

CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the RESOURCES OVERVIEW COMMITTEE held on 2 DECEMBER 2014

PRESENT: Councillor A D Garnett - Chairman
" J L Gladwin - Vice Chairman

Councillors: A K Bacon
S P Berry
D G Meacock
D W Phillips
D Spate
J F Warder
C J Wertheim

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors A J Garth, J S Ryman, C H Spruytenburg, N Stewert, M Vivis and A P Williams

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Mrs I A Darby and M Stannard

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

It was moved by Councillor D W Phillips, seconded by Councillor C J Wertheim and

RESOLVED -

That Councillor A D Garnett be elected Chairman of the Resources Overview Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was moved by Councillor C J Wertheim, seconded by Councillor J F Warder and

RESOLVED -

That Councillor J L Gladwin be elected Vice Chairman of the Resources Overview Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor J L Gladwin was a Member of the Support Services Policy Advisory Group.

Councillor A K Bacon was a Member of Chesham Town Council.

4 TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED –

That the Terms of Reference be noted.

5 FORWARD PLAN

Members reviewed the Work Programme and considered potential topics to review from the 28 Day Notice Forward Plan. There was a request for an update on the Duty to Co-operate with Aylesbury Vale District Council with regard to their Local Plan. It was advised that information could be circulated to Members.

There was interest in the Annual Energy Report. It was advised that this was a factual report on performance only but Councillors wanted to know how money was being spent. The report would be available to the Committee if not already being scrutinized by a Policy Advisory Group.

RESOLVED –

That the Work Programme be noted with additional reports being made available if applicable as discussed.

Note: Councillor Stannard entered the meeting at 6.37 pm.

6 DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2015/16

The draft revenue budget for 2015/16 was shown in detail in the appendices and tables in the report. The Government Revenue Support Grant was expected to be announced later in December 2014, following the Chancellors Autumn Statement. A further reduction in funding was expected in the future. Members were asked to consider whether to reduce the grant to Town Councils and Parishes in line with the reduction in grant funding.

Councillors asked in particular about the recycling credits listed on page 25. It was explained that recycling credit income was higher than the current year budget and that this was expected to continue. Councillors were concerned that this presentation of a saving would not be available in future years. A Member asked how this payment had been used previously and was advised that it contributed to the prior year underspend which allowed additional money to be put into the pension scheme.

It was noted that staff salaries were not keeping up with inflation along with other costs outlined in the report. It was advised that the current proposed pay deals had been advised in reports to the Personnel Committee and the provisions made were close to the actual proposed pay deal.

Overall the budget was considered to be prudent and affordable. The scale of the future potential budget deficit has been reduced to a manageable level but

further savings would still have to be made and were expected in part through joint working.

With regard to the payments to Parishes and Town Councils, it was noted that they had already been warned to expect a reduction in their grant. It was discussed that these cuts would hit some areas harder than others, in particular Chesham Town Council. Other Local Authorities had taken the same steps and some had cut their grant altogether already (including South Bucks District Council). There was general agreement to continue in principle as previously, i.e to reduce the support in line with the reduction in government grant.

That the recommendations contained in the draft Cabinet report be endorsed by the Resources Overview Committee and that the comments of the Committee be forwarded to the Cabinet.

7 TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2014

The trend for low interest rates had continued and so the average return on investments was only 0.63%. The strategy of keeping short-term investments was made to allow a transfer to longer term investments once an upturn in interest rates occurred in the future. It was confirmed that a higher rate of interest could be achieved if there was an appetite for greater risk. It was also noted that there had been a successful transfer to a new bank.

RESOLVED

That the draft Cabinet report on treasury management activity in the quarter July to September 2014 be noted.

8 QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2014/15

The performance of the Council during this period was shown in the tables from page 147 and the key points were highlighted in the report. It was noted that there had been an increase in homelessness during this quarter but there had been some progress with Paradigm making 5 one-bedroom houses available in Amersham for short-term use. Some of the Waste indicators were off-target, particularly customer services due to the large volume of calls received for chargeable green waste. Fly-tipping was not meeting targets for clean-up although this may have been due to incorrect dates being used. Sustainable Development had 6 new indicators, most were on or above target.

Members asked whether the ICT helpdesk was adequately resourced. It was advised that this would be addressed in the current service review. The Green Deal was discussed due to the low take up both in the district and nationally. Councillors were concerned about the Waste indicators and asked if they could have statistics prepared for just the Chiltern area. It was advised that the joint waste committee had decided to present joint figures so none would be available.

There was a question about the large number of planning appeals allowed in this quarter. It was advised that the average figure over the year was still at an acceptable percentage of about 28%.

RESOLVED

That the Quarterly performance indicator report (Q2 2014-15) be noted.

9 STANDING ITEM: JOINT COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT

RESOLVED

That the joint committee progress report be noted.

10 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED –

That under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

11 CHILTERN & WYCOMBE JOINT WASTE CONTRACT

A request had been made by the contractor for additional payments to be made. Following advice, the request was declined. It was possible that the matter would go to mediation or arbitration to resolve the issue.

It was also noted that the contractor was seeking to divest its environmental services division and has begun the legal process to do so by novating contracts.

RESOLVED

That the Resources Overview Committee noted the changing circumstances of the Waste contract.

The meeting ended at 7.59 pm