

RESOURCES & PERFORMANCE SELECT COMMITTEE

NOTES OF PERFORMANCE MONITORING SESSION

19 June 2024 at 11am (Remote Meeting)

Attendees: Cllr Bob Hughes (Chairman)
 Cllr Steven McCormick (Vice-Chairman)
 Cllr Steven McCormick (Vice-Chairman)
 Cllr David Harmer
 Cllr Lesley Steeds
 Cllr Riasat Khan
 Cllr Nick Darby
 Cllr David Lewis, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Officers: Jake Chambers, Scrutiny Officer
 Anna D'Alessandro, Director for Finance Corporate & Commercial (Interim s151)
 David Lewis, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
 David Oates, Head of Performance & Data Management
 Richard Supple, Performance Insight Analyst
 Bella Smith, Head of Insights, Systems & Governance
 Matt Scott, Chief Digital Information Officer
 Gary Clothier, Freedom of Information Officer
 Asmat Hussain, Director of Law & Governance
 Louise Lawson. Strategic Finance Business Partner- Improvement & PPG

Key points raised during the discussion:

Residents- SCC (Surrey County Council) Resident Survey

1. **PSR16: Satisfaction that the Council acts on the concerns of residents:**
 The Vice-Chairman asked which and how many residents were questioned about their degree of satisfaction that the Council acted on the concerns of residents in the SCC Resident Survey. The Head of Performance & Data Management stated said this could be ascertained, but believed it was a random sample of people.

Action I: PSR16: Satisfaction that the Council acts on the concerns of residents: A Member requested further information on how many residents were surveyed.

Resources- People and Change

2. **PC13: % of Off payroll spend of total pay bill:** The Chairman asked for reasons why 6.3% was reported for the Off payroll spend of total pay bill in May 2024. The Head of Insights, Systems and Governance explained that Off payroll spend tended to follow a pattern every year -at the beginning of the year the percentage tended to be slightly lower than average, the percentage then plateaued in quarter 2 and quarter 3, usually increasing towards the end

of quarter 4. This was generally a pay and billing issue. The percentage was expected to decrease towards the beginning of quarter 1 whilst directorates identified their requirements. The Council needed to be mindful of the 7% target and ensure that it was not exceeding the target earlier than 2023/24.

3. A member asked why April tended to see a decrease in the percentage of Off payroll spend each year. The Head of Insights, Systems and Governance clarified this tended to be the time that billing was submitted, but there was also a slight delay at the beginning of each financial year as directorates identified the Off payroll staffing requirements, which resulted in a delay in April.
4. The Director of Finance, Corporate & Commercial (Interim S151 Officer) explained that Off payroll spend was discussed regularly at CLT meetings to ensure effective management. Moving forward, it would be included in the monthly report to CLT to ensure monitoring and that the Council remained at or below target.
5. **PC13: Staff with Disabilities (%)**: Vice-Chairman Cllr Steeds asked how many staff members were represented by the increase of 0.1% in staff with disabilities. The Head of Insights, Systems and Governance explained that this was taken from the headcount, and that this figure could be retrieved for the committee, though would only factor staff that have chosen to share that they have a disability.

Action II: PC13: Staff with Disabilities (%)- The Head of Insights, Systems and Governance to provide the number of staff that had declared disabilities.

6. A member noted interest in seeing the percentage of Surrey's general population with disabilities compared to the percentage employed by SCC. The Head of Insights, Systems and Governance explained that this was tracked through census data, though one challenge with the most recent census data was that it does not break down easily into people of working age against all others. The census did break down disabilities into different categories, such as significant disabilities, learning disabilities, etc., though it was difficult for the Council to break this down further into working ages. The census data for the South-East was also considered, as well as the census data for Surrey.

Action III: PC13: Staff with Disabilities (%)- The Head of Insights, Systems and Governance to share figures for how the percentage of disabled staff mirrors that of the Surrey population as a whole.

7. It was clarified by the Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources and the Head of Insights, Systems and Governance explained that the corporate body of the Council employed around 8,700 people, excluding schools and therefore a 0.1% increase in staff with disabilities represented in the range of eight to ten people.

Digital- Digital and agile capabilities

8. **ITDO3: Cyber Attacks: Successfully blocked cyber-attacks:** The Chief Digital Information Officer explained that the number of cyber-attacks blocked by the council was recorded monthly and was also broken down by category. This data could be provided to the committee outside of this session.

Action IV: ITD03: Cyber Attacks: successfully blocked cyber-attacks: The Chief Digital Information Officer to provide a breakdown of halted cyberattacks by category.

Finance

9. **FINO3: % of Budget Accountability Statement returned:** The Director of Finance, Corporate & Commercial (Interim S151 Officer) explained that the figure of Budget Accountability Statements returned had since increased to from 64% to 72% since the Performance Report was published. 100% of returned Budget Accountability Statements was being pursued, as was achieved last year. The Childrens, Families & Lifelong Learning Directorate was delayed.
10. The Chairman asked for clarification that the **FINO3: % of Budget Accountability Statement returned** Performance Indicator was not necessarily the spend. The Director of Finance, Corporate & Commercial (Interim S151) clarified that it was not. Every year a Budget Accountability Statement was sent to all the budget holders stating clearly what their revenue and capital budget allocation had been for the year. This was to attain budget holders' agreement that they would remain within their budget and that there was understanding of their budget envelope. Conversations with budget holder's business partners had been with the full knowledge of what the budget holders were accountable for.

