

Minutes

Finance and Resources Committee 30 June 2014

Membership/Attendance

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| * Cllr Aspinell (Chair) | * Cllr Kendall |
| * Cllr Lloyd (Vice-Chair) | * Cllr Le-Surf |
| * Cllr Clark | * Cllr Mrs McKinlay |
| Cllr Faragher | * Cllr Parker |
| * Cllr Hirst | |

*present

Substitute Present

Cllr Kerlake (for Cllr Faragher)

Also Present

Cllr Baker	Cllr Morrissey
Cllr Chilvers	Cllr Mynott
Cllr Mrs Hubbard	Cllr Quirk

Officers Present

Jo-Anne Ireland – Director of Strategy and Corporate Services
Tony Pierce – Acting Head of Planning
Roy Ormsby – Head of Street Scene
Paul Knight – Head of Business Transformation
Ashley Culverwell - Head of Borough Health, Safety & Localism
Leona Murray-Green – Senior Communications Officer
Leanna McPherson – Governance and Member Support Officer

23. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Faragher.

24. Minutes of Performance and Resources Committee held on 12 March 2014 and Strategy and Policy Board held on 19 March 2014

The minutes of the meetings were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

25. Proposals for a Review of Election

Members had before them a report outlining a proposal for a review of the elections process.

The proposed review would consider (but not be restricted to) the following areas:

- Review of the current Election cycle
- Review of polling day practices, including the locations of polling stations and processes undertaken at polling stations
- Review of the verification and count procedure
- Review of potential marketing campaigns to encourage electoral registration and voting
- Potential impact of Individual Electoral Registration (IER)

The review may identify a number of areas which can be recommended to Finance and Resources. However, it must also be recognised that any significant recommendations such as a change to the Election Cycle would need to be referred to Full Council for approval.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Lloyd and **SECONDED** by Cllr Aspinell to approve the recommendation as set out in the report.

RESOLVED to support a review of elections and to receive a report on options at the next meeting.

26. Provisional Outturn 2013/14

As part of the year end process, the Council must report the outturn position for 2013/14 and produce a Statement of Accounts which must be signed off by the External Auditors (Ernst & Young) and published by 30 September 2014.

The report before Members dealt with the financial outturn for the following:

- General Fund - projected surplus of £374,700 (plus a further £487,300 returned to balances from earmarked reserves) for the year.
- Housing Revenue Account – projected overspend of £158,000 for the year.
- Capital Programme – projected underspend of £1,497,100 for the year.

The report also considered the reserves and working balance levels.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Aspinell and **SECONDED** by Cllr Lloyd to approve the recommendations as set out in the report.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

1. To approve the provisional outturn information contained within this report.
2. To approve the following reserve transfers:
 - 2.1 Transfer of £500,000 to the Funding Volatility Reserve in recognition of the need to make good in 2014/15 a deficit on the NNDR Collection Fund in 2013/14.
 - 2.2 Close the ICT Contracts Reserve and transfer the residual balance of £30,000 to the Organisational Transformation Reserve
 - 2.3 Reduce the Single Status Reserve to £30,000 and transfer the unused amount of £487,300 to the General Fund Working Balance

27. Annual Treasury Management Report 2013/2014

The Council is required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2013/14. The report before Members met the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code).

On 12th February 2013 the Council received an annual treasury strategy in advance of the year (2013/14) and this review compared the activity with the strategy.

A motion was MOVED by Cllr Aspinell and SECONDED by Cllr Lloyd to approve the recommendations as set out in the report.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to note the Treasury Management activity and information for 2013/14.

28. Performance Indicators for 2014/15

The report before Members detailed the Operational Performance Indicators agreed for 2014/15 and gave performance detail for the first quarter up to 16th June 2014.

A motion was MOVED by Cllr Aspinell and SECONDED by Cllr Lloyd to approve the recommendations as set out in the report.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee notes the Strategic and Operational Performance Indicators for 2014/15.
2. That the Committee considers and notes the performance and contextual information against the first quarter key performance indicators up to 16th June 2014.

29. Organisational and People Development Strategy and Staff Survey

Members were aware that a staff survey was conducted during February 2014 which was requested by Overview and Scrutiny on 18 September 2013. The results of the survey were attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The staff survey was followed up with a managers' workshop on 04 June 2014 and additional workshops were to be held later in June.

An Organisation and People Development Strategy had been developed in response to the issues raised in the report and feedback contained within the Peer Review outcome letter of February 2014. The strategy was attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

A comprehensive action plan needed to be drawn up by managers and staff to support the delivery of the Organisational and People Development Strategy.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Le-Surf and **SECONDED** by Cllr Aspinell to approve the recommendations as set out in the report.

During the debate and amendment to the motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Le-Surf and **SECONDED** by Cllr Aspinell to add an additional recommendation as follows:

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

1. To note the report and attached survey results (Appendix 1 of the report) as requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
2. To endorse the Organisation and People Development Strategy attached as Appendix 2 of the report.
3. That a further staff satisfaction survey be undertaken in six months.

30. Revised Health and Safety Policy

The Health and Safety Policy (Appendix 1 of the report) had been revised as required under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and was reflective of current organisational and management structures within the Authority. The health and safety policy had been passed to Corporate Leadership Board and all Health and Safety Committee members for comment and review in accordance with its conditions.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Aspinell and **SECONDED** by Cllr Clark to approve the recommendation as set out in the report.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that the revised Health and Safety Policy be approved.

31. Communications Protocols

The report before Members comprised of three documents that set out guidelines and procedures for handling Brentwood Borough Council's internal and external communications. The aim was to help the Council communicate effectively with its key audiences by ensuring the quality, accuracy and effectiveness of communications activity and protocols.

Communications Protocols (Appendix 1 of the report), was mainly for staff use and covered communications of a news, marketing and information type and applied to all formats and channels regarding internal and external communications. It had been revised to acknowledge the new Communications Team at the Council and our increased use of Twitter as a way of engaging with residents.

Communications Strategy 2014/15 (Appendix 2 of the report) was a new document that provided a framework and action plan for the Communications Team to support the delivery of the Council's strategic priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan 2013-2016.

Social Media Protocol for Members (Appendix 3 of the report) was for members and provides guidance on best practice for the use of social media.

A motion was MOVED by Cllr Lloyd and SECONDED by Cllr Kendall to approve the recommendations as set out in the report, with the following amendment,

2.1 That the Committee approve the Social Media Protocol for (Appendix 3).

During the debate and amendment was MOVED by Cllr Lloyd and SECONDED by Cllr Aspinell to add an additional recommendation as follows:

2.4 That the Public Information Panel (PIP) will continue and will be constituted of three Members, two from the administration and one from the opposition group.

The amendment was ACCEPTED.

RESOLVED

1. To approve the continued use of the Communications Protocols (Appendix 1).
2. To approve the Communications Strategy for 2014/15 (Appendix 2).
3. To approve the Social Media Protocol (Appendix 3).
4. That the Public Information Panel (PIP) will continue and will be constituted of three Members, two from the administration and one from the opposition group.