



Council

Date: 5 October 2015
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Council Chamber
District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe Bucks

Membership

Chairman: Councillor I L McEnnis
Vice Chairman: Councillor M Hussain JP

Councillors: Mrs J A Adey, Mrs S Adoh, K Ahmed, Z Ahmed, M C Appleyard, M Asif, D H G Barnes, Ms A Baughan, S Broadbent, Miss S Brown, H Bull, D J Carroll, M Clarke, Mrs L M Clarke OBE, A D Collingwood, M P Davy, C Etholen, R Farmer, R Gaffney, S Graham, A R Green, G C Hall, M Hanif, M Harris, C B Harriss, M A Hashmi, A E Hill, A Hussain, M Hussain, D A Johncock, Mrs G A Jones, M E Knight, D Knights, Mrs J D Langley, A Lee, Mrs W J Mallen, N B Marshall, H L McCarthy, R Newman, Ms C J Oliver, B E Pearce, G Peart, S K Raja, R Raja, S Saddique, J A Savage, R J Scott, D A C Shakespeare OBE, N J B Teesdale, Mrs J E Teesdale, A Turner, P R Turner, Ms J D Wassell, D M Watson, C Whitehead, R Wilson, L Wood and Ms K S Wood

Fire Alarm - In the event of the fire alarm sounding, please leave the building quickly and calmly by the nearest exit. Do not stop to collect personal belongings and do not use the lifts. Please congregate at the Assembly Point at the corner of Queen Victoria Road and the River Wye, and do not re-enter the building until told to do so by a member of staff.

Agenda

Item		Page
5	QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC Written questions may be asked of the leader or any Cabinet Member, if submitted by 12 noon on Thursday 1 October 2015. Questions will be submitted in the order in which they are received. A questioner will have a maximum of 1 minute to ask a question, and the answer shall not exceed 3 minutes. Any questioner may put one supplementary question without notice within a maximum time	1 - 2

of 1 minute and the answer may not exceed 2 minutes.

6**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS****3 - 6**

Questions to the Leader or any Cabinet Members must be submitted by 12 noon on Thursday 1 October 2015. Questions will be taken first from leaders of the political parties in order of number of Members.

Other Members will be called upon in the order in which questions have been received. Every member asking an oral question is permitted to ask one supplementary question without notice provided that it does not introduce any new matter. The appropriate Member will respond to any questions remaining unanswered at the expiry of 30 minutes in writing.

Any questions remaining unanswered after 30 minutes will be answered within 10 working days in writing after the meeting by the appropriate Member and appended to the minutes of the meeting.

10**AUDIT COMMITTEE****7 - 12**

To receive the minutes of and consider any recommendations from the following meeting:

Audit Committee

24 September 2015

**For further information, please contact Iram Malik on 01494 421204,
iram_malik@wycombe.gov.uk**

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 5 October 2015

AGENDA ITEM

Questions from Members of the Public

1. Question from Mr T Snaith to the Leader of the Council

As a result of the Conservative Government austerity measures we are hearing about National and Local charities and support organisations who are getting into difficulties and closing.

In High Wycombe this Conservative cabinet has a record of abdicating responsibility to its partners and charities, however often without the necessary funding.

We have seen this conservative council successively cut funding to these organisations over many years. This has been happening even before we were faced with the problems being created today. This council expects its partners and charities to pick up the fallout from the cutbacks.

Do you agree it's time to say no to austerity in High Wycombe?

To deliver this what more can this council do to step forward and support its partners and the charity sector through these difficult times?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council).

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WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 5 October 2015

AGENDA ITEM

Questions from Members

1. Question from Councillor R Raja to the Leader of the Council

The Household Voter Registration system was replaced by the Individual Electoral Registration system in 2014. Under the previous system the "head of the household" was required to register all residents of the household who were eligible. Under the Individual Electoral Registration individuals are required to register themselves, as well as provide their National Insurance Number and date of birth on the application form.

Would the Leader of the Council tell us as to what percentage of eligible voters have registered so far and whether the new voter registration requirements are acting as a barrier to registration? And what action is the council taking or proposing to take to encourage eligible voters to register so that they can exercise their democratic right to vote?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council)

2. Question from Councillor M Knight to the Leader of the Council

Over the last year there have been a number of violent attacks in Wycombe involving knives. Nationally the carrying of knives is reported to be on the rise and in the past successful amnesties have been held in Wycombe, although the most recent one appears to have been back in 2006.

High Wycombe is generally a peaceful and friendly place to live, and I acknowledge the hard work that agencies have put in to improve public safety, particularly in the town centre through the Purple Flag award. However, would the leader of the council join with me in calling on Thames Valley Police to have another widespread knife and gun amnesty, in the light of recent incidents?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council)

3. Question from Councillor B Pearce to the Cabinet Member for Community

Does the member agree with me that it would be far more beneficial to keep the close circuit television response centre within Wycombe District, as it is at the moment. Do you agree with me that it would be more beneficial to keep this operation local, not just because of the problems with vandalism and antisocial behaviour but also the threat of terrorism that we must all be vigilant against?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Adey (Cabinet Member for Community)

4. Question from Councillor S Graham to the Cabinet Member for Housing

It is my understanding that WDC transferred about 6000 homes to Red Kite in December 2011 and at the time, it was promised that the Council would hold accurate and up-to date information on the delivery and performance of Red Kite against the promises made to Council tenants.

