

Minutes of the Meeting of the AUDIT, CRIME & DISORDER AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held on 23 June 2015

PRESENT -

Councillor Clive Smitheram (Chairman); Councillor David Reeve (Vice-Chairman); Councillors Steve Bridger, Kate Chinn, Robert Foote, Tina Mountain (as nominated substitute for Councillor Alex Clarke), Peter O'Donovan, Humphrey Reynolds, David Wood and Tella Wormington (as nominated substitute for Councillor George Crawford)

Absent: Councillors Alex Clarke and George Crawford

In Attendance: Councillor Vince Romagnuolo, Inspector Jackie Elkins (Surrey Police) (Items 1-4) and Lorna Raynes (Baker Tilly Risk Advisory Services LLP) (Items 1-6)

Officers present: Kathryn Beldon (Director of Finance and Resources), Doug Earle (Head of Corporate Risk), Margaret Jones (Scrutiny Officer), Gillian McTaggart (Corporate Risk & Governance Manager) (Items 1-7), Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Officer), Kelvin Shooter (Community Safety & Projects Officer) (Items 1-4) and Simon Young (Head of Legal and Democratic Services)

1 QUESTION TIME

No questions were asked or had been submitted by members of the public.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee held on 9 April 2015 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by Councillors in items on this agenda.

4 COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP 2014/15 END OF YEAR REPORT

The Committee received a report informing it of the work of the Epsom and Ewell Community Safety Partnership (CSP) for the year 2014/15.

The Committee noted the budgetary and funding position of the Partnership. Funding was provided to the CSP through annual contributions from Surrey

County Council and Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, and from individual grants from the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). It was noted that the PCC did not provide an annual contribution to the funding of the Partnership, but made grant funding available for specific activities and projects. A recent grant which the CSP had successfully applied for had provided funding for two off-road bikes for use in addressing issues on the Longmead estate.

The Committee noted that the Partnership's annual expenditure exceeded its income, and that its activities were partly funded through use of its working balance. Officers informed the Committee that if the current level of funding continued, the Partnership would not be able to resource any intervention work in 4-5 years' time.

The potential to work in tandem with neighbouring CSPs to address funding pressures had been considered by the Partnership, but it had been identified that this would not reduce costs, and that the issues faced by the Epsom and Ewell area were not in common with those of neighbouring CSPs.

The Partnership's budget retained a £10,000 allocation for support of a Domestic Homicide Review, should one be necessary within the Borough. Officers informed the Committee that should this budget not be available from the CSP, it was likely that the Borough Council would be required to fund such a Review if one was necessary.

Following consideration of the report, the Committee noted the work and expenditure of the CSP over the 2014/15 financial year.

5 INTERNAL AUDIT - MONITORING REPORT

The Committee received a report summarising progress against the Audit Plan for 2014/15.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- Property Maintenance and Post Implementation Review of CRM Audit reports. The Committee noted that these reports were still in draft form, and would not be presented to the Committee until finalised by the Auditor.
- Payroll Audit report. The Committee was informed that the Council was taking action to address the issues identified in the Auditor's Payroll report. It was noted that the issues raised by the Auditor included items related to BACS payments and the documentation of controls.
- Procurement Audit report. The Committee was informed that Officers would be undertaking a health check of procurement arrangements in the next few weeks, with a result by the end of July 2015.

- Procurement arrangements – Agency staff. The Committee was informed that a report regarding procurement arrangements for agency staff would be presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 24 June 2015.

6 INTERNAL AUDIT ASSURANCE REPORT 2014/15

The Committee received a report presenting the Internal Audit Annual Report 2014/15, and a review of the performance of Internal Audit for the year.

The Committee considered the following matters:

- Payroll Audit report. The Head of Corporate Risk informed the Committee that Officers reviewed payroll processes frequently, and that BACS payment authorisation procedures had recently been revised in accordance with the Auditor's recommendations. The Council operated a payroll Bureau, which provided Payroll services to Mole Valley and Tandridge District Councils, and officers in the department were learning each other's duties to increase service resilience.

7 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2014/15

The Committee received a report seeking its formal approval to the Annual Governance Statement 2014/15 and the arrangements made for its preparation.

The Committee noted the following corrections to typographical errors in the Annual Governance Statement attached as the Annexe to the report:

- Paragraph 3 (page 1) should have read - "This statement explains how Epsom and Ewell has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of the Account and Audit (England) Regulations **2011** and accompanies the 2014-15 Final Accounts." (amended text in Bold and Underlined).
- The date for item no. 1 of the table in paragraph 9 (page 5) should have read: "March **2016**" (amended text in Bold and Underlined).
- The first bullet point within the table at the top of page 3 should have read: "The Council has in place an approved Whistleblowing Policy for investigating complaints, **and** established anti-fraud and corruption arrangements." (amended text in Bold and Underlined).
- The third bullet point within the table at the top of page 4 should have read: "Performance management reports are taken ~~place~~ to **the** relevant ~~the~~ policy committees and the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee over the course of the year. Based on the information provided during the year and reviews of data quality, adequate controls are in place." (amended text Struck-through and in Bold and Underlined).

