

Minutes

FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY 14 MARCH 2017, IN LARGE DINING ROOM, JUDGES LODGINGS,
AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.02 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.02 PM.**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Bill Chapple OBE (Chairman), Dev Dhillon, Netta Glover, David Martin and David Shakespeare
OBE (Vice-Chairman)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from Andy Huxley, Steven Lambert and Roger Reed.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st November 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

4 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman thanked Members for their work on the Budget Scrutiny Inquiry and reported that 11 of the Committee's 14 recommendations had been agreed, plus one in part by Cabinet. This had resulted in an amended Budget being agreed by full Council in February.

5 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were none.

6 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources and Mrs Frances Mills, Head of People and Organisational Development to the meeting. The Cabinet Member advised that good progress had been made in this area, with reductions in both staff turnover

and agency costs from 2015-16. Mrs Mills took the Committee through the detail of her report before taking Members' questions. The following main points were noted:

- There had been significant improvement in the recruitment of children's social workers, although retention remained an issue.
- Changes to the IR35 rules might lead to agencies trying to increase their fees, but BCC along with other councils in the region, planned to resist this. It could also result in some staff moving from agency to permanent.
- Exit interviews are undertaken when staff leave the Council, either face to face or online. A list of the most significant reasons for leaving were included in the report and Members highlighted 'Lack of teamwork/cooperation' and 'Poor communication by senior management' as key issues for Senior Managers to address in order to improve retention.
- It was recognised that recruiting relatively inexperienced staff and training them on the job did carry some risk.
- Difficulties remained with the recruitment of Educational Psychologists, although it was hoped that an enhanced recruitment offer would lead to improvements.
- Employee engagement was key to retention. BCC's engagement score of 58% was well above the national average of 33%.

7 INCOME GENERATION UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources and Mr Jonathan Noble, Commercial Director, Business Services Plus to the meeting. The Chairman reminded the Committee that the Income Generation Inquiry report had been presented at Cabinet in December 2016 and all recommendations had been agreed. The Cabinet Member assured the Committee that income generation was a top priority and that he had welcomed the Committee's recommendation which would strengthen work in this area.

Jonathon Noble provided Members with an update on activities which had already been undertaken in response to the Inquiry recommendations. During the presentation and in response to Member's questions, the following main points were noted:

- BCC already generated £85million worth of income, which represented the Council's second largest source of funding after Council Tax. The Medium Term Financial Plan included targets for an additional £9.6million in income from fees and charges.
- Ms Gill Quinton, Managing Director, Business Enterprise and Business Services Plus had been nominated as the One Council Board Income Generation Champion and she now chairs a meeting of Income Generation Champions, officers who had volunteered for this role on behalf of each business unit.
- The Income Generation Champions would work on implementing the Committee's recommendations and in the longer term, would share knowledge and best practice and ensure that a focus on income generation was embedded in each business unit.
- The BSP Commercial team have created and will maintain a central register of external funding opportunities. The register will prevent duplication of effort and enable teams of staff to be assembled to meet bid deadlines. It will also highlight opportunities for joint bids with partners, which are often looked upon more favourably by central government.

- Pump priming investment could be available for income generation projects.
- Each business unit had targets for income generation and a plan to deliver them, which would be closely monitored by the BU boards and Cabinet.
- Other potential income generation opportunities were being investigated, including the possibility of introducing adult care services to self-funding clients at commercial rates. Members commented that Bucks Care had been established with a view to selling services to new clients, but this had not been achieved. Jonathan Noble explained that lessons would be learned from the Bucks Care experience and a detailed business case would be prepared for any proposed new venture.
- Members suggested that pre-application advice for planning applications was something that the Council should introduce.

The Chairman thanked Mr Chilver and Mr Noble for attending the meeting and congratulated the Income Generation Champions for making progress with the Committee's recommendations. It was also noted that a hackathon on commercial activities/income generation was due to be held in the late summer or autumn and the Chairman asked if members of the FPR Select Committee could be invited to attend.

ACTION: Jonathon Noble

8 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee and Governance Adviser led a discussion with Members about possible topics for future Committee Agenda items.

9 BUDGET SCRUTINY 2016 - 12 MONTH UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources and Mr Richard Ambrose, Director of Assurance to the meeting. Mr Ambrose provided Members with a 12 month update on the implementation of the recommendations made in the 2016 Budget Scrutiny Inquiry. Members agreed that the Chairman and the Committee and Governance Adviser would complete the report, detailing the status of each recommendation after the meeting.

Mr Ambrose highlighted the following points:

Recommendation 4 - Governance changes had been made in relation to the Bucks Learning Trust and Adventure Learning Foundation and Bucks Care had now been brought in house. A review of lessons learned from the existing Alternative Delivery Vehicles (ADV) was currently underway.

Recommendation 10 – Following a recommendation by Budget Scrutiny 2017, additional funding has been allocated for gully cleaning.

Recommendation 12 – Changes to Children's Centres will now be considered as part of the wider review into Early Help services, which is one of four key work strands in the Change for Children transformational programme.

Recommendation 14 - A key decision is due to be taken shortly to approve a 5% increase in fees for home to school transport. It was noted that the Budget Scrutiny 2017 had

recommended that the provision of home to school transport should meet national statutory guidelines only.

10 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 4th July 2017 at 10am

11 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the Press and Public be excluded as the following item 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)

12 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 1st November 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

13 PROPERTY REVIEW PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received an update on the progress of the Property Review in exempt session.

CHAIRMAN