

**MINUTES**  
**FINANCE & RESOURCES**  
**JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**03 MARCH 2015**

**Present:**

Cllr Adeleke  
Cllr B Chapman (Chairman)  
Cllr Doole

Cllr Marshall  
Cllr Townsend  
Cllr W Wyatt - Lowe

**Officers:**

J Deane	Director (Finance & Operations)
R Smyth	Assistant Director (Performance & Projects)
B Hosier	Group Manager – Procurement
M Brookes	
M Rawdon	Group Manager - People
J Doyle	Group Manager – Democratic Services
L Collins	Member Support Officer (Minutes)

**OS/049/15 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Finance & Resources OSC meeting held on 10 December 2014 were confirmed by the Members present and signed by the Chairman.

**OS/050/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Clark, Collins, N Hollinghurst and N Tiley. Councillor's Ayling, Organ and Taylor were absent.

**OS/051/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**OS/052/15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

**OS/053/15 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO A CALL – IN**

None.

The chair announced at the meeting that the order of the Agenda would be amended at the request of the Director of Finance and Operations. Item 9, Quarter 2 Financial Outturn Report 2014/15 would be moved to item 7.

### **OS/054/15 ACTION POINTS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Chairman of the committee went through the action points from the previous meeting and the responses to those points.

- Report on Charging for Credit Card transactions - This is ongoing. A report is being sent to CMT in the next few weeks before a recommendation is made to Cabinet 10/2/15.
- Staff Survey to include a question specifically referring to e-mails- Communications to include a question on email management in the next staff survey.
- Circulate details of the HCC mental Health First Aiders courses - Public Health at Herts County Council funded the Royal Society for Public Health Understanding Health Improvement Level 2 Award course for DBC staff, Members and external partner organisations. The one day course was run three times in June, September and December last year. There were about 20 attendees on each course. Part of the course covered mental health.
- Breakdown of Prosecutions into seriousness, severity and frequency - Email circulated to Members on 18/11/2014.
- Schedule of regular updates on Get set, Go Dacorum - To be included in the 'quarterly People Group update' – Next one March 2015.
- Provide analysis of data, CSU06 - customers satisfied with service received from CSU - Customer satisfaction survey undertaken during July – September 2014 - E mail sent to Councillors.
- Clarify FO101 - FOI responses - Email circulated to Members on 18/11/2014.
- Status report on items for delivery during Nov/Dec 2014 - Incorporated into report for 3rd March.

Councillor Doole made reference to the 1<sup>st</sup> action point regarding the no of calls not answered in the CSU. He asked why this was still outstanding as this appears to be an ongoing problem with the CSU.

B Hosier informed Members that a meeting would be held this Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2015 with the Portfolio Holder N Harden to discuss this issue. All Members will be notified of the outcome.

#### **Action**

B Hosier informed Members that a meeting would be held this Thursday with the Portfolio Holder N Harden to discuss this issue. All Members will be notified of the outcome.

Councillor N Harden arrived at 7.35pm

## **OS/055/15 QUARTER 3 FINANCIAL OUTTURN REPORT 2014/15**

James Deane, The Director of Finance and Operations, introduced this item on behalf of Richard Baker and highlighted the importance of the figures in the report on pages 92 and 93 and invited Members to ask questions.

Councillor Townsend asked what the difference was between adjusted budget and forecast outturn.

The Director of Finance and Operations replied that the adjusted budget is the amount that has been approved by Members for expenditure, whereas the forecast outturn is the amount that the Council expects to have spent by the end of the year.

Councillor Adeleke referred to page 83 and the funding grant for Sportspace. He asked what the amendment was for and when it would be completed.

J Deane confirmed that in 2014 there was a planned reduction of £50k in the grant paid to SportsSpace. However, following Members' decision to award an additional one-off £100k payment to SportsSpace in 2015/16, it was decided not to implement the planned £50k reduction in grant this year.

Councillor Adeleke asked a question about the software requirements for Northgate. He asked if they could reassure Members that this would all be under control.

J Deane said that this was all being closely managed and all payments to Northgate were being monitored.

Councillor Doole made reference to the extra costs within the CSU and asked if the Council was monitoring or managing this.

J Deane confirmed that the costs would be both managed and monitored.

Councillor W Wyatt – Lowe asked if there was anything the Council could do proactively to identify homes brought back into use?

J Deane said that he would provide Members with a detailed answer at a later date.

Councillor Townsend asked a question regarding the Pensions Backfunding. Referring to the adjustment in the budget for 2015/16 he asked why the amount had been reduced.

J Deane explained to Members that this was an amount payable to contribute to the pension scheme deficit that had arisen from the triennial review of the pension scheme in late 2013. Originally it was anticipated that the payment would be made in 2014/15, and so it was budgeted for that year. However, HCC subsequently requested payment in late 2013/14 which meant that the budget was not then required in 2014/15, hence the adjustment. The payment was still made – the adjustment was down to a timing issue.

