

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 22 March 2018.

PRESENT

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

Cllrs Mrs C F Chapman MBE
J Kane

Cllrs D McVicar
T Swain

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs Mrs A Barker
N B Costin
T Woodward

Substitutes: Cllrs C C Gomm
M A G Versallion

Members in Attendance: Cllrs K M Collins Deputy Executive Member for
Corporate Resources and Vice-
Chairman of Licensing Committee
E Ghent Executive Member for Assets and
Housing Delivery
Mrs T Stock Deputy Executive Member for Health

Officers in Attendance: Mr I Berry Assistant Director of Assets
Mr M Coiffait Director of Community Services
Mrs P Everitt Scrutiny Policy Adviser
Mr D Galvin Assistant Director of Finance
Mr G Leka Finance Analyst
Mrs S Michael Head of Corporate Finance
Mr C Warboys Director of Resources

CROSC/17/72 Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 25 January 2018 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

CROSC/17/73 Members' Interests

None.

CROSC/17/74 Chairman's Announcements and Communications

The Chairman welcomed the new Executive Member for Assets and Housing Delivery to the meeting. Cllr Ghent would attend future meetings to update the Committee on developments and news relating to his portfolio.

CROSC/17/75 Petitions

None.

CROSC/17/76 Questions, Statements or Deputations

None.

CROSC/17/77 Call-In

None.

CROSC/17/78 Requested Items

None.

CROSC/17/79 Executive Member Update

The Deputy Executive Member for Health and Communities updated the Committee on the latest news and developments for the Corporate Resources Director that included:-

- The new HR digital upgrade, Project Simplify, would be launched in May 2018.
- The roll out of the Fiori system that records leave and time keeping would be extended to include travel claims for Staff and Members.
- Following a Service User Forum, the Legal Services Team would develop a Service Improvement Plan.
- The Consultation Team had received over 11,000 responses to the Waste and Recycling consultation since its launch. Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive would learn of the feedback at future meetings.

A Member enquired as to the number of Town and Parish Councils that had instructed LGSS Law in the last year. A response to this question would be provided after the meeting.

The Executive Member for Assets and Housing Development updated the Committee on the latest news and developments from his Portfolio that included:-

- Preparatory work had been undertaken for the imminent arrival of modular amenity buildings at the Biggleswade South Gypsy and Traveller site.
- The completion of land sales disaggregation negotiations with Bedford Borough Council had resulted in a payment of £4.5m to Central Bedfordshire.

- The sale of land at Thorn Turn to Baytree Limited for two commercial buildings at a value of over £20m had been completed and work on the site would start in April 2018.

CROSC/17/80 Pensions Scheme and Ethical Investments

The Deputy Executive Member for Corporate Resources gave a verbal update on the Bedfordshire Pension Scheme that included the three Bedfordshire Unitary Councils. Members were advised that information on the policies, statements of funds and asset allocations was available on the website <https://www.bedspensionfund.org>. The Pension Fund Committee meets eight times a year and fund managers are invited to attend. An ethics register is kept and is available for inspection.

A Member raised a question regarding the health of the pension fund and whether there were enough funds available to meet needs. In response, the Director of Resources advised 74-76% of the Pension Fund could be funded and this was a healthy and not unusual position to be in for this service.

The Committee was satisfied the Bedfordshire Pension Fund was managed to a high ethical standard.

Noted the updated.

CROSC/17/81 Quadrant Accommodation Plan

The Assistant Director Assets gave a verbal update on the Quadrant Accommodation Plan that formed part of the Asset Management Strategy. The plan would provide accommodation and allow staff to work in a smart, agile way. Comments received through a staff accommodation survey would inform the Draft Accommodation Plan and a report would be submitted to the next meeting for Members' comments before it was considered by the Executive.

A budget of £2m had been allocated to spend on the Built Asset Improvement Programme (BAIP) to maintain and improve the Council's estate.

In response to a query on what detail would be featured in the report, the Director for Community Services advised the strategic themes will detail planned changes and timescales, but could not anticipate the outcome of any public consultations on the service provision that may impact building use.

Once plans have been agreed, every effort would be made to engage with partners to allow community use of premises.

The Committee was happy and reassured by the direction of the Quadrant Accommodation Plan and the strategic overview of built assets.

NOTED the update.

CROSC/17/82 Outcomes of the Fees and Charges Project

The Head of Corporate Finance introduced a presentation that outlined the work undertaken by the Fees and Charges project team and the outcomes established. The new income codes would be used from April 2018 and would reduce the number of unnecessary virements and journals. The Finance Analyst advised the new volume data would identify individual fees and charges and the team would have a clear understanding of income and be able to set a clear justification for fees and charges as well as transparent financial reporting.

The Committee commended the work of the Project Team and were assured that they would receive clear and transparent income data to ensure future fees and charges recommendations are based on a sound basis.

NOTED the update.

CROSC/17/83 Work Programme 2017/18 & Executive Forward Plan

The Committee considered the current work programme and Executive forward plan. The work programme was agreed subject to the addition of the following items to the 31 May 2018 meeting:-

- Draft Farm Strategy
- Quadrant Accommodation Plan report and
- Land for Housing Development report.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 11.30 a.m.)

Chairman.....

Date.....