

## MINUTES

### FINANCE AND RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

7 JUNE 2016

**Present:**

**Members:**

**Councillors:** Herbert Chapman  
(Chair)  
Douris (Vice-  
Chairman)  
Barnes  
Birnie  
Clark  
E Collins  
Fethney  
Silwal  
Taylor  
Tindall  
Gbola Adeleke

<b>Officers:</b>	Chris Baker	Group Manager - Revenues, Benefits & Fraud
	Mark Brookes	Group Manager - Legal Governance
	Nicholas Brown	Group Manager - Commercial Assets & Property Development
	Louise Collins	Member Support Officer
	Jim Doyle	Group Manager - Democratic Services
	Ben Hosier	Group Manager - Commissioning, Procurement & Compliance
	Matt Rawdon	Group Manager - People
	David Skinner	Assistant Director - Finance & Resources
	Robert Smyth	Assistant Director - Performance & Projects
	Ben Trueman	Group Manager – Technology & Digital Transformation

**Also Attendance:**

Councillor Guest

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

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## **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Finance and Resources meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016 were confirmed by the Members present and signed by the Chairman.

**27**                    **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Ashbourn.

**28**                    **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**29**                    **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was public participation from Emma and Jason West, John Sawbridge and neighbours, Mr Ashley Taylor who lives at no.23 Cuttsfield Terrace and Mr Robert Fradley who lives at no. 19 who spoke to Members regarding the parking issues in Hemel Hempstead and vehicular access to their properties.

Councillor Guest also made a speech in line with the residents concerns regarding the parking issues they face in their area.

Members noted the comments made by the Ward Councillor and the local residents.

The Chair thanked all of the residents and the Ward Councillor for speaking at the meeting.

**30**                    **CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO CALL-IN**

None.

**31**                    **ACTION POINTS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

All of the action points from the previous meeting had been actioned and were all agreed by all the Members present at the meeting.

**32**                    **PROVISIONAL OUTTURN REPORT 2015-16**

**Councillor Guest left the meeting at 7.45pm**

Councillor Elliot – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources informed Members that there had been an underspend within the budget and that the report would be going to the next Audit Committee for a final sign off.

Questions:

Councillor Tindall referred to page 11, 5.1 and the surplus of £30k on income and garages. He asked if the level of void would be different on smaller garages.

D Skinner, Assistant Director - Finance & Resources confirmed that the level of voids would be lower on smaller garages. He confirmed that this will be reviewed in the future.

Councillor Tindall referred to page 13, 7.6 and the repairs and maintenance. He mentioned that there was a trend of increase in the repairs and asked the officer to confirm if there will be a trend identified for future years.

D Skinner explained to Members that there is a lot of work to be done which will include detail analysis to forecast demand and arrangements in place for 15/16 and 16/17 and to all additional controls to take action as they go through the year.

Councillor Birnie referred to page 10, 4.1 and the Employees being £217k over budget. He asked the officer to confirm when the review would take place in Building Control.

D Skinner said that he was not sure when the review would conclude.

Councillor Birnie referred to the V4 Services review and asked for the costs involved.

D Skinner said that he would check the costs and get back to Members at a later date.

Councillor Barnes referred to Page 8, 3.1 and asked how many premises there were in Dacorum.

D Skinner said that he would get back to Members with an update.

Councillor Barnes asked the officers to confirm how long the new electronic opening system that is being installed would last for.

N Brown said that he would get back to Members with an update.

Councillor Adeleke referred to page 14 and the Health and Safety works – overspend £120k and asked if there was anything put in place for the rehabilitation of homes.

D Skinner confirmed that there is an ongoing education programme to educate the residents on how to maintain their properties. He added that there had been a number of major cases of mould being reported whereby extensive treatment was issued which in effect led to an increase in spending.

Councillor Silwal referred to the Employees - £217k over budget on page 10 of the report and asked the officer to clarify this.

D Skinner replied that Waste Services delivered in budget in 2016/17, however in 2015/16, it took longer to address all of the issues which is why there was an increase in the budget.

Councillor Douris referred to page 10, 4.1 and the service review and asked the officer to confirm when this would take place.

D Skinner said that he would get back to Members with the information.

Councillor Douris referred to page 10, 4.2 and the damage to properties from subsidence due to the tree routes. He asked the officer to confirm whom the trees belonged to and if there was any consideration to residents when planting them and how they would be maintained in 20/30 years time.

D Skinner said that he would get back to the committee with an answer before the next meeting.

Councillor Douris made reference to page 18 line 174 and the slippage of £2m on the Water Gardens. He asked the officer to confirm if this was slippage or if it will turn into an overspend.

