significant savings as part of business planning. Attention was drawn to the background to the proposal which was divided into two phases. Phase 1 involved investing and expanding the use of Just Checking (or similar) equipment, which gave a full report of a person's movements during a given period. This was part of a longer strategy which would involve a partnership project to establish an enhanced response service to incidents where social care service users got into difficulties as part of Phase 2. During discussion, some Members raised the following:

- welcomed the proposal and requested that it be introduced across all phases as quickly as possible. It was noted that it would take approximately three months to prepare the business cases for Phase 2. The Chairman invited the Service Director: Older People & Mental Health to approach the Chief Executive for assistance if she did not have sufficient capacity to prepare the business cases. However, it was important that Phase 2 had a high degree of certainty regarding the return.
- the need to make reference in the report to work with families. The Service Director: confirmed that this was part of the work. Consultation took place with families regarding the outcome of monitoring the safe arrangement.
- queried the involvement of neighbours. It was noted that Phase 2 would focus on alternative sources of support if neighbours, friends and family were unable to respond. It was acknowledged that a more systematic approach was needed. Members were informed that any provision would be designed in consultation with family who would always be the first port of call. However, some users did not have family living nearby.
- queried how much the proposal had been driven by reducing costs. The Service Director reported that the Council had a statutory responsibility to ensure that a person eligible for residential care should not be at home. However, it was important to note that the majority of older people wanted to remain in their home. Members acknowledged that the technology would enable both the Council and families to move people into care at the right time. It was therefore believed this measure could improve outcomes as well as delivering financial savings. The Service Director reported that the experience with Learning Disability had provided reassurance. One Member raised the need to describe the outcomes better in the report.

- queried the involvement of Adults Committee and Spokes. It was noted that many discussions had taken place with both the Committee and Spokes about alternative ways of a delivering a service without making cuts. The Vice-Chairwoman of Adults Committee confirmed that this proposal had been endorsed by both the Committee and Spokes as part of the business plan. She expressed support for Phase 2 which was primarily about prevention and welcomed the involvement of the Fire and Rescue Service which reflected neighbourhood working.
- expressed concern about the fact that no equality and diversity implications had been provided. The Chairman queried why there should be any implications for what was effectively a universal service. The Service Director acknowledged that it should have been made clear in the report that this universal service would not be means tested.
- highlighted the need to monitor outcomes to compare what the situation would have been like if the technology had not been installed. In response, the Committee requested that a monitoring report be presented in six months detailing the return on investment. **Action Required.**
- expressed confusion regarding the way the resource implication had been presented in Section 6.1. The CFO reported that it had been presented in the business plan format which showed incremental movement. He agreed to present future bids in absolute sums.
- queried the position regarding warranties if the equipment failed. The Service Director reported that the contract had a maintenance agreement.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) approve the business case for phase 1 and the investment from the Strategic Transformation Fund to support the wider use of assistive technology. A finance summary was included in Section 6.1.
- b) comment on the phase 2 concept and the wider work programme.
- b) Renegotiation of the Waste PFI Contract

The Committee was asked to approve an investment of £380k to fund the cost of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in supporting the renegotiating of the Council's waste disposal contract. This reflected 8% of the savings to cover technical support and would be recovered through a reduction in the PFI credits. Members were reminded that a report on the Contract had been presented to a previous committee. It was hoped that renegotiations could result in the Council achieving savings of £5m over three years and then £5m per year. However, there were significant risks. The Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment reported that the Council had a good and positive relationship with the contractor Amey. During discussion, some Members raised the following:

- the need to present the financial information in Section 10 in absolute terms rather than that customarily used in the business planning process. The absolute format to

be used for all future reports enabling the public to easily understand the documentation.