### **Outcome:**

Members noted the progress of the report and commented on the Customer Service Centre and Gateway project.

## **OS/056/15 QUARTER 3 RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT 2014/15**

James Deane the Corporate Director of Finance and Operations introduced the Quarter 3 Risk Management Report on behalf of Linda Dargue. He highlighted the changes in the risks C1, C2 and R4 as they had come onto the register too late. He added that all of these risks will be incorporated into the next report.

Councillor Doole highlighted the need to identify opportunities as well as risks in the reports and said that most registers avoid these. He also pointed out that the performance reports should be linked to the risk registers and identified the Finance & Resources report as an example of how this could work well. He asked if the other registers would be presented in this way.

J Deane agreed with Councillor Doole's comment that opportunities should be reflected in risk registers, and observed that often they were captured, but as the avoidance of a negative, rather than expressed as a positive.

Councillor Townsend commented on the Risk Registers content. He asked if it was necessary to have all of this information in the risk registers as it appeared too full and said it would be helpful to have a simplified register to read.

J Deane explained to Members that a change in the Registers content would take place after the elections in May.

Councillor Harden asked if there would be an opportunity for backbenchers to have a say in the review of the Risk Registers.

J Deane added that this would be possible and would welcome their ideas on how to take the Registers forward. He committed to incorporating this into the process for repopulating the risk registers once the new administration was in place.

The Chair added that it would be helpful to Members to have a Register that was more clear and concise. He suggested bullet pointing the risks as opposed to a table format to highlight the key areas within the Risk Register.

### Outcome:

The report was noted.

## **OS/057/15 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE AND OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER REPORTS – LEGAL GOVERNANCE, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND PEOPLE**

M Brookes introduced the Quarter 3 Performance and Operational Risk Register for Legal Governance, Democratic Services and People on behalf of S Baker.

He invited Members to ask questions.

The Chairman made reference to page 22, Item 6 – The Statutory Notice Pilot. He asked the officer if there was a date in mind that this could be looked at.

R Smyth explained that they were in discussion with the CLG since 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015. An update will be given to Members after the 9<sup>th</sup> March when the next meeting takes place.

Councillor Adeleke made reference to page 22 The Mental Health Programme asked the officer to confirm what level of training is given to mental health staff.

M Rawdon, Manager of People, confirmed that there were two levels of training provided for staff. The two day sessions include a range of training for Mental Health issues and a 7 day course covers all of the areas within Mental Health. It focuses on signs to look for as a Manager.

Councillor Adeleke asked if there was a reduction in the Sickness absence figures reported.

M Rawdon said that currently there is a 2 year programme running. All staff are fully trained. It would be easier to assess the figures once the end of year has elapsed to get a more accurate figure to report on.

Councillor Doole highlighted risk CEM03 on page 33 and asked if this was correct as the impact had gone from a 3 to a 4.

M Brookes said that this appeared to be an error and will come back to Members regarding this risk.

Councillor Marshall referred to page 33 and the last control regarding the quarterly meetings of the Dacortium Sub-group (AD level). She asked what level this related to.

M Brookes confirmed that this related to the Assistant Director level.

\the Chairman referred to page 27 HR03 and asked the office what was considered a long term sickness.

M Rawdon confirmed that after 7 days sickness a doctors certificate would be required.

Action:

- M Rawdon to report to Members on the review of the sickness figures for the next meeting.
- Page 33, Risk CEM03 – M Brookes to get back to Members regarding this.

Outcome:

The report was noted.

**OS/058/15 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE AND OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER REPORTS – PERFORMANCE AND PROJECTS**

R Smyth, Assistant Director – Performance and Projects outlined the key elements of the Quarter 3 Performance and Operational Risk Register.

Councillor W Wyatt-Lowe referred to page 41 and the complaints handling process.

R Smyth explained that all complaints are assigned to a complaints handler to be dealt with.

Outcome:

The content of the report is noted.

**OS/059/15 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE AND OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER REPORTS – FINANCE AND RESOURCES**

J Deane, Corporate Director of Finance and Operations outlined the Quarter 3 Performance and Operational Risk report and invited Members for questions.

He highlighted Members attention to risk FR02 on page 75. He mentioned that performance on the processing of benefits had declined for two consecutive quarters and therefore he had increased the associated risk rating. This would ensure that there would be increased focus on this risk until performance was once again within acceptable standards.

There were no questions for the Corporate Director.

Outcome:

The report was noted

**OS/060/15 WORK PROGRAMME**

Councillor Marshall referred to the Work Programme for Finance and Resources 2015/16 and asked why the Procurement Review had been taken off. She asked for the reasoning behind this and wondered whether this could be put back on the Work Programme.

Action:

Member Support Officer, L Collins to get clarification regarding this item and inform Members via e mail.

The meeting ended at 8.20pm