

MINUTES of the meeting of the **CORPORATE OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.00 am on 21 March 2019 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Thursday, 16 May 2019.

Elected Members:

*= in attendance

- * Mr Ken Gulati (Chairman)
- * Ms Ayesha Azad
- * Mr Mark Brett-Warburton
- * Mr Tim Evans
- Mr Tim Hall
- * Mr David Harmer
- * Mr Nick Harrison (Vice-Chairman)
- * Mr Keith Witham
- * Mr Chris Botten
- * Mr Richard Walsh

11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies for absence were received from Tim Hall.

12 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 25 JANUARY 2019 [Item 2]

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were no declarations of interest received.

14 QUESTIONS & PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were no questions or petitions received.

15 RESPONSE FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [Item 5]

Key points raised during the discussions:

1. The Committee noted the response from the Cabinet Member for Finance from the Cabinet meeting on 29 January 2019.
2. The Vice-Chairman noted the response's comments regarding the Corporate Overview Select Committee (COSC) Budget Sub-Group and stated that the group would need to adapt how it scrutinised budgets to allow it to be better aligned to consider individual budget proposals.

16 TRANSFORMING THE COUNCIL TO BETTER SERVICE RESIDENTS - UPDATE [Item 6]

Witnesses:

Michael Coughlin, Executive Director – Customers, Digital & Transformation

Key points of discussions:

1. The Chairman highlighted the Committee's decision to identify three key enabling projects to concentrate Member's attention for discussion. The three enabling projects would be: Customer Experience, Digital / Agile Working and Spans and Layers.
2. The Executive Director – Customers, Digital & Transformation provided the Committee with a brief summary of the report. It was noted that there were 24 individual projects of transformation which would be conducted over a time period of three – five years. It was stated that the transformation was at a point in its life cycle where it would be beneficial to moderate and reflect on its overall progress.
3. The Committee asked to be provided with further information around the Transformation Steering Board (TSB) and the Transformation Support Unit (TSU). The Executive Director explained that the TSB comprised of the Chief Executive, executive directors and key officers who held responsibilities in some of the programmes of work. Additional people were also able to join discussions at the meeting if it was felt it would be beneficial and appropriate. The TSU comprised of external support from My Proteus who provided key skills around programme management. Mare Snelling, Director of Transformation, had recently joined the Council and was tasked with coordinating the transformation programme as My Proteus began to decrease support. It was noted that the Director of Transformation was looking to have a more permanent transformation support structure in the future. Further to this, Members noted that each project had a project leader, a project manager and a group of staff from the impacted services.
4. The Committee felt it would be appropriate for each individual select committee to consider the relevant transformation programmes within their remit.
5. Members noted that officers were currently reviewing progress so far to identify key lessons that could be designed into the next phase of transformation. When Members asked if the Committee were able to view the lessons which had been identified, Officers confirmed that the information should available to be able to be presented at the next meeting of COSC.
6. Members noted that the 'next steps' identified in the report were for COSC to review the new Vital Signs Quarterly Report in July and quarterly thereafter. The Executive Director explained that there were a number of checks to monitor the delivery of the transformation projects which provided assurances against budgetary and time constrictions. In addition to this, the Internal Audit service, Finance service and senior managers were able to check projects were on

track and identify those that needed further attention on a periodic basis.

7. The Committee discussed the opportunity to conduct a 'deep dive' into some individual transformation projects to monitor their progress. When conducting this, it was agreed that it would be helpful to invite the relevant project manager to attend the meeting to aid discussions. Following discussion, it was agreed for the Committee to consider indicators of performance at the Committee meeting in May prior to deciding what transformation project to conduct an 'deep dive' into.
8. The Committee stated that it would be beneficial to be provided with totemic examples of change throughout the transformation in order to better understand outcomes.

Customer Experience

9. Members sought clarification on the expected benefits from the project and for further clarification on the Single Front Door approach. It was noted that the agreed business cases set out key principles and calculations on what savings could be achieved. In regards to the Single Front Door, Officers explained that triaging incoming calls allowed the same number of calls to be handled by significantly fewer staff. When a call required a specialist response, the customer service team would be in the position to escalate it to the appropriate team. Officers further confirmed that consideration was being put into how easy it was for residents to self-serve using the Council's website to reduce the number of direct phone calls. Evidence had shown that resident typically wanted 24 hour access and to have their questions answered easily therefore consideration was being put into how to make this possible.
10. Members noted that the expected savings within the Customer Services project was £0.5m. £300,000 of this had been identified and £200,000 was yet to be identified.
11. Members raised a concern that moving a majority of the communication online would depersonalise residents' contact with the Council. Officers explained that, in resident consultative workshops, many residents had said they were comfortable with communicating with the Council online as long as it gave the impression of a dialog. In the event of any harmful or sensitive issues, communication would be held either face to face or using a phone.
12. A Member of the Committee advised that officers clarify details when sending automatic acknowledgement emails to residents. It was stated that residents sometimes expected to be contact sooner than stated due to the wording used.

