

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR RESOURCES  
21 NOVEMBER 2011**

Present: Councillors Hodges, Pragnell (in the Chair), Turner (as the duly appointed substitute for Councillor Sabetian) and Westley

Lead Members in attendance: Councillors Birch and Kramer

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Corello, MJ Lock and Sabetian.

**12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

**13. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meetings held on 6, 21 and 29 September be approved as a true record.

**14. UPDATE ON SCRUTINY REVIEW OF INFLUENCING AND APPRAISING THE DECISIONS OF THIRD PARTIES**

Councillor Cartwright, as Chair of the review, gave a spoken update on progress.

The review had begun with a wide ranging remit, which had since been crystallised into a more focused scrutiny of East Sussex County Council (ESCC), in particular the Highways Department. The review team were currently looking at how to strengthen procedures for assessing work undertaken by ESCC.

The next step for the review team was an interview with Karl Taylor, Assistant Director of Transport and Operations at ESCC. After this meeting, members would decide on whether to extend invitations to other organisations, for example utility companies.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**15. QUARTER TWO PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

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Jane Hartnell, Head of Policy and Performance, presented the Quarter 2 Performance and Financial Monitoring Report.

The report detailed performance by the staff in Policy and Performance and the Corporate Resources Directorate against the 2011/12 targets and performance indicators set out in Part II of the Corporate Plan.

Members discussed economic growth in the town, Asset Management Plan, the role of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in addressing local needs and the introduction of a welcome new feature in the covering report which lists current consultations.

Peter Grace, Head of Financial Services, highlighted the excellent results of the Customer Service Satisfaction Survey undertaken in Revenue Services. A copy of the survey was circulated to the committee for their information. Members asked that staff within this service area be thanked for their continuing hard work.

Members asked for figures relating to the number of staff who completed the last staff survey using the new hand-held technology. Councillor Kramer commented that she did not have the exact figures to hand, but would circulate to the committee.

Neil Dart, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources, highlighted the Council's success in achieving Investors in People (IiP) re-accreditation recently. The committee asked that their thanks be forwarded to staff involved in the exercise.

The committee commented on the lack of suitable venues for student nightlife and the town's evening economy in general. Councillor Birch commented that these issues had been raised at the Town Conference on 26 September 2011 and would be progressed as far as possible by the Council and its partners.

Members discussed the progression of the Anti Poverty Strategy and Councillor Westley asked how the strategy could be finalised when so many factors contributing to poverty were changing. Councillor Kramer explained that this had been a huge project and the Strategy needed to be focussed on activities within the control of the Council and the members of the Local Strategic Partnership. An action plan was currently being pulled together, with long and short term targets to achieve.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1. the Committee's comments on Quarter 1 performance be addressed by the relevant Lead Member(s) with appropriate action and report back; and**

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- 2. staff in Policy and Performance and the Corporate Resources Directorate be thanked for their hard work and achievements in this quarter.**

**16. UPDATE ON SCRUTINY REVIEW OF SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT (SROI)**

Councillor Hodges, as Chair of the review, gave a spoken update on progress.

Social Return on Investment (SROI) seeks to place a monetary value on the social benefit of an investment. The review team had so far concluded that there were two types of SROI applicable to the council, these being evaluative and forecast. The former would be used retrospectively when reviewing an investment, while the latter would be used to predict the value of intended outcomes. SROI assessments can provide evidence but is not a tool to make decisions nor could it remove subjectivity.

The review team were meeting again shortly to discuss the barriers to the implementation of SROI, in order to lead them to a balanced conclusion.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

**17. MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS**

Katrina Silverson, Scrutiny and Electoral Services Officer, submitted a report on the recent Cabinet Decisions made since the last formal meeting, highlighting areas that fell within the Committee's remit.

Members briefly commented on the various land disposals decided at the Cabinet meeting on 5 September 2011 and the consultation on localisation of Council Tax Benefit as discussed by Cabinet on 3 October 2011.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.28pm)