

Performance and Finance Select Committee

26 March 2014 – At a meeting of the Select Committee held at 10.30 a.m. at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mrs Urquhart (Chairman)

Mr Burrett*	Mr Lamb	Mr Tyler
Mrs Evans	Mr Metcalfe	Mr Waight
Mr Glennon	Mrs Millson	Mr Watson***
Ms James**	Mr Rae	
Mrs Kitchen	Mr R T Rogers	

In attendance by invitation: Ms Goldsmith (Leader), Mr Barnard (Cabinet Member for Resident's Services), Mr Brown (Cabinet Member for Finance) and Mrs Fields (Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing (and Deputy Leader)).

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Turner.

*Mr Burrett arrived at 1.00 p.m.

**Ms James left at 2.25 p.m.

***Mr Watson left at 2.00 p.m.

Declarations of Interest

151. In accordance with the code of conduct, the following personal interest was declared:

- Mr Rae for his Deputy Cabinet Role for Fire and Rescue and Resident's Services performance and finance issues in relation to the Total Performance Monitor.

Minutes

152. Resolved – that the minutes of the Performance and Finance Select Committee held on 23 January 2014 be approved as a correct record, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

Responses to Recommendations

153. The Committee considered responses from the Leader and from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health to recommendations made at a previous meeting by the Select Committee (copies appended to the signed minutes).

154. The Committee welcomed the responses and noted their content.

Corporate Performance Framework 2014-15

155. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Finance and Assurance and the Head of Policy and Communications (copy appended to the signed minutes).

156. The Leader and the Head of Policy and Communications introduced the report and gave a short presentation explaining the new approach for recording County Council performance. Emphasis was placed on the new system being a "living" document and would be updated throughout the year. The Framework would reflect the outcomes for the County as a whole and therefore would need to work closely with partners. A slideshow of how the system is being used in Maryland, USA was presented as an example to the committee. This highlighted how stakeholders could drill-down into the system to get more information on areas that interested them.

157. The Committee made general comments concerning the whole system including those that follow. It:

- Queried why the County Council was working with an American company rather than a UK company. – *The Leader reported that no other UK Councils are using a system like this and so the American company is the only choice. The company was keen to work with West Sussex County Council as the first UK Council and so was very accommodating.*
- Queried the cost of the system and if the system could have been developed in house. – *The Head of Policy and Communications confirmed the price is a one off cost of £20,000 which included the necessary training packages. The Leader confirmed the cost of the work in house would have been at least double.*
- Raised concerns that the system could be labour intensive for officers to keep up to date. – *The Head of Policy and Communications reported that the system would use current data that would only need to be entered once. The system was easy to use and was not expected to add strain to workloads.*
- Requested that the system is kept up to date and is easy for stakeholders to find, access and interrogate. – *The Leader confirmed that officers would be keeping the system up to date and that web page improvement was being planned to ensure the system would be easy to find and navigate.*
- Raised concerns that the system could result in too much focus on indicators and symptoms rather than outcomes. – *The Head of Policy and Communications confirmed that outcomes would be the focus. The Leader made it clear that the system was flexible and would allow change in indicators to ensure outcomes were met.*
- Made general comments regarding all measures including the request that the narrative for each measure should be clear at the top level so they are understandable; that the national average and benchmark data is included and finally that all targets should be sufficiently stretching.

158. The Committee then focussed on looking at each of the High level measures. The Committee made specific comments on the following measures. It:

1. Improved physical and emotional well-being

- Queried why measure A was recorded in absolute figures rather than percentages. – *The Head of Policy and Communications explained that figures were the best way to record this data but suggested that context could be added to the narrative section.*

- Enquired what measure C would be. – *The Head of Policy and Communications informed the committee that this would probably be the number of mental health assessments within four weeks of referral. This would be developed with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS) over the following weeks.*

3. Children are safe and secure

- Sought clarity on the term 'threshold' as a target. – *The Head of Policy and Communications explained that this is a percentage threshold measure that Children's Services worked to.*
- Requested that measure D should be changed to 'Percentage of children subject to a repeat child protection plan within 12 months'.
- Requested that absolute numbers are used as well as the percentages.