Digital / Agile working

13. Members of the Committee discussed the value of the IT & Digital transformation programme. In regards to Digital, Officers provided detail of various potential uses in the Council which included maximising the usage of artificial intelligence to support vulnerable

residents. Officers stated that the Council had an appetite to use digital capabilities to its full potential in a new and innovative way. Members further noted that there would be an opportunity for a technology-minded expert team to monitor various service delivery and suggest potential improvements through incorporating new digital processes.

14. The Committee discussed the potential risks associated with agile working which included a drop in efficiency due to employees working on their own. The Executive Director explained that officers individual situations would need to be taken into consideration as not every officer had the same requirements.
15. Further to discussions regarding agile working, Members highlighted that there may be concerns from staff related to changing how they work. The Executive Director explained that leaders and managers would be required to change their behaviour in order to become more focused on outcomes rather than focusing on the officer being actually present in the office. The Executive Director agreed to circulate the 'McKinsey report' which identified the key benefits of an agile organisation.

Spans and Layers

16. Members of the Committee discussed the Decision Making Accountability (DMA) model which modelled staff in a six by six structure. Officers explained that there would be an opportunity for flexibility if appropriate for the best possible outcomes for residents.
17. Officers explained they were reassured with the rigorousness of the model due to its uniform and consistent effect on savings in other organisations. Members noted that managers would receive training on delivering the new model while also being supported by Human Resources (HR).

General discussion

18. Members explained that it was difficult to scrutinise the projects due to the amount of information provided in the report. Members agreed that it would be helpful to consider the Lessons Learned Report and the Summary Expectations report from a high level at a future meeting. It was further agreed that it would be useful to review the red / amber / green statuses of the enabling projects at a future meeting, as well as updated information on the Transformational delivery plans.

RESOLVED:

The Committee recommends that:

1. Relevant Delivery Plans for transformation projects are shared with individual Select Committees upon completion in April 2019 to inform future scrutiny reviews
2. The Director of Transformation's 'lesson learned' report is shared with this Committee on its completion at the end of March 2019

3. Project managers identify examples of tangible change to services and resident experience resulting from transformation projects thus far. These examples should be shared with all Members of the council
4. Future scrutiny of transformation projects should include review of project milestones, risk management, savings and outcomes.

17 SCRUTINY OF BUDGETS [Item 7]

Witnesses:

Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Finance
Kevin Kilburn, Strategic Finance Manager - Corporate
Anna D'Alessandro, Interim Director - Corporate Finance

Key points raised during the discussions:

1. The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report and informed Members that the Council was on track to deliver a balanced budget as it was expected to achieve savings between £105m to £106m, while using only £1.3m of the Council's reserves. £21.4M of these savings had been identified in Adult Social Care. The Cabinet Member further reported that for the first time all Cabinet Members had agreed to the projected forecast for each service.
2. Member asked what assurances were in place to ensure the savings achieved were sustainable. Officers explained that it was the objective for all savings to be sustainable but they would continue to be monitored. Officers further stated that the main drive for the in-year savings was to not require the use of reserves in order to ensure the Council was in the best possible position for 2019/20.
3. The Committee asked for confirmation on whether the Cabinet Member was satisfied that the Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) service would be able to operate within the scale of their budget envelope. The Cabinet Member explained that the finances were currently mostly theoretical and that more information would be available within the first quarter of 2019/20. Members stated it would be helpful to be provided with a scale of possible risks when meeting the budget envelope.
4. Officers reassured Members that the £51m savings identified through the transformation programme had been identified using a rigorous process and would continue to be monitored. Members requested that appropriate attention be put on monitoring the remaining £31m required that was yet to be identified. Follow discussion, officers further reassured Members that the savings programme of £82m in 2019/20 would be monitored and reported on.
5. Members were concerned that there may be less savings in Adult Social Care in 2019/20 due to the acceleration of savings in the current year. The Cabinet Member confirmed that he was confident there would be a continuation of savings into 2019/20.

6. The Committee discussed the benefits of the Budget Sub-Group conducting a 'deep dive' into the Children, Families & Learning Directorate's budget. It was suggested that this could be carried out with the participation of the Children and Education Select Committee. The Cabinet Member for Finance advised that, due to ongoing transformational change, a 'deep dive' would be best placed after the first quarter of 2019/20 when the service was in a more secure position.
7. The Committee agreed to conduct a 'deep dive' into the Waste budget with a particular focus on the delivery of the Eco-Park in the new council year

RESOLVED:

1. The Committee to explore options for scrutiny of Children, Families & Learning Directorate's budget with the participation of the Children & Education Select Committee in June or July 2019
2. The Committee prepares to conduct a 'deep dive' into the Waste budget with a particular focus on the delivery of the Eco-Park in the new council year

18 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 8]

Key points raised during discussions:

1. The Committee felt it would be appropriate for other select committee's to conduct 'deep dives' into areas relevant to their remit.

19 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 9]

Meeting ended at: 12.30 pm

Chairman