- expressed concern that the wrong contract had been let in the first place and that the Council should take quick action and go for Option 5 particularly as Amey had been in breach of contract. The Chairman clarified the fact that the breach had been a technical one. The Executive Director acknowledged that with hindsight the Council could have acted differently but the outcome would have been the same. The technical breach had been remedied by Amey and it would have been very difficult and expensive for the Council to have withdrawn from the contract. It was noted that the Council would need to pay for financing, loss of profit and still need to remove the waste if it opted for Option 5.
- highlighted the need to have an Option 5 in order to be able to implement Option 4. The Executive Director explained that the Council was already progressing Option 2 and working on Option 3. It was therefore queried whether options was the right word rather than actions as Option 4 was a cumulative package involving Options 2 and 3. The Vice-Chairman stressed the importance of working up Option 5. The Chairman requested a confidential briefing note to the committee detailing what Option 5 would look like. **Action Required.**
- expressed concern about any possible slippage in the key milestones detailed in Section 5. The Executive Director reported that the Council had set a challenging timescale regarding the re-negotiations. It was currently withholding money from Amey to encourage progress. He explained that next year was the window of opportunity which would then diminish. He informed Members that the Council would do all it could to stick to the timescales in order to deliver savings as quickly as possible. The Chairman asked for specific cut off dates to be included in the timescales when it was reported back to Committee.
- the need to communicate the risk to all members of the Council. The Executive Director reported that there was a Steering Group involving Members. One Member queried why the Steering Group was not recommending options to GPC. The Executive Director offered to review arrangements to make sure that Members felt they had sufficient involvement. He explained that negotiations could involve just GPC and or the Steering Group. The Vice-Chairman, proposed with the agreement of the Committee, that the Chairman of GPC as well as the Chairman of Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee should be members of the Steering Group. It was agreed that the Vice-Chairman of GPC should attend in his absence.
- queried the relationship with DEFRA if the Council adopted Option 4 as the credits were predicated on DEFRA criteria. The Executive Director reported that this issue of the PFI credits was a significant risk and the Council would want to ensure that it was protected. He acknowledged that the credits were linked to objectives set by DEFRA at the beginning of the contract. The Mechanical Biological Treatment plant was doing effectively what it had been designed to do but the regulatory regime had changed. It was noted that recycling rates were currently good. The Council was trying to come up with a better solution in order to reduce waste to landfill but this was not what DEFRA had asked the Council to do in the beginning. It could therefore potentially take the Council's PFI credits away. However, the Council

could argue that all the waste product would be used and not sent to landfill. One Member raised the need for a confidential briefing session for GPC.

- expressed concern that the Council was effectively discussing its negotiating position in public. The CFO reported that the two negotiating teams had agreed a joint process and a document detailing the information contained in the report had been shared with both parties. The Executive Director confirmed that the report did not include any information of which Amey was not aware of. It was noted that Amey had identified the risk with DEFRA to the Council.

There was concern from some Members that they were being asked to support a preferred option without the appropriate information. It was suggested that a confidential item should be added to a future meeting detailing the risk and the relationship with the Council's business plan. The Chairman reminded the Committee that it was being asked to approve the outline business case. As it progressed the Committee would be able to have an in depth confidential briefing. It was noted that the Steering Group was scheduled to meet before the next meeting of GPC. The Executive Director reported that the Steering Group could work with the Council's financial advisers to bring a recommendation to the next meeting. With the agreement of the Committee, the Chairman proposed that the full business case and savings be presented to the first meeting of GPC following a meeting of the Steering Group.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) approve the outline business case and savings proposals from renegotiation of the Council's waste disposal contract.
- b) bring back a full business case and savings to the first General Purposes Committee following a meeting of the Steering Group.

256. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – JULY 2016

The Committee was presented with the July 2016 Finance and Performance report for Corporate Services and LGSS Cambridge Office. Attention was drawn to the Corporate Capacity Review (CCR) where the overspend had reduced from £1.2m to £0.4m, partly as a result of further work to refine the projection for savings from CCR. It was also proposed to bring forward some of the early proposals for the second phase of the CCR, which were anticipated to deliver £300k of savings in 2016/17. Members were informed that financing costs were predicted to underspend due to a change in the base rate.

One Member highlighted the need for all overspends to include an explanation. She queried why the LGSS Cambridge Office was predicting an overspend of £98k and asked whether the sharing arrangement with Northamptonshire County Council and Milton Keynes Council was creating a perverse incentive. The CFO agreed to provide the Committee with a briefing note on both issues. **Action Required.**

Another Member expressed concern about the percentage of debt over 90 days old. The CFO reminded the Committee that a report would be presented to the next meeting. There was concern from one Member regarding the fact that there was no

mention in the report of the number of people at risk of redundancy as a result of the CCR. The Chairman reminded the Committee that the report was a monitoring report rather than a report about the CCR. The CFO offered to circulate the link to the Intranet where the information was available. **Action Required.**

The Chairman drew attention to the overspends in Corporate Services and LGSS Managed. He reminded the Committee that he was challenging other Chairs to tackle overspends in their areas so it was important that he did the same. The CFO confirmed that these services would continue to work to get to zero.

