



Minutes

FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2016, IN MEZZANINE ROOM 2, COUNTY HALL,
AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.02 PM.**

This meeting was webcast. To review the detailed discussions that took place please see the webcast which can be found at: <http://www.buckscc.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>
The webcasts are retained on this website for 6 months. Recordings of any previous meetings beyond this can be requested (contact: democracy@buckscc.gov.uk)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr W Chapple OBE (Chairman), Mr D Dhillon, Ms N Glover, Mr A Huxley, Mr S Lambert, Mr D Martin and Mr D Shakespeare OBE (Vice-Chairman)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr J Chilver, Ms A Colonnese, Ms F Mills, Ms J Moore, Dr J Nethercoat, Mr M Phillips, Mrs K Sutherland and Ms J West

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

There were no apologies. The Chairman welcomed Mr A Huxley to the meeting. Mr Huxley joined the Committee as the UKIP representative, replacing Mr A Stevens.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman declared an interest in Item 13 Green Park Progress report as he was a Trustee of the Adventure Learning Foundation. It was agreed that the Vice-Chairman would chair this particular item.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 13th September and 11th October 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were none.

5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reported that he had written to the Chairman of the TEC Select Committee to ask his Committee to consider the current gully cleaning approach which had been outlined to FPR Members at the September meeting, as part of the 6 month Budget Scrutiny progress report.

Members were also reminded that the Income Generation Inquiry report would be presented to Cabinet on 14th November.

6 BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S APPRENTICESHIPS PROGRAMME

The Chairman welcomed Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources and Mrs Frances Mills, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development to the meeting. The Committee received an overview of the implementation of the new Apprenticeship Levy and the introduction of new targets for public sector bodies to achieve apprenticeship starts of 2.3% of headcount. Members discussed the impact this would have on Buckinghamshire County Council's (BCC) budget and the plans that were being put in place to increase the number of apprenticeships within BCC and within Bucks schools.

The following main points were noted:

- All large employers with a pay bill over £3million would be subject to a levy of 0.5% of their paybill.
- Government had consulted on a proposed 2.3% of headcount for new apprenticeships within public sector bodies but no formal feedback had yet been published. To date, the advice was that this would include local authority maintained schools, although the Local Government Association continued to lobby against the inclusion of schools.
- Biggest challenge would be the impact of the 2.3% headcount target on schools. The HR and OD team had engaged with schools via Schools Forum to advise of the new targets and to begin to establish how the County Council could support schools in recruiting apprentices and accessing funding for their training.
- The push for apprenticeships also offered opportunities – there could be scope to act as a hub for other local authorities in recruiting apprentices and also BCC was involved in a group working on the development of a Social Work apprenticeship, which would enable local authorities to grow their own Social Workers. Both of these opportunities were for the longer term and would require additional resources.
- Currently BCC apprentices were employed via a specialist apprenticeship agency but in order to access the maximum training funds available, it would be advantageous to employ them directly. Therefore the possibility of acting as a hub for other authorities was being investigated.
- In addition to employing new apprentices it was also possible to upskill existing staff by enrolling them onto apprenticeship training.
- Currently there were 63 apprentices in County Hall and only 25 in schools – the target for schools overall would be 230. Roles in schools which could be suitable for apprenticeships needed to be identified as currently they were largely in ICT or Business Administration. It might be possible for Teaching Assistants, for example, to be recognised through an apprenticeship programme, although this might not be suitable for school leavers.
- On completion of entry level apprenticeships, individuals could move on to higher level apprenticeships. Currently these were mainly in the areas of Science, Technology and

Engineering but if Social Work, Legal or HR apprenticeships were successfully developed these would be at a higher level.

- Some BCC apprentices had secured permanent job roles at County Hall.

It was agreed that Frances Mills would provide the following information to Members after the meeting: the name of the Minister to lobby about the schools issue, confirmation as to whether an existing employee on a part-time hours contract could sign up to an apprenticeship and the number of apprentices who had stayed with BCC on completion of their training.

Action: Frances Mills

The Chairman thanked Mr Chilver and Mrs Mills for attending the meeting.

7 RENT-IN-ADVANCE INQUIRY - 12-MONTH UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Mr Martin Phillips, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health, Miss Janice Moore, Assessments and Direct Services Team Manager and Mrs Anna Colonnese, Local Emergency Support Co-ordinator to the meeting. The purpose of the item was to monitor the progress of the implementation of recommendations made by the Rent in Advance Inquiry in November 2015. The Chairman highlighted that an amended version of the report had been submitted to the Committee. It was agreed that following discussions in the meeting, the Chairman and the Committee and Governance Adviser would update the recommendation monitoring report with a RAG status and this would be circulated to the Committee on email for comments.

Action: Chairman/Committee & Governance Adviser

During the discussions the following main points were noted:

- The progress update for Recommendation One referred specifically to a pilot housing project for offenders, although the Inquiry group had aimed this recommendation at the wider group of all those with high level complex needs.
- The original response to Recommendation One mentioned possible funding for such a project from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). It was agreed that Members of the Committee might raise the issue of funding with the PCC at a forthcoming meeting.
- The Cabinet Member also agreed to follow this up with partners at the next Safer and Stronger Bucks Partnership Board.
- Recommendation Two - Agreement had been reached with the Credit Unions and the first £15,000 of funding had been provided. A further £15,000 would be paid in the 2017-18 financial year. The Local Emergency Support Team was meeting with referring agents on 7th December to confirm the process for referring clients to the Credit Union for assistance with rent in advance.
- Recommendation Three – Following review, current staffing levels would be maintained.

The Chairman thanked Mr Phillips, Miss Moore and Mrs Colonnese for attending the meeting.

8 BUDGET SCRUTINY 2017 SCOPE

The Committee considered and agreed the Draft Inquiry Scope for the 2017 Budget Scrutiny Inquiry. Members discussed various ideas regarding preparation of papers and practical arrangements for the meetings in January 2017. A Member suggested that public accountability would be enhanced if questions could be submitted 'live' via Twitter during the meetings. It was agreed that Member Services would liaise with colleagues in the Communications team to discuss how best to facilitate and publicise this opportunity for public involvement.

Action: Committee and Governance Adviser

Subsequent to the meeting, the date for Cabinet to agree the Budget to recommend to County Council was changed and timings in the Outline Project Plan were revised accordingly.

9 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted the Select Committee Work Programme and agreed to hold an informal Work Programme workshop in 2017, once the Budget Scrutiny Inquiry work had been completed.

10 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded for the following item which is exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 because it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

11 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

The Confidential Minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

12 PROPERTY REVIEW

A discussion on the Property Review took place in the exempt session of the meeting.

13 GREEN PARK PROGRESS REPORT

A discussion on the Green Park Progress report took place in the exempt session of the meeting.

14 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

There will be a private briefing for Members of the Committee on 13th December 2016 at 10am in Mezzanine Room 2, County Hall, Aylesbury.

Budget Scrutiny 2017 will be held from Tuesday 10th January to Friday 13th January 2017.

The next formal meeting of the Finance, Performance and Resources Committee will be held on Tuesday 14th March 2017 at 10am.

CHAIRMAN