

## CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Committee Room 2, Watling House, High Street North, Dunstable on Thursday, 1 June 2017.

### PRESENT

Cllr P A Duckett (Chairman)  
Cllr J Chatterley (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs	Mrs A Barker	Cllrs	J Kane
	Mrs C F Chapman MBE		D McVicar
	N B Costin		T Swain

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs R W Johnstone  
T Woodward

Members in Attendance: Cllrs K Ferguson  
R D Wenham Deputy Leader and Executive  
Member for Corporate Resources

Officers in Attendance:	Mr S Conaway	Chief Information Officer
	Mrs P Everitt	Scrutiny Policy Adviser
	Mrs C Jones	Chief People Officer
	Tobin Stephenson	Programme Manager
	Mr C Warboys	Director of Resources

### CROSC/17/1. Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 March 2017 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### CROSC/17/2. Members' Interests

None.

### CROSC/17/3. Chairman's Announcements and Communications

The Chairman announced the Corporate Resources OSC would consider the Performance and Budget information on behalf of all OSCs. Questions and suggestions would be reported back to each Director and OSC for consideration and action.

### CROSC/17/4. Petitions

None.

### CROSC/17/5. Questions, Statements or Deputations

None.

**CROSC/17/6. Call-In**

None.

**CROSC/17/7. Requested Items**

None.

**CROSC/17/8. Executive Member Update**

The Executive Member for Corporate Resources advised the Committee of new developments that included:-

- The largest reaction recorded on Social Media for the Queen's visit to Priory View in Dunstable that saw over 250,000 people view the webpage.
- The completion of the telephony project roll out.
- The addition of 78 car parking spaces at Flitwick railway station.
- The official opening of the new Silsoe VC Lower School building in Chestnut Avenue, Silsoe by the Bishop of St Albans. The school had previously been located in the High Street, Silsoe.

In response to the update, a Member requested that all Members be kept up to date and prepared for the next phase of IT changes.

**CROSC/17/9. IT infrastructure and stability**

The Chief Information Officer delivered a presentation that outlined the Council's IT strategic focus over the next 18 months with proposals to move to a modern, flexible infrastructure and enable business change. In conjunction with the changes the Storm Telephony system had been rolled out and Members would be provided with an update on the system and the performance data it provided.

In light of the update Members raised the following comments:-

- Given that Members had purchased a variety of IT equipment with the use of their allowances, there was a concern that not all hardware would be compliant going forward. It was proposed that Members be provided with the same IT equipment as officers. In response the Executive Member advised there would need to be a change in the allowance scheme for IT equipment to be provided to Members and this would be considered at the appropriate time. It was agreed that Members would be provided with a list of recommended hardware they might consider purchasing.
- That Members be provided with a list of mobile phone networks that provided the best signal at Priory House.
- That an additional IT security training session be provided to Members should demand be sufficient
- An update on the roll out of Storm along with performance figures be provided at a future meeting.

**Noted the update and recommended a list of IT hardware and mobile networks be provided to Members.**

### **CROSC/17/10.Q3 Performance Monitoring**

The Head of Knowledge and Insight introduced the new style of reporting performance monitoring for Quarter 3 2016/17 for Central Bedfordshire's Medium Term Plan (MTP) indicator set. In summary the data set was good with twelve measures reported on or above target and six measures below target. Commentary on each indicator had been provided by the service and questions arising would be referred to the appropriate Director for response. In addition, the Committee could recommend an investigation of poor performance to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Members discussed the following areas of performance in Sustainable Communities:

#### **Delivering Great Resident Services**

- The satisfaction with highways maintenance had declined and Members reported poor communications with the new contractor.
- Improved performance was required on the signage on the roads network.
- Improved provision was required on drainage and ditches of farm land by engineers.

In response the Chairman of Sustainable Communities advised his Committee would investigate the areas of concern and had identified the above issues too.

#### **Education and Skills**

Members discussed the following areas of performance:-

- School readiness – the percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the Early Years Foundation
- Attainment 8 ranking
- The percentage of schools rated good or outstanding.

The Chairman of Children's Services OSC advised his Committee had arrangements in place to look into all the issues outlined by the Committee.

#### **RECOMMENDED the areas of performance including:-**

- **Highways maintenance communications**
- **Road network signage**
- **Drainage and ditches**
- **School readiness**
- **Attainment 8 ranking and**
- **The percentage of schools rated good and outstanding, be considered for investigation and inclusion on the appropriate OSC work programmes.**

### **CROSC/17/11.Q3 Budget Monitoring Reports**

The Director of Resources introduced a report which provided the Committee with the Budget Monitoring Provisional Forecast outturn financial position for

Quarter 3. Corporate Resources OSC was the only Committee to receive this information and it was able to refer matters to the relevant OSC for further investigation on matters of particular concern.

#### **a. Quarter 3 Revenue Budget Monitoring**

The Director of Resources introduced the Quarter 3 Revenue Budget monitoring report that forecast an overspend of £1.2m. He also highlighted the provisional outturn position, subject to audit, that indicated a £1.9m under spend. All directorates had improved their provisional figures and had achieved a satisfactory position for the Council.

The ear marked reserves would provide funding for specific projects and the Council had achieved a resilient financial position in the short term. Social Care Health and Housing faced continued housing challenges and Members discussed the growing pressure of homelessness provision. In response the Executive Member advised the Council had purchased the Greenacre building for transitional housing and a cost effective solution to this issue was required. Members supported the proposal that Social Care Health and Housing (SCHH) OSC investigate the issue.

**RECOMMENDED that the SCHH OSC consider the request to investigate homelessness provision given the budgetary pressures on this service.**

#### **b. Capital Budget Monitoring**

The Executive Member introduced the Capital monitoring report detailing the financial position. The Council had achieved a net underspend of £23m that compared favourably to the net figure of £44m achieved last year. The Empty Homes team were congratulated on their achievements, however, a source of concern was identified with regards to the schools capital budget that was overspent due to delays on Section 106 monies being received and the change in legislation to this area of funding.

Members discussed the schools funding issue and agreed to ask Children's Services OSC to investigate the issue and report back to the Committee.

**Noted the Capital budget position and recommended Children's Services OSC investigate the schools' capital budget concerns.**

#### **c. Q3 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Monitoring**

The Executive Member introduced the HRA budget report that detailed the projected outturn at quarter 3. Due to delays in Croft Green and Houghton Regis Central project, the expected outturn figure was expected to be £6m.

**Noted the update.**

#### **CROSC/17/12HR Projects Update**

The Assistant Director People gave a verbal update on the key projects to be delivered by the Human Resources Team that included:-

- An upgrade to the SAP system
- A new recruitment package
- Apprenticeship scheme roll out
- IR35 (HRMC tax rule change for limited company workers in the public sector) and the retention of specialist contractors.

**Noted the update and would consider a further update in the autumn.**

### **CROSC/17/13. Work Programme 2017/18 & Executive Forward Plan**

The Committee considered the current work programme and agreed to include the following items:-

1. Progress update on the Office 365 migration project (September)
2. Update on the Storm Telephony roll out and performance data. (September)
3. Fees and charges (September)
4. A further update on the HR projects (Autumn)

**AGREED the work programme as set out in Appendix A subject to the addition of items 1-4 highlighted.**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 1.12 p.m.)

Chairman.....

Date.....