

MINUTES of the meeting of the **COUNCIL OVERVIEW BOARD** held at 10.30 am on 1 July 2015 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, 10 September 2015.

Elected Members:

- * Mr David Munro (Chairman)
- * Mr Eber A Kington (Vice-Chairman)
- * Mr Mark Brett-Warburton
- * Mr Bill Chapman
- Mr Stephen Cooksey
- Mr Bob Gardner
- Mr Michael Gosling
- * Dr Zully Grant-Duff
- * Mr David Harmer
- * Mr Nick Harrison
- * Mr David Ivison
- * Mr Colin Kemp
- Mrs Denise Saliagopoulos
- Mrs Hazel Watson
- * Mr Keith Witham

Ex officio Members:

Mrs Sally Ann B Marks, Chairman of the County Council
Mr Nick Skellett CBE, Vice-Chairman of the County Council

12/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Bob Gardner, Michael Gosling, Denise Saligopolous, Hazel Watson and Stephen Cooksey, Fiona White and John Orrick attended as substitutes.

Apologies were also noted from the Cabinet Member for Business Services, Denise Le Gal (LGA Conference)

13/15 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 3 JUNE 2015 [Item 2]

The Board agreed that the Welfare Reform draft letter for Cabinet should also be sent to Central Government for their understanding of what is going on in Surrey.

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

14/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

No Declarations of Interest were received.

15/15 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

No questions or petitions were received.

16/15 CHIEF EXECUTIVES 6 MONTH REPORT [Item 7]

Witnesses:

Julie Fisher, Strategic Director of Business Services and Deputy Chief Executive

Kevin Kilburn, Deputy Chief Finance Officer

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Strategic Director of Business Services introduced the report and informed the Board that it was the Chief Executive's twelfth 6-month report to the Council. The report had evolved over time, taking on a new format that was easier to read and contained case studies and real examples of operational work. The Strategic Director referred to the four key challenges to focus on over the next six months, as detailed in the report:
 - Working with partners to improve services for children in need
 - Releasing the full energy and potential of staff
 - Accelerating whole systems transformation
 - Ensuring Surrey has the powers to continue improving services for residents
2. It was noted that the report would no longer be presented to Full Council, therefore scrutiny was key. It was considered by the Board that the report should be presented at full council to give all Councillors an opportunity to comment.
3. The Board suggested that in future years the report could have more of a focus on residents. An executive summary written for residents would help engagement and understanding. Officers confirmed they

would liaise with Communications to ensure residents were able to view the report.

4. The Board was informed by the Chairman of the Social Care Services Board that the Improvement Board has put measures in place in response to the recent Ofsted report. A copy of the improvement plan was due to be discussed at the Social Care Services Board in October.
5. It was reported that the Strategic Director of Business Services was currently the statutory lead of the Children, Schools and Families Directorate; Members questioned how management was discharged across the two services given the large remit across these two directorate areas. The Strategic Director explained that there was a strong leadership team with clear objectives in Business Services, allowing her to focus on Children, Schools and Families during this critical period post-Ofsted was expressed by Members that more scrutiny and evaluation in six months time. Officers explained that the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) detailed financial and budget targets which could be scrutinised by Members. However, the Board thought the Chief Executive's Report could be improved by including more detailed targets which could be challenged and monitored. One Member expressed the view that the MTFP sets the direction while the 6 month report should explain how targets would be achieved in a format accessible to the public.
6. There was a debate about the 4 priorities outlined in the report. Some Members felt that it would be more transparent to include a specific priority about the huge financial pressure facing the Council and therefore although the priorities were endorsed by the Board, it was not unanimous.

Action/further information to be provided:

None.

The Board recommended that:

1. The Chief Executive and Staff are congratulated on their hard work contributing to the report.
2. That the Chief Executive's 6 month report be presented to Full Council
3. That future reports include key milestones and targets in relation to the Council's priorities
4. That the Four Priorities for the next 6 months, as set out in the Chief Executive's report, are endorsed by the Scrutiny Board.
5. That the Chairman of the Council Overview Board writes to the Leader of the Council to make the points above.

17/15 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [Item 5]

There were no responses to report.

18/15 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 6]

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. It was noted that the draft letter to Cabinet regarding Welfare Reform had been drafted and circulated to the Board for comment
2. It was noted that the recent airport expansion report had now been published and should be added to the Forward Work Programme. The Capital Programme item, Fees and Charging item and HR would also be added to the Forward Work Programme for October 2015
3. It was noted that joint scrutiny arrangements could be established with partner organisations such as East Sussex. The Chairman would contact his counterpart at East Sussex and report back at a future meeting.
4. With relation to recommendation COSC 85, it was agreed that further communication from the Welfare Reform Task Group would be sent to all Members regarding the introduction of Universal Credit.

Actions/further information to be provided:

None.

Recommendations:

That the recommendations tracker and forward work programme be updated.

Committee Next Steps:

Members are invited to submit items for the Forward Plan.

19/15 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT [Item 8]

Witnesses:

Kevin Kilburn, Deputy Chief Finance Officer

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Deputy Chief Finance Officer introduced the report and informed the Board that this was the first report of the 2015/16 financial year. A small projected overspend of £1.8million was recorded due to a delay in certain areas of reorganisation such as Children's Centres, Early Years Savings and an overspend in the SEND transport service. The Chairmen of the Education & Skills Scrutiny Board and the Economic Prosperity, Environment & Highways Board informed Members that work was in the planning stage for joint scrutiny of the SEND transport service
2. The Board was informed that there was just over £21million in the general balances account. It was noted that External Auditor were satisfied this level was adequate.

Colin Kemp left the room at 11.55am.

3. The Board were concerned that there was too much reliance on one-off savings. The Deputy Chief Finance Officer explained that the MTFP refresh would be looking at how to replace savings achieved through one-off means in this year's budget required. It was agreed that this was an area that individual Scrutiny Boards could scrutinise as required.

4. After some debate it was agreed that the Scrutiny Board would now receive Budget Monitoring reports at their full public meeting, instead of through the traditional method of reviewing in detail at a private Performance & Finance Sub Group. The Sub Group could be called upon where more detailed scrutiny was required in the future.

Action/Further information to be provided:
Future Sub Group dates to be deleted from the Council Overview Board schedule

Recommendations:

1. The Board recommends that Scrutiny Board Chairmen ensure that individual Scrutiny Boards scrutinise plans to replace one-off savings/test sustainability.

Committee next steps

None.

20/15 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TRANSFORMATION SUB GROUP [Item 9]

Colin Kemp entered the room at 12.00pm.

Witnesses:
Helen Rankin, Scrutiny Manager

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Scrutiny Manager introduced the report and referred to the one-page introduction detailed in the agenda. The objective of the Transformation Sub Group would be to scrutinise new models of delivery arrangements, including business cases for new partnership ventures.
2. Members who nominated themselves for the sub-group were; David Munro, David Harmer, Nick Harrison, Mark Brett-Warburton and Hazel Watson.

Recommendations:

1. The Board confirmed the establishment of a Transformation Sub Group, with Membership as above.

Further action/information to be provided:

An initial meeting of the Sub Group to be set up to confirm Terms of Reference

21/15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 10]

The next Council Overview Board will be held on Thursday 10 September 2015 at 10.00am.

Meeting ended at: 12.14 pm

Chairman