4. Young people are ready for school and ready for work

- Raised concerns that measure B did not take into account other qualifications and did not show emphasis on English and Maths. – *The Leader assured the committee that when the system went live those specifics would be found on a lower tiered measure.*
- Questioned if measures B and D were ambitious enough and asked if aspirational targets should be included. – *The Director of Communities Commissioning explained that the figure was appropriate for the current landscape and that the target was realistic against Ofsted expectations.*
- Queried if the targets should link more closely to the skills required by businesses rather than purely academic targets.

5. Growth of jobs

- Suggested that measures such as Gross Value Added (GVA) per head, average salary data and median income should be considered in order to determine the skills available to the County.

6. Growth of enterprise

- Sought reassurance that these figures would reflect the correct number of businesses in the county including home based and rural businesses.
- Suggested that Measure D should be the net increase in businesses within the County.

7. Skills: ensuring local people of all ages have support to access work

- Suggested that the targets needed to be more stretching.

8. Infrastructure that businesses and local communities need to support economic growth

- The Cabinet Member for Residents' Services suggested that measure B should not quote 'homes' and would instead measure against enabled cabinets. 'Premises' was suggested as alternative wording.
- Queried if congestion should be considered. – *The Leader suggested that air quality could become a measured target.*

10. Increased participation in society

- Queried if this should be a measure for all ages rather than just older people. – *The Leader confirmed that this measure could grow to include all ages.*
- Raised awareness that isolation is not always a rural issue.

11. Increased independence

- Suggested measures E and F were merged.
- Suggested measures D and G were merged.

12. Increased healthy life expectancy

- Raised concerns that these measures would not challenge life expectancy as figures were based on people attending sessions (A and B), were not considering e-cigarette usage (C), BMI improvements would yield small results for life expectancy (D) and also that measure F did not indicate how busy the service was. The desired outcomes needed to be identified and the number of people changing their lifestyle as a result of the interventions/checks recorded. – *The Principal Manager for Public Health Research Unit explained that the measures were aiming to tackle the people who needed help. The Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing (and Deputy Leader) explained that this was a process for influencing areas highlighted as a concern. The Leader confirmed that as the system is developed, these measures could be refined to be more effective.*

159. Resolved – That the:

- (1) System is made easy to access, use and understand.
- (2) Importance is placed on measuring outcomes over inputs.
- (3) Committee's suggestions are taken into account for the final version.

Members Big Society Fund

160. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Finance and Assurance and the Community and Economic Development Manager (copy appended to the signed minutes).

161. The Better Communities Team Manager and the Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report. The fund was described as a success and the Cabinet Member for Finance passed on his appreciation to his deputies, Mrs Mockridge and Mr Crow, for their work on the fund. He also committed to increasing the budget per annum for the fund if the demand remained. The Better Communities Team Manager agreed to ensure that the list of members who had given feedback would be monitored and kept up to date.

162. The Committee made comments including those that follow. It:

- Requested that a dialogue should open when member's applications only just fail to meet the criteria, rather than immediate decline. – *The Cabinet Member for Finance said that member's involvement to tailor applications would be welcome.*
- Raised concerns on applications that received funds significantly below the request as to whether projects could still proceed. – *The Leader reported that many schemes made good use of the funds they had received and it was up to members to manage applicant's expectations.*

163. Resolved – That the:

- (1) Committee to receive an annual report on the fund.
- (2) The Cabinet Member for Finance to contact members who have not responded to the feedback process.

Total Performance Monitor

164. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Finance and Assurance (copy appended to the signed minutes). A tabled report summarising the February TPM was also considered (copy appended to the signed minutes).

165. The Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report which set out the County Council's performance and risk position as at the end of February 2014. He confirmed that Operation Watershed projects would be funded from the February underspend and the costs of the public order incidents at Balcombe would be funded from reserves.