Would the Cabinet member for Housing please tell us as to how many quarterly monitoring meetings have been held with Red Kite, and when they took place? (The quarterly meetings were laid down in the contract between Red Kite and WDC).

Could you also tell me where ex- Council tenants can find the reports of these monitoring meetings so they can see if the promises made to them by WDC have been kept?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Langley (Cabinet Member for Housing)

5. Question from Councillor Ms A Baughan to the Cabinet Member for Community

I recently attended the excellent and informative evening session at Cressex School with regards to child sexual exploitation. There is a multi-disciplinary panel working to educate and inform parents, those working with young people and young people themselves. It is something we all should be aware of in our community. I would ask how Wycombe District Council can further contribute to this work?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Adey (Cabinet Member for Community)

6. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Leader of the Council

Can we be told what involvement Wycombe District Council will be having in the future redevelopment of the Wycombe General Hospital site?

There is always a good deal of speculation about this and it would be helpful to know the official position.

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council)

7. Question from Councillor B Pearce to the Leader of the Council

Does the leader agree with me that it is very disturbing to hear of calls and rumours for various parishes within the town of High Wycombe. Do you agree with me that this would be absolutely disastrous for the town and it would be much better to have a town council than individual parishes and it would be a good idea to look into the possibility of having a town council? Do you agree with me that it would be the lesser of 2 evils?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council)

8. Question from Councillor M Knight to the Cabinet Member for Housing

Do you agree with me that it is essential for the Cabinet member, and indeed all councillors, to have access to the latest figures for housing need in the district?

Do you also agree that given the number of our residents who are struggling with housing this information is in the public interest and should be regularly published?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Langley (Cabinet Member for Housing)

9. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Planning

Would it be possible for more care to be taken of Wycombe's Ancient Monumenet, the Hospital of St John the Baptist 1180 AD. This ancient hospital needs better signposting, information boards and landscape maintenance. Would you agree?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor D Johncock (Cabinet Member for Planning)

10. Question from Councillor M Knight to the Cabinet Member for Community

What is the council doing to tackle the growing number of Signal Crayfish, particularly in The Dyke on the Rye in High Wycombe?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Adey (Cabinet Member for Community)

11. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Leader of the Council

Would the Leader agree that the work done locally to raise funds and provide essential items to refugees highlights the generosity and hard work of Wycombe people?

These items and funds are supporting people in Calais, Greece, Syria and elsewhere and this is vital work with the winter approaching.

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council)

12. Question from Councillor M Knight to the Leader of the Council

Would the Leader of the Council agree that the redesign and recent re-opening of the Quaker Peace Garden in High Wycombe has been a great success and all those involved should be congratulated?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council)

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Audit Committee Minutes

Date: 24 September 2015

Time: 7.10 - 8.35 pm

PRESENT: Councillor M C Appleyard (in the Chair)

Councillors G C Hall, A Lee, Ms C J Oliver and C Whitehead, N J B Teesdale

Also present: Councillor D M Watson, Mr C Baston and Ms M Grindley
(External Auditors, Ernst & Young)

15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Saddique and G Peart.

16 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of Interest.

18 APPROVAL OF THE 2014/15 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Financial Services Manager presented the Statement of Accounts for 2014/15, including comparative figures from 2013/14 and the Higginson Park Trust Statement of Accounts for 2014/15. During the detailed presentation the Committee were taken through key figures in the Accounts, and were asked to recommend that the Higginson Part Trust Accounts proceed to Council for approval as the Council is the charity's sole trustee.

The Committee were asked to note the Annual Governance Statement for 2014/15 which was included in the report. The Statement had been signed by the Leader and Chief Executive.

An addendum to the Statement of Accounts was presented to the Committee as an adjustment to the accounts had been made following the circulation of the accounts for the meeting. This was due to a misclassification between debtors and cash accounting which required correction. The Statement of Accounts had been subsequently updated to reflect the misclassification.

The Financial Services Manager, summarised the following key factors:

- The General Fund surplus for the year was £984k and this had been reported to Cabinet on 21 September 2015.
- Major Projects expenditure of £25.6m of which £23.6m was funded by capital receipts
- The Pensions Liability had increased from £45m in 2013/14 to £60m in 2014/15. This was mostly due to a fall in Corporate Bond Yields by 2% during the year.
- Depreciation of assets, particularly the existing Sports Centre at Handy Cross. Assets had also increased in value following expenditure on the new Asset Under Construction on the Handy Cross site.

The Committee considered the core financial statements featured within the Accounts document, these were the Movements in Reserves Statement, Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow Statement, and Collection Fund.

It was noted that the Higginson Park Charity Accounts had been independently audited and had been included in the Group accounts which had been audited by Ernst & Young. The Committee then considered the External Auditor's ISA 260 Audit Results Report before approving the accounts.