It was resolved unanimously to review, note and comment upon the report.

257. INTEGRATED RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31ST JULY 2016

The Committee received a report detailing the financial and performance information to assess progress in delivering the Council's Business Plan. The CFO reported that there had been a reduction in the Children, Families and Adults (CFA) overspend of approximately £700k (0.3% of the overall budget). Unfortunately, the draft figures for August showed a bounce back up particularly in Learning Disability and Looked After Children where it was difficult to manage demand. Members were informed that the Capital Programme was in line with the profile to date, and performance indicators presented a mixed range of positives and challenges.

One Member queried how the Chairman of Health Committee would approach the long standing problem of delayed transfers of care from hospital as detailed in the performance indicator on page 79. The Chairman of Health Committee reported that he had asked how the turnover of staff in CFA had impacted on this area. He had been in regular conversation with the Executive Director: CFA about this issue. The CFO reminded the Committee that the appropriateness of some of the indicators had been raised and as a result Strategic Management Team was reviewing and evaluating them as part of the business plan process.

The Chairman added that in relation to delayed transfers of care there was an element which related to the Council and one to the NHS. The Vice-Chairwoman of Adults Committee drew attention to the number of adult social care attributable bed delays. There had been a relentless focus by Adults Committee on this target and the numbers had come down. When local hospitals went to black alert, resources were targeted to help ease the problem. However, it was important to note that adult social care was not the root of the problem. The Chairman reported that the Council could not keep being blamed for this issue but it should also not attack the NHS. Therefore the challenge was to help the media understand the background. He asked the Chief Executive to take action. **Action Required.**

It was resolved unanimously to:

Analyse resources and performance information and note any remedial action currently being taken and consider if any further remedial action was required.

258. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S INNOVATION FUND

The Committee received the Delivery Plan for “Stronger Together – Cambridgeshire County Council’s strategy for building resilient communities” as requested by Full Council. Attention was drawn to the background detailing how the strategy had been agreed. Members were advised of the activities associated with delivering the strategy and how these would help to deliver new savings over and above those already outlined in the business plan. Information detailing examples of work with Parish Councils was available at the meeting and could be circulated electronically. It was noted that the launch of an Innovation Fund in partnership with the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation would encourage the local voluntary and community sector to bid for transformation funding for projects which would demonstrate value for money and make a significant contribution to the Council’s corporate objectives. Bids would be considered by an officer and the Localism Member Champion, Councillor Criswell. Any bids over £50k would need to be considered by GPC. In welcoming the report, some Members raised the following:

- the need for more Member involvement. It was noted that a third of Councillors had taken part in the Councillors as Connectors programme. It was also proposed to hold a Members’ Seminar in February. The Chairman acknowledged the need to reinvigorate the programme early on in the new cycle but suggested that February would be too close to the County Council elections. It was noted that there was an ongoing role for those Members involved in the programme. However, it was also important to talk to Community Champions who were not Councillors.
- disappointment expressed by one Member that only 23 Councillors had signed up to the Councillors as Connectors programme. It was suggested that officers needed to learn from the drop out rates.
- queried the size of the Innovation Fund. The CFO reported that there was no definitive sum as it would depend on the proposals. The Fund was all about return on outcomes and was similar in terms of pump priming and objectives to the Council’s own Transformation Fund. It was about better and more efficient use of Council services using the community as the vehicle of delivery.
- the need to apply some rigour to monitoring in relation to the effectiveness of the Fund. It was also important to learn from failure. In response, the Committee requested that a monitoring report be presented in six months detailing the return on investment. **Action Required.**
- the need to circulate examples of projects to all Members. **Action Required.**
- the need to consider all outcomes such as the handyman employed by Parish Councils to cut the grass. It was noted that bids could cover any aspect of Council business provided they could demonstrate value for money. Members were informed that the fund was open to any organisation. The Chairman added that the fund should consider any innovative project if it met the criteria such as filling in pot holes.

