

18 JUNE 2020

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday, 18 June 2020

- * Cllr Alexis McEvoy (Chairman)
- * Cllr Alan Alvey (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

- * Fran Carpenter
- * Keith Craze
- * Sandra Delemare
- * Mahmoud Kangarani

Councillors:

- * Martyn Levitt
- * Alan O'Sullivan
- * Beverley Thorne
- * Derek Tipp

*Present

In attendance:

Councillors:

Barry Dunning
Jacqui England
Michael Harris
David Hawkins
Jeremy Heron
Barry Rickman

Officers Attending:

Rob Beere, Alan Bethune, Rebecca Drummond, Andy Rogers and Andrew Smith

Apologies

No apologies were received.

43 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2020 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

44 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by any member in connection with any agenda item.

45 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No issues were raised during the public participation period.

46 PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' UPDATES

Members received updates from the portfolio holders for this Panel.

Leader and Corporate Affairs

- Covid 19 Lockdown 18 March
- Things changing on a daily basis and maintaining services. Thanks to staff.
- Creation of 4 new Covid 19 Recovery Task and Finish Groups, to deal with the new normal. Remote meetings have their opportunities

Finance, Investment and Corporate Services

- Thanks to ICT for enabling the council to continue service delivery
- New finance system now up and running
- New phone system – voice over internet
- Covid 19 impact on finances - £2m income loss to date.
- Government Funding of £410k for leisure centres
- £1.783m further support funding
- Impact on General Reserve = negative net effect figure of £269k reducing reserve to £2.731m
- Overall losses approx £1m per month.
- Task and finish groups to address lost income.
- Options being formulated.
- Council entered pandemic in a good financial position.

Economic Development

- £38m government funding to support local business community. Economic development team and planning service collaborated to disburse.
- Further £2m discretionary fund to fill gaps in Central Govt funding. Being processed.
- Future tax and inflation increases predicted.

47 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND PROVISIONAL BUDGET OUTTURN

The Panel received details of the annual performance of services under the review of this Panel and the provisional budget outturn figures.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the updated position statement be noted, including the highlights from 2019/20;
- b) That the development of the new performance framework be noted;
- c) That the provisional outturn of the General Fund revenue and capital budgets for 2019/20 be noted;
- d) That the provisional outturn of the Housing Revenue Account for 2019/20 be noted.

48 DEVELOPMENT OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The Panel considered the principles and design of the Performance Management Framework in support of the delivery of the Corporate Plan.

It was suggested that the report show the environmental impact of all portfolios. It was emphasised that the indicators should be measurable. It was suggested that staff retention and turnover should be included.

Benchmarking data from previous years would be included wherever possible. It was noted that benchmarking against other councils was not straightforward as different councils used different reporting tools.

Most members felt that 4 to 6 monthly reporting would be preferable.

RESOLVED:

That the Panel endorse the principles and design of the performance management framework in support of the delivery of the Corporate Plan 'Community Matters' and continuous improvement across the organisation, subject to the comments above.

49 ANNUAL COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY INVESTMENT UPDATE - PRESENTATION

The Panel received a presentation on the Council's commercial and residential property investment activities. A copy of the slides is attached to these minutes as Appendix 1.

It was pointed out that as well as providing income for the Council, both strategies had a positive impact on the local economy, providing local businesses with premises, and leading the way in providing quality accommodation and services being provided to local people renting privately.

Members noted the benefits from the agreed rate of return and capital growth potential for properties, with low risk investment, within the District.

50 ICT UPDATE - STRATEGY DELIVERY / BUSINESS WEBSITE / APP DEVELOPMENT - PRESENTATION

The Panel received an update on progress with the ICT strategy.

Details were given on progress with strategic projects, many of which were continuing through the pandemic, in addition to business continuity works in lockdown. Examples of completed and ongoing projects were:

- Infrastructure renewal
- Finance
- Windows OS replacement
- Digital Customers (Website)
- Telephony
- Smartphone contract
- Sharepoint
- Accolaid replacement
- Digital Customers (Back end services)

Some Business as Usual services had now been recommenced after the lockdown pause, which included:

- PSN Certification
- PSN Network 2.1
- Gosport fall over facility
- Depot network
- App upgrade

The following works were ongoing to support remote working:

- Members' ICT
- VPN / Cloud optimisation
- ATC Server room
- Officer equipment longer term

Recent developments had justified the significant investment in ICT, and Members paid tribute to the ICT team for their invaluable support to the organisation over recent months.

51 WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel considered its future work programme.

It was agreed that a special Panel meeting be called in July to discuss Broadband provision in the District.

The Chairman suggested that staff be asked for their business improvement ideas through the next staff survey.

It was suggested regular updates be given on tackling climate change corporately.

CHAIRMAN