



WYCOMBE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Queen Victoria Road
High Wycombe
Bucks HP11 1BB

Supplementary Council Agenda

Date: 3 April 2017
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Council Chamber
District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe, Bucks

You are hereby summoned to attend the Meeting of the Council to be held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe on 3 April 2017 at 6.30 pm to consider the business set out in the Agenda below.

Ms K Satterford
Chief Executive

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.

Supplementary Agenda

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5	QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC	1
	Written questions may be asked of the Leader or any Cabinet Member if submitted to the Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services no later than 12 noon on Monday 27 March 2017. Questions will be submitted in the order in which they were 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 of 1 minute and the answer may not exceed 2 minutes.	
6	QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS	2 - 4
	Questions to the Leader or any Cabinet Members must be submitted by 12 noon Monday 27 March 2017. Questions shall be	

taken first from the Group Leaders of the political parties who shall be entitled to ask an initial Leader`s question, including the right to adopt another Member`s question from his/her group, of which written notice shall have been given to the Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services prior to the meeting.

The order of questions shall then permit the first question from each other Councillor to be asked before any subsequent questions from the same Councillor. One question will be taken in turn from the same Councillor unless there are no other questions to be asked.

Every Member asking an oral question is permitted to ask one supplementary question without notice provided that it is not substantially the same as a question that was put to a Council meeting during the past six months.

The appropriate Member will respond to any questions remaining unanswered at the expiry of 30 minutes in writing. Any question 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

5 - 10

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

Audit Committee 23 March 2017

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

Agenda Item 5

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 3 April 2017

AGENDA ITEM 5

Questions from Members of the Public

1. Question from Mr M Foyle-York to the Leader of the Council

In the WDC Unitary Authority proposal, mental health was not given adequate coverage.

Can this council promise myself and the rest of the public that they will give issues surrounding mental health as much attention as physical health, especially when so many of our services would be up in the air with a switch to a unitary model?

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

Agenda Item 6

WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 3 April 2017

AGENDA ITEM 6

Questions from Members

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

Wycombe District Council seems fond of paying consultants for consultancies and feasibility studies, which range from commissioning the report for a two unitary authority option for Buckinghamshire, (with the WDC share of the cost being £25K), to the consultations about the new cemetery in Hazlemere and now the proposed £100K for a feasibility study about the establishment of a heavy rail line between High Wycombe and Bourne End.

Would the Leader like to tell us how much has been spent by WDC on consultations and feasibility studies in the last two years and how many such exercises cost more than £5,000?

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.

Five years on from the transfer of the District's housing to Red Kite would you consider the move to be a success and in particular what do you think the benefits have been for the wider community?

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

3. Question from Councillor M Clarke to the Cabinet Member for Planning.

The Bucks Free Press on 15 March 2017 ran a story on a consultation on the feasibility of reopening the High Wycombe to Bourne End branch line for heavy rail. It indicates that this consultation will cost £100k to be paid for in two equal tranches from CIL monies in this and the next year.

What steps have been or are to be taken before committing to spend £100k of CIL money to ensure that the appropriate authorities are content with the reinstatement of level crossings across the A4155 Cores End Road and the A4155 Station Road?

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

4. Question from Councillor B Pearce to the Cabinet Member for Environment.

I am assuming the reason why the ANPR system at Wycombe District Council's car parks had to be abandoned was because the DVLA would not pass on the relevant information of car ownership to the Council.

Do you agree with me this seems to be a very peculiar state of affairs when information cannot be passed onto local authorities which are responsible and accountable, but can be passed on to unscrupulous and ruthless car park operators?

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Teesdale (Cabinet Member for Environment).

5. Question from Councillor Mrs L Clarke OBE to the Cabinet Member for Environment.

Litter is becoming more and more an unsightly problem both in the town and on the kerbside, not to mention fly tipping.

Can we be told whether the contract for litter collection has been changed as it appears this is not as thorough as it once was?

There appears to a general lack of care and pride into the District's surroundings.

Verbal reply to be given by Councillor Mrs J Teesdale (Cabinet Member for Environment).

6. Question from Councillor M Hanif to the Cabinet Member for Housing.

When WDC sold off the housing stock to Red Kite we were assured that Castlefield Regeneration Project was a top priority. This project has been delayed with one setback after another with no sign of any real progress in the near future.

Is this a failure on the part of Red Kite, and what is WDC doing to ensure that this much needed housing project does take off, to address the serious housing problems in the town?

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

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

The Cabinet recently allocated £100,000 to make a final assessment of the feasibility of the Bourne End to High Wycombe rail link. I assume that this was in consultation with Bucks County Council Officers who are working on a cycle route.

Please inform us of how the £100,000 will be spent and whether it could include a cycleway from London Road to Wycombe Railway station in the meantime?

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

8. Question from Councillor S Graham to the Cabinet Member for Community.

According to a recent study, NHS cuts were responsible for 30,000 excess deaths in 2015 an unprecedented rise in mortality. But despite these shocking statistics it is reported that the service has been asked to make another £22.bn worth in cuts.