- queried whether the target areas detailed in section 3.5 had been identified. It was noted that the target areas identified were thematic areas. Members were informed that there was a section on Cambridgeshire Insight detailing geographically where the Council spent its money. The Community Foundation along with staff members would be working with local communities to target specific areas which needed additional support.
- queried whether sufficient staff resource capacity was available. Members were informed that Phase 2 of the CCR would look at the roles of staff in relation to community engagement and galvanise that support. It was noted that conversations had taken place with community groups.
- the need to consider areas which did not have Parish Councils. It was noted that discussions had taken place with the City Council regarding a different approach. One Member reported that the City had an Anti Poverty Strategy which involved Credit Unions. The County Council could therefore work jointly with the City on this issue. The Chairman added that the project provided a significant opportunity for the County Council to work with District and Parish Councils to support adult social care.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) agree the Delivery Plan for 'Stronger Together' as a reflection of the Council's ambitions to support community resilience;
- b) as requested by Full Council, note the development of the Innovation Fund as an *"appropriate investment in community initiatives to deliver the outcomes of the Strategy, that will have a social and financial value that will enhance peoples' lives"; and*
- c) note the establishment of a governance structure to oversee this investment.
- d) receive future updates at six monthly intervals on progress of the strategy.

259. DEMOGRAPHY UPDATE

The Committee considered a report setting out the changes to the approach to demography in the Business Planning process. Members were aware that there had been some disquiet regarding the presentation of demography. It was proposed that the financial impact of general population growth should be absorbed by all services, thereby reducing the number of demography proposals in Cambridgeshire. This would mean demography funding only being given to services which experienced growth greater than the general population. To manage the financial impact for these services a corporate budget would be established. Services would then need to make evidence based Business Cases from this provision, which would be considered by GPC.

The Chairman highlighted the fact that the process was common practice in other authorities and it would improve transparency as it would be identified fully in the narrative of the business plan. The Vice-Chairwoman of Adults Committee expressed support for this approach. Demography particularly in Adult Services was very

nebulous which made it difficult to analyse. She added that this approach could avoid the need to make unnecessary reductions to achieve savings. One Member in support of this approach highlighted the fact that it reflected the outcome approach being rolled out by the Council.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) agree that the Business Plan should be developed with demography being budgeted for corporately;
- b) agree that any service committee requests for funding from this central allocation be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Chair of this Committee; and
- c) approve the revised presentation of demographic pressures and demand management savings.

260. SERVICE COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THE DRAFT 2017-18 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report which provided an overview of the draft Business Plan Capital Programme for Corporate and Managed Services.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) note the overview and context provided for the 2017-18 Capital Programme for Corporate and Managed Services; and
- b) comment on the draft proposals for Corporate and Managed Services' 2017-18 Capital Programme and endorse their development.

261. TREASURY MANAGEMENT QUARTER 1

The Committee received the first quarterly update on the Treasury Management Strategy 2016-17, approved by Council in February 2016. The Chairman reported that the Municipal Bonds Agency was scheduled to issue its first bond in the autumn. The CFO added that Milton Keynes Council was not part of the retender of the Treasury Management Advisory Contract because its contract did not expire for another year. However, it was expected to join in the future.

It was resolved unanimously to note the Treasury Management Report.

262. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

The Committee considered a report detailing the current status of corporate risk. Attention was drawn to changes to the Corporate Risk Register for GPC to review. Following on from previous discussions regarding delayed transfers of care, it was noted that Risk 32 "Insufficient availability of care services at affordable rates" had moved to Amber. Members were also advised that the Council had a new online risk management system.

It was resolved unanimously to note the position in respect of corporate risk.

**263. GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN, TRAINING PLAN
APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES, PARTNERSHIP LIAISON AND ADVISORY
GROUPS AND INTERNAL ADVISORY GROUPS AND PANELS**

The Committee considered its agenda plan, training plan and appointments to Partnership Liaison and Advisory Groups. Members noted the following changes to the agenda plan:

- delete "Draft Strategic Framework" from the October meeting;
- move "County Council Elections 2017" to November; and
- add "A Corporate Energy Strategy" to November.

The Committee also considered appointments to the LGSS Scrutiny Steering Group.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) review its Agenda Plan;
- b) review and agree its Training Plan;
- c) appoint Councillors Lynda Harford, Paul Clapp and Mike Mason to the LGSS Scrutiny Working Group.

Chairman