166. The Committee made comments including those that follow. It:

- Queried if the Highways and Transport schemes referred to in the January TPM would be secure. – *The Cabinet Member for Finance confirmed that it had been agreed to roll the funding into the next financial year to support the schemes.*
- Queried the additional government funding that was being made available to address flooding issues. – *The Director of Finance and Assurance confirmed that all the necessary requirements will be met by the County Council to ensure the £3.4m is available.*
- Requested an update on the status of the Fire and Rescue control centre. – *The Cabinet Member for Residents' Services confirmed that the control centre is operational, running on secondary systems. It is expected to run on full systems soon. The Director of Finance and Assurance agreed to send members a short briefing to clarify the current situation.*
- Queried if there would be an impact to the Capital Programme following the recent fire at Millais school. – *The Director of Finance and Assurance informed the committee that costs should be met by the insurance and resolved to monitor the impact on plans over the following weeks.*

167. Resolved –

- (1) That the Monitor be noted.
- (2) Director of Finance and Assurance to provide members with a report on the Fire and Rescue Control Centre
- (3) Director of Finance and Assurance to monitor the impact of the fire at Millais school.

Risk Register

168. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Finance and Assurance and the Head of Corporate Finance (copy appended to the signed minutes).

169. The Director of Finance and Assurance introduced the report and welcomed questions from the committee.

170. The Committee made comments including those that follow. It:

- Asked if PERFORM is to be replaced. – *The Director of Finance and Assurance explained that the data previously presented by PERFORM would still be collected and recorded but would instead be utilised in the new system, discussed earlier in the meeting, that is currently under development.*
- Reiterated the emphasis of ensuring risk is scrutinised by either the Committee or the Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee (RAAC); particularly as the County Council proceeded further towards a commissioning environment. – *The Chairman of the committee resolved to discuss the matter with the Service Select Committee Chairmen and the Chairman of RAAC to ensure the matter would be fully explored.*

171. Resolved – That the:

- (1) Select Committee Chairmen will meet to discuss how scrutiny of risks can be explored further.
- (2) The Committee Chairman and the Chairman of RAAC to meet to ensure risk is fully covered without duplication making potential use of a Project Day to look at scrutiny of risks.

Troubled Families TFG Report

172. The Committee considered a report by the Chairman of the Troubled Families Task and Finish Group (copy appended to the signed minutes). Appendix A was tabled at the meeting (copy appended to the signed minutes).

173. The Chairman of the Troubled Families Task group introduced the report.

174. The Committee made comments including those that follow. It:

- Sought a definition of the term 'turned around'. – *The Strategic Commissioning Manager (Think Family) explained that 'turned around' referred to families who met two of the key criteria, e.g. children were in school or adults back to work with no reported anti-social behaviour.*
- Queried if the Department for Communities and Local Government insisted target of 100% families being turned around was achievable. – *The Strategic Commissioning Manager (Think Family) said that the County Council had always strived for this and worked on a basis of providing early help to prevent crises from developing.*
- Queried how much resistance keyworkers received from families requiring help. – *The Strategic Commissioning Manager (Think Family) explained that keyworkers did occasionally meet resistance, but were very good at building trust and rapport with families.*

175. Resolved – That the:

- (1) Committee agrees with the recommendations in the report; in particular that the Children and Young People's Services investigate the Readiness for Schools TFG.

Business Planning Group Report

176. The Committee considered a report by the Chairman of the Business Planning Group (copy appended to the signed minutes).

177. The Senior Advisor introduced the report.

178. The Committee suggested that risk could be considered as part of the commissioning member day.

179. Resolved – That the:

- (1) Committee agrees the recommendations in the report.
- (2) Committee agrees Robin Rogers' appointment to be the County Council member representative on the Community Advice Services Joint Scrutiny Task and Finish Group.

Forward Plan of Key Decisions

180. The Committee considered the Forward Plan of Key Decisions April – July 2014 (copy appended to the signed minutes).

181. The Committee sought clarity over what would be included in the Redesign of Facilities management Services decision. – *The Director of Finance and Assurance explained that the decision was looking into resourcing rather than internal arrangements; but resolved to investigate the decision to see if members should be involved further.*

182. The Forward Plan was noted.

Member's Items

183. A query was raised regarding the possibility of members receiving County Council emails on their personal smartphones. – *The Senior Advisor agreed to investigate this possibility and report back to the Business Planning Group.*

Date of Next Meeting

184. The Committee noted that its next scheduled meeting will take place on 16 May 2014 at 10.30am at County Hall, Chichester.

The meeting closed at 2.40 p.m.

Chairman.