- The fifth bullet point within the table at the top of page 4 should have read: Annual Service Plans are monitored and updated by the relevant Committee.” (amended text in Bold and Underlined).

Following a question from a Member of the Committee regarding the status of the project to redevelop land at Upper High Street, it was noted that the project was currently paused due to matters outside the Council’s control.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- Confirmed the adequacy of the arrangements made for preparing the Annual Governance Statement;
- Agreed that the final version of the Annual Governance Statement be approved by the Strategy and Resources Committee, subject to the correction of the typing errors detailed above.

8 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT: PROGRESS REPORT FOUR 2014/15

The Committee received a report setting out performance against the Policy Committees’ actions as at the end of the 2014/15 financial year, and highlighting those actions which had been ‘rolled forward’ to the 2015/16 year, or ‘signed-off’.

The Committee noted the targets for 2014/15 which had been ‘rolled-forward’ to 2015/16 or ‘signed-off’, and considered the following matters:

- Reason for ‘signing-off’ actions. The Committee requested that in future reports the broad reason for ‘signing-off’ each ‘signed-off’ action be given.
- Review of Performance Management System. The Committee was informed by the Director of Finance and Resources that the Council’s Performance Management system would be reviewed once the New Corporate Plan had been agreed. This would enable the system to be amended to best suit the structure of the objectives contained within the Plan.
- Progress on refurbishment of Horton Chapel. The Committee noted that a report regarding Horton Chapel would be presented to the next meeting of the Strategy & Resources Committee.

9 WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

The Committee received a report asking it to agree its work programme for 2015/16.

The Committee considered and agreed its work programme as detailed at Annexe 1 to the report. The Committee also agreed to appoint the following Members to three separate task groups to undertake reviews into services as follows:

- Review of the administrative arrangements for publicising and determining planning applications. Membership: Councillors David Reeve, Humphrey Reynolds and Clive Smitheram. It was noted that a report from this task group was anticipated to be presented to the Meeting of the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee on 4 February 2016.
- Review of the Council's Social Centres. Membership: Councillors Kate Chinn, Robert Foote, David Reeve, and Clive Smitheram. It was agreed to co-opt a member of the Strategy and Resources Committee nominated by that Committee's Chairman to this task group. It was noted that a report from this task group was anticipated to be presented to a Special Meeting of the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee on 6 October 2015.

Note: following the meeting it was confirmed that the Member of the Strategy and Resource Committee nominated by its Chairman to be co-opted by this task group was Councillor Tony Axelrod.

- Review of the Routecall service. Councillors Steve Bridger, David Reeve, and Clive Smitheram. It was agreed to co-opt a member of the Strategy and Resources Committee nominated by that Committee's Chairman to this task group. It was noted that a report from this task group was anticipated to be presented to a Special Meeting of the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee on 6 October 2015.

Note: following the meeting it was confirmed that the Member of the Strategy and Resource Committee nominated by its Chairman to be co-opted by this task group was Councillor Richard Baker.

10 CORPORATE EQUALITY SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT, 2014/15

The Committee received a report presenting the Corporate Equality Scheme Annual Report 2014/15. The Committee did not identify any areas of concern within the report.

11 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE USE OF DELEGATED POWERS

In accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation to Officers, the Committee received a report setting out significant decisions taken by officers under delegated powers since 20 May 2014. The Committee was informed that Delegated Authority Decision Form 424 was not recorded in the Annexe to the report. The Chairman had discussed this matter with Officers and informed the Committee that he had been assured that this was not a matter for concern.

In response to a question from a Member of the Committee, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services informed the Committee that all decisions detailed within the report and Annexe had been authorised by the Chief Executive. Following the recent management restructure of the Council, the procedure for authorising significant decisions taken by officers under delegated powers would

be reviewed. The Committee was informed that one possible outcome of this review was that authorisation might be permitted by either the Chief Executive or Director of Finance and Resources in future.

Note: following the meeting Officers confirmed that Delegated Authority Decision Form 424 (referred to above) related to the purchase of 2 Shopmobility Scooters. This decision had been reported to Councillors in the Members Briefing document circulated on 30 May 2014.

12 OUTSTANDING REFERENCES

The Committee received and noted its outstanding references. The Committee was informed that a report regarding Information Governance would be presented to its November 2015 meeting. The Committee was informed that this report had initially been scheduled for the November 2014 meeting of the Committee, but had been delayed in order to enable it to detail the significant amount of work which had been undertaken relating to the issue over the past year.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 9.00 pm

COUNCILLOR CLIVE SMITHERAM (CHAIRMAN)