Can the Cabinet Member tell me how many of these excess deaths in 2015 were reported for High Wycombe; and if any, whether the excess deaths in Wycombe were around the national average?

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

9. Question from Councillor K Ahmed to the Cabinet Member for Planning.

Thames Water has been fined a record £20m after pumping 1.9 billion litres of untreated sewage into the River Thames. This follows spills in 2013 and 2014, resulting in the deaths of countless fish and birds.

The Cabinet Member will be aware that Judge Francis Sheridan in Aylesbury Crown Court was compelled to observe that it was a "shocking and disgraceful state of affairs" and that the scale of the problem was such that it must have been known up the chain of command. Will the Cabinet Member tell us whether or not the stretch of the river passing through WDC has recovered from this environmental disaster and in the light of this can she reassure us whether the sewage infrastructure at little Marlow will be able to cope with the proposed additional housing proposed in Wycombe, Bourne End and Wooburn Green?

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

10. Question from Councillor M Hanif to the Cabinet Member for Housing.

It was reported in Feb 2012 that Red Kite had employed 13 residents at a rate of £12 per hour to act as watchdogs to ensure that the promised £100 million worth of upgrades to their acquired council housing stock was carried out.

Five years on, I would like to ask the cabinet member if she is able to confirm if these tenants were successful watchdogs and if not what role did WDC play during this time assuming that the tenants are no longer employed and the upgrades have still not been completed along with some other promised projects?

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

Audit Committee Minutes

Date: 23 March 2017

Time: 7.00 - 8.20 pm

PRESENT: Councillor M C Appleyard (in the Chair)

Councillors S Saddique, A Lee, Ms C J Oliver, G Peart and G C Hall, R J Scott

Also present: Sue Gill (External Auditor, Ernst & Young)
Councillor David Watson

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor N Teesdale.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 HEALTH AND SAFETY WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18

The Committee considered the Health and Safety Work Programme for 2017/18.

It was reported that progress against the 2016/17 work programme was largely completed and the Council remained a relatively low risk organisation. Work to be highlighted in the 2017/18 work programme included; the need to review site security arrangements in light of the recent attack in Westminster, the potential for health & safety risks in WDC premises (e.g. Booker Depot and Saunderton Lodge), reviewing the Health & Safety intranet web pages, and reviewing the Service Level Agreement with Bucks County Council.

It was noted that the security arrangements review would include all public areas in the Council's buildings.

RESOLVED: That the Health and Safety Work Programme for 2017/18 be noted.

5 2016/17 SERVICE PERFORMANCE: Q3 (OCTOBER - DECEMBER)

The Committee were provided with an update on a selection of the corporate performance measures for Q3 (October – December).

Information was provided on 19 Level 1 Measures identified by the Audit Committee which included base data as appropriate to put the percentage outturns in context. The Committee specifically considered six targets that were identified 'red'; more than 5% away from target.

During the discussion Members made a number of points and received clarification on a number of queries as follows:

- Homelessness: It was noted that assisting households into private rented properties had become increasingly challenging due to the rise in market rents and this was a problem nationally. Also London borough councils had offered large incentives to landlords to accept clients; however in response WDC offered a good service.
- Sickness absence: There had been a seasonal increase in quarters 3 and 4. It was noted that this had been discussed at length at the Personnel and Development Committee.
- Planning appeals: If targets continued not to be met then an officer from Planning would be invited to a future Committee meeting to provide an explanation.
- Household waste: Data was not yet finalised however amounts collected and recycled were expected to be on target.
- Customer Service Centre: Members considered the number of calls answered within 20 seconds and recommended the current target be increased.

RESOLVED: That the 2016/17 Service Performance Q3 (October – December) be noted.

6 RED KITE UPDATE

The Committee received a report which provided an update on Red Kite performance following the transfer of housing stock in December 2011.

The Housing Services Manager reported that according to the information provided by Red Kite they have completed all 109 promises made to tenants and residents prior to the 5 year 'deadline' as per the offer document. It was noted that regarding the Castlefield Regeneration residents had been consulted with and this was now at the pre-planning stage.

The Committee noted this information but were concerned at the accountability regarding the promises made and how these could be verified. It was noted that only the financial arrangements could be audited and Red Kite were reportable to the Homes and Community Agency. It was suggested that Red Kite board members could be invited to the meeting to provide information and that Red Kite be requested to verify the schedule of improvements made as set out in the agreement.

RESOLVED:

- i) That Red Kite be contacted to confirm the schedule of improvements made to properties as set out in the agreement.
- ii) That the Red Kite Performance Update be noted.