Legal and Democratic

11. **LDO4.1: % Responses to Freedom of Information (FOI)/Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests within statutory timescales- ICO target 90.0%- by Council and Directorate:** The Chairman noted that the May 2024 figure of 95.5% responses to FOI and EIR requests was impressive. The Freedom of Information Officer explained there was a significant increase in the volume of FOI requests in 2024, with close to 500 requests by March 2024. Officers were doing well to complete FOI requests on time. The target was being met or exceeded every month.
12. The Vice-Chair asked if the type of FOI requests was known. The Freedom of Information Officer explained that the FOI requests were given a classification when logged onto the system, which provided a report on the most popular categories of FOI requests. Potholes and road conditions were popular types of request. The Council also received a lot of requests that were for borough and district councils rather than SCC. Childrens Services received a lot of FOI

requests around areas such as Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Action V: LD04.1 Responses to Freedom of Information (FOI)/Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests within statutory timescales – ICO target 90.0% - by Council and Directorates: The Director of Law & Governance to provide a breakdown of FOI requests by category.

13. Vice-Chairman Cllr McCormick clarified that there was a public website called 'WhatDoTheyKnow' that provided further information on FOI requests. The Freedom of Information Officer explained that a disclosure log had been implemented at the council from the start of 2023, with every request that SCC had received with every response, viewable on SCC's website. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources added that Cabinet received, fortnightly, the list of FOI requests received.
14. **LD08.1 No of personal data breaches across Directorates:** The Freedom of Information Officer explained that the 57 data breaches in May 2024 was the number that had been reported to SCC. The actual number of breaches may be lower than the numbers in the Performance Report.
15. The Chairman raised that the way the metric on data breaches was put together would be re-looked at. The Freedom of Information Officer confirmed this was the case. The way data breaches were reported would be reviewed to ensure the information was correct and people were aware that SCC was looking at the number of the breaches rather than just what was reported.
16. A Member asked why there was an increase in data breaches in February 2024. The Freedom of Information Officer explained that it was sometimes difficult to know what the exact reasons were for trends in the volume of data breaches. It could have been the result of more communications around how to report data breaches which made people more aware and thus likely to report incidents. Some teams had also done their own work to make other officers aware of what was and was not a breach.
17. The Chairman asked for confirmation that none of the personal data breaches were reportable to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The Freedom of Information Officer confirmed that none of the data breaches were reportable to the ICO.

Resources- Project Indicators

18. **Transitioning MySurrey ERP to BAU: Entering the 'Steady State' Phase:** The Chief Digital Information Officer explained that SCC had now transitioned MySurrey ERP from a project state to 'business-as-usual' activity undertaken within the IT & Digital service structure and processes. The Officer suggested working through a new set of indicators.

Action VI: Resources Project Indicators: MySurrey ERP to BAU: The Chief Digital Information Officer suggested adopting new indicators for MySurrey now that it has transitioned to 'Business-as-usual' (BAU). The Scrutiny Officer to set up a meeting with The Chief Digital Information Officer, Cllr McCormick, and relevant Officers.

Transformation

Finance Update

19. **BUDGET MONITORING POSITION- as at M11 2023-24:** Vice-Chair Cllr McCormick asked whether the budget monitoring position in the report took account of the latest update position from the 2023/24 outturn financial Cabinet report, published on 14 June. The Strategic Finance Business Partner - Improvement & PPG explained that due to the postponement of the May Cabinet, the outturn figures could not be provided in this Performance Report due to timings. Therefore, this report did not correspond perfectly to the outturn position from the Cabinet financial outturn report. The outturn position was an improvement of £0.5 million on the numbers presented in the Performance Report.
20. **Efficiency Plan Delivery:** The Director of Finance, Corporate and Commercial (Interim S151) explained that the Council ended the year, in terms of outturn, on nearly 78% of efficiencies delivered. It was not unusual, as the Council went through the year, for the situation to change and therefore the Council would end up not delivering all efficiencies originally planned. Business Partners worked with directorates to find mitigations for efficiencies that were not able to be delivered. The Council had ended the financial year strongly, with consideration that the planned efficiencies were set some time ago.
21. Vice-Chair Cllr McCormick asked why more up-to-date information was not being shared on efficiencies. The Director of Finance, Corporate and Commercial (Interim S151 Officer) explained that the outturn information did not go to Cabinet when originally planned due to the cancellation of the May Cabinet, which was why Month 11 was being discussed.

Action VI: Efficiency plan delivery: Vice-Chair Cllr McCormick requested that the efficiency Plan be updated and recirculated, as it was now out-of-date due to the cancellation of May Cabinet. This is to be provided before questions could be sent by Members to Officers/the Strategic Finance Business Partner- Improvement & PPG.

22. The Chairman noted that the big areas were demand-led and therefore difficult to forecast. The Director of Finance, Corporate and Commercial (Interim S151 Officer) stated that AWHP and CFLL were problematic areas. The Director summarised key issues involved price and volume, inflationary impacts, demand impacts, Adults and Children placements and home-to-school transport, which would continue into 2024/25.

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