Recommended: That the Higginson Park Trust Annual Report and Accounts for 2014/15 recommended to Council for approval.

RESOLVED: That (i) the Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2015 be approved; and

(ii) the signed Annual Governance Statement for 2014/15 alongside the Statement of Accounts be noted.

19 EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S ISA 260 AUDIT RESULTS REPORT

External Auditor, Mr C Baston, presented Ernst & Young's Audit Results Report and findings from the 2014/2015 audit. The Committee were informed that the auditors proposed to issue an unqualified opinion on the financial statements. The audit results had demonstrated that the Council had prepared its financial statements adequately.

He commented that Appendix A of the report detailed the corrected audit misstatements that had been identified during the audit. These related to the presentation of the depreciation of assets, and a classification error between debtors and cash. The Head of Financial Services confirmed that these had been corrected and that there were no unadjusted errors to the accounts.

RESOLVED: That the Auditor's Results Report be noted.

20 TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The report before the Committee presented the results from the skills and knowledge self-assessment process that had been undertaken by Audit Committee Members. It was noted that further work was required to increase the awareness of key areas which were within the remit of the Audit Committee.

The Committee was informed that the assessment had identified that further clarification was required on the following areas:

- An understanding of the main areas of fraud risk that the organisation was exposed to. Knowledge of the principles of good fraud risk management practice. Knowledge of the organisation's arrangements for tackling fraud.
- Knowledge of the six principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Good Governance Framework and the requirements of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS). Knowledge of the local code of governance.
- An awareness of the key principles of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the Local Government Application Note. Knowledge of the arrangements for delivery of the internal audit service in the authority and how the role of the head of internal audit was fulfilled.
- Knowledge of the Seven Principles of Public Life. Knowledge of the authority's key arrangements to uphold ethical standards for both members and staff. Knowledge of the whistleblowing arrangements in the authority.

The Committee concluded that training could be provided on the aforementioned areas before each Audit Committee meeting.

RESOLVED: That (i) the results of the self-assessment Core Knowledge and Skills Framework, undertaken by members of the Audit Committee be noted; and

(ii) Training sessions be arranged before each Audit Committee meeting.

21 IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee were provided with an update on the progress of the implementation of recommendations that had arisen from the final reports issued during 2014/2015. Mike Howard, Audit Risk & Fraud Manager, provided details of the seven internal audit recommendations which had not been implemented, and the progress of those recommendations.

He confirmed that if recommendations were not implemented then Heads of Service could be asked to attend the Audit Committee to provide an explanation to the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report on the Implementation of Internal Audit Recommendations be noted

22 ANNUAL REVIEW OF ANTI-FRAUD AND ANTI-CORRUPTION POLICY

The Committee's approval was sought to approve the Anti-fraud and Corruption Policy for 2015. The revised Policy had been amended to reflect the different offences under the Fraud Act, and the transfer of responsibility to the Department for Works and Pension for the investigation and enforcement of housing benefit fraud.

The Committee felt that a letter should be written to the Secretary of State to query the level of fraud work being pursued by the Department of Works and Pensions following the transfer of responsibilities.

RESOLVED: That (i) the 2015 Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy as attached at Appendix A of the report be approved; and

(ii) a letter be sent to the Secretary of State with regards to the level of fraud work by the Department of Works and Pensions be pursued.

23 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15 AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

The Committee had before it the annual report produced for the end of the financial year in respect of Treasury Management as required by the CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice, which has been adopted by the Council. The report detailed the treasury management activities and performance for 2014/2015.

Members were informed that Investec Asset Management had withdrawn from providing fund management services to the Council from July 2015 the impact of this on treasury investment limits had been detailed in the report.

RESOLVED: That (i) the treasury management report for 2014/15 be noted; and

(ii) an amendment to the investment limits in the 2015/16 treasury strategy following the withdrawal of Investec Asset Management from providing fund management services in July 2015 be noted.

24 ISSUES LOG

The issue log before the Committee identified key recommendations and improvements that the Audit Committee had made through its governance process.

The four issues listed were discussed, and following consideration of the information sheet on Service Performance, it was agreed that in future, the performance information be presented to the Committee as a report which should include details of the percentage targets.

It was noted that issues logged with regards to undertaking a training needs assessment, and training on the Statement of Accounts for Audit Committee Members had been completed.

With regards to providing a training session on the Treasury Management Strategy, it was noted that training would be arranged before the Strategy was set in January 2016.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

25 AUDIT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Audit Committee Work Programme as appended to the agenda was reviewed by the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Audit Committee work programme be approved with the inclusion of a report on the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, Audit Charter and Effectiveness of Internal Audit

26 INFORMATION SHEETS

RESOLVED: That the following Information Sheets be noted:

02/2015: Assessing the Effectiveness of the External Audit Process; and

03/2015: Performance Measures 2015/16.

Chairman

The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:

- Steve Richardson - Head of Finance and Commercial
- Mike Howard - Audit, Risk and Fraud Manager
- Nisar Visram - Financial Services Manager
- Catherine MacKenzie - Principal Democratic Services Officer