D Skinner explained that at the time the report was written this figure was a slippage, however confirmed to the committee that there was no indication that there would be an overspend.

Councillor Tindall referred to page 19, line 198 and the slippage of £838k on the new build scheme at London Road Apsley. He asked if this could have been anticipated in advance of the build.

D Skinner told the committee that this was due to the change in the clients requirements.

Action:

1. D Skinner to confirm what the costs are for the V4 Service Review.
2. D Skinner to confirm how many Premises there are in Dacorum.
3. N Brown to confirm the number of wc's fitted with time locks and steel opening doors
4. D Sinner to check when the service review is due to take place in Planning and Building Control.
5. D Skinner to confirm whom the trees belong to with regards to the damage to properties from subsidence due to the tree routes.

**Outcome:**

The Committee noted the forecast outturn position report.

**33a                      Quarter 4 Performance and Operational Risk Register Report a)  
Legal Governance and Democratic Services**

M Brookes, Solicitor to Council introduced his report. The Portfolio Holder for Residents and Corporate Services had nothing to add to the report.

Questions:

Councillor Tindall made reference to page 29, item 7 and asked the officer to confirm the costs incurred in these cases.

M Brookes, Solicitor to the Council mentioned that there is no evidence of a breakdown for each individual case. They do however provide a year end summary but are moving towards providing on each case individually in the future.

Councillor Adeleke referred to page 31 and the Parish and Community Liaison and offered his thanks to Sharon Collins for all her hard work that she put in.

Outcome:

Members noted the report.

**34                    QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE AND OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER REPORT - FINANCE AND RESOURCES**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources gave a brief update to Members in that there was a movement of compliance changes in May 2016, with the retirement of Steve Baker.

Questions:

Councillor Barnes referred to page 47 and asked the officer to explain risk CE\_F01.

B Hosier explained that there is a reporting structure in the spending identified. he Council analyses its expenditure and has categorized it in to 5 separate segments. By grouping together similar types of expenditure the Council can investigate efficiencies and cost saving opportunities by producing sourcing strategies that looking horizontally across the Council's expenditure rather than vertically against each project..

Councillor Tindall referred to page 51/52 and the Capital Programme and asked the officer to explain if there was anything they could do to make the budget more robust.

D Skinner said that with reference to the information on page 54, they re currently looking at additional action plans and the key factors in 15/16 on slippages. He highlighted that they are keen to complete these and have set out measures in place to monitor them for the future.

Councillor Douris mentioned to the officers that it may be helpful for the committee to have all of the various risks separated onto separate pages to help make them more identifiable.

Councillor Harden said that they would take the comment on board and look at this moving forward and apologized to members for the loss of information.

D Skinner mentioned that they are reviewing the risks and highlighted that in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter there will be a different risk profile.

Councillor Adeleke referred to page 42 CSU13 and asked if the Council is encouraging online use.

B Hosier said that they are encouraging customers to utilize a number of customer contact channels which has made the use of face to face contact easier for customers who really need the face to face contact.

R Smyth added that Digital Dacorum aims to help people to convert to the channel shift programme. Over time the number of people using the system will increase rising to the vast majority going online. In the Forum there will be self serv kiosks to encourage people to free up face to face contact for those that will need to use it.

Outcome:

The Committee noted the report.

**35**                    **QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE AND OPERATIONAL RISK REPORT**  
**- PERFORMANCE AND PROJECTS**

R Smyth, Assistant Director - Performance & Projects pointed Members towards the Performance and Operational Risk Reports they had before them.

Questions:

Councillor Tindall referred to page 67, 2.7 and the total days lost through sickness. He asked the officer to confirm how many of the sickness absences were related to stress.

M Rawdon said that he would need to get back to the committee with an accurate answer.

Councillor Douris referred to page 68, 2.19 and asked if the enhancements to the existing tablets set for 2017 can be brought forward.

B Trueman said that this could be prioritised and looked at.

The Chair referred to page 90 and the paperless approach. He asked what the 20% was in the savings.

R Smyth said that he would need to come back to Members with regards to this question.

Councillor Fethney left at 8.45pm

Action:

1. M Rawdon to confirm for Members what percentage of sickness absences were related to stress.
2. R Smyth to confirm to Members what the savings are within the paperless approach set within the report.

**Outcome:**

That Members noted the report.

**36                    APPENDIX A - WORK PROGRAMME 2016-17**

The Chair announced that the Finance and Resources meeting on October 4<sup>th</sup> 2016 would be moved to the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2016 subject to Council approval.

The Meeting ended at 8.50 pm