7 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Policy and the overall RIPA performance of the Council over the last year. The Principal Solicitor reported that there had been no RIPA activity at the Council since 2014 however the compliance arrangements for RIPA were inspected on 28 November 2016 by His Honour Brian Baker of the Office of Surveillance Commissioners (OSC). The outcome of the inspection had been positive with only three changes to the RIPA policy recommended. These were as follows:

- 4.9 - References and hyperlinks have been added to provide direct readers to the 2014 Home Office and the OSC Procedures.
- 6.15 - This clause has been amended to explain the risks regarding the use of social media and potential dangers that Officers, while investigating, arriving into potential RIPA territory.
- To remove the Corporate Director as an 'Authorised Officer' to maintain the independent supervisory role of the Senior Responsible Officer.

In response to a Member query it was noted that if Council officers were openly investigating or enforcing then this would not fall under the RIPA regulations as it would be considered open surveillance.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the removal of the Corporate Director as an 'Authorised Officer' highlighted in Appendix A be noted.
- ii) That the proposed amendments to the Council's RIPA Policy and Procedures highlighted in Appendix B to the report be approved.
- iii) That the present position with regards to the use of RIPA be noted.

8 CERTIFICATION OF GRANTS AND CLAIMS

The Committee received the Ernst and Young Certification of Grants and Claims Annual Report 2015-16. It was noted that no recommendations for action had been identified in the report.

The Revenues and Benefits Manager provided an explanation on the thresholds set by DWP for Local Authority errors and the value of these errors. It was reported that the extrapolated value of the errors had taken Wycombe over the DWP threshold and this could reduce the housing subsidy up to £400,000. It was noted that the Revenues and Benefit department had been at the forefront of government changes with an increase in work load and significant reduction in funding. Also staff sickness had been a factor in the ability to process work within set targets.

A number of actions had been put in place which included: a dedicated checking regime, access to external resources during peak periods, additional training, continued management of sickness and reviewing resourcing levels.

In response to a Members query it was noted that some housing benefit overpayments were recovered from future payments made to individuals.

RESOLVED: That the EY Certification of Grants and Claims Annual Report 2015-16 be noted.

9 PRESENTATION ON THE NEW ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Committee received a presentation on the new Annual Governance Statement.

The Audit, Risk & Fraud Manager advised the Committee of the changes and challenges of the new governance framework. It was noted that a report on the new draft Annual Governance Statement would be provided at the next meeting.

Members noted that the Whistleblowing Policy and any whistleblowing incidents were under the remit of the Personnel and Development Committee. It was suggested that a report be brought to the next meeting of the Audit Committee regarding these arrangements in order to determine whether the Audit Committee's terms of reference required amendment to reflect the future involvement.

It was also noted that the terms of reference would need to be amended to reflect compliance with the Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016. The Audit Risk & Fraud Manager would consult with Democratic Services to arrange this amendment.

It was noted that the presentation would be circulated to the Committee members for information.

RESOLVED:

- i) That a report be brought to the June meeting of the Audit Committee regarding the Whistleblowing Policy arrangements.
- ii) That the terms of reference be amended to reflect the Delivery Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016.

10 PROPOSED INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAMME 2017/18

The Committee received a report which presented the proposed Internal Audit programme for 2017-18. It was noted that the programme had been compiled after taking into account the following contributions:

- Areas of interest from the Chief Executive, the Corporate Director, the Council's S151 Officer and the Heads of Service;
- Areas of interest as determined by the Audit, Risk and Fraud Manager;
- The contribution from members of the Audit Committee.
- The Strategic Risk Register was used as this provided a useful reference point as regards risk and control.

The Audit, Risk & Fraud Manager noted that a report on the implementation of the recommendations would be provided to members in September.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Internal Audit programme for 2017/18 be agreed.
- ii) The audit programme be reviewed half-yearly and reported as part of the Audit, Risk & Fraud Manager's half yearly report.

11 AUDIT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Audit Committee work programme as appended to the agenda was reviewed by the Committee.

A report on the Whistleblowing Policy arrangements would be brought to the June meeting for consideration.

It was noted that the draft Statement of Accounts for 2017/18 would be brought to Committee in May 2018 and a special meeting would need to be arranged for the final sign off in July 2018.

RESOLVED: That the forward work programme be noted and updated as above.

12 INFORMATION SHEETS

RESOLVED: That the following Information Sheets be noted.

- i) 02/2017 Homelessness – Customer Journey.

ii) 03/2017 Revenues and Benefits Information.

13 CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

The Chairman noted that The Head of Finance and Commercial, Steve Richardson, was leaving Wycombe District Council and this would be his last Audit Committee meeting.

The Committee thanked Steve for his quality of work, guidance and advice and wished him well for the future.

Chairman

The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:

Jemma Durkan	- Senior Democratic Services Officer
Steve Richardson	- Head of Finance and Commercial
Mike Howard	- Audit, Risk and Fraud Manager
Brian Daly	- Housing Services Manager
Aisha Bi	- Policy Officer
Paul Spencer	- Shared Support Services Manager
Catherine Herris-Smith	- Principal Solicitor
Andy Green	- Revenues and Benefits Manager