

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR SERVICES

9 FEBRUARY 2015

Present: Councillors Davies (Chair), Fitzgerald, Scott, Edwards, Lee and Webb (as the duly appointed substitute for Councillor Turner)

Apologies for absence were noted for Councillor Turner and Charman

19. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Councillors declared an interest in the minutes:

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Minute No.</u>	<u>Interest</u>
Webb	21	Personal – Member of Hastings Friendship Group

20. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 NOVEMBER 2014**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2014 be approved as a correct record

21. **QUARTER THREE PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

The Senior Corporate and Democratic Services Officer introduced a report to advise Members of performance against the 2014/15 targets and performance indicators in part II of the corporate plan. The report also provided a summary of financial information.

The Lead Member for Corporate Services explained that, following guidance from the Home Office, Sussex Police had taken a more rigorous approach to the recording of crime statistics. As a result, it would not be possible for the council to meet its target to reduce alcohol and drug related crime levels and some of the targets set out in the Hastings Community Safety Plan. He added that this was a national issue, and police authorities across the country were undergoing similar changes to the way they record crime incidents. Discussion took place regarding the validation process for police statistics; the Lead Member for Corporate Services explained that the statistics were accepted on trust.

The committee were pleased to note that the reduce the strength campaign had been extended to include Gensing and Silverhill wards. The council's Licensing team would continue to work in partnership with the Police to encourage premises in these areas to join the scheme. Efforts were also underway with the Hastings and Rother Clinical Commissioning Group to explore funding opportunities for initiatives to tackle drug and alcohol addiction, this included the appointment of an outreach officer based in Central St Leonards.

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The Gambling Commission had recently highlighted the council's handling of a test of gaming premises, to ensure the satisfactory management of such premises, as an example of best practice for other licensing authorities.

Discussion took place regarding the role of Overview and Scrutiny in monitoring the waste and cleansing contract with Kier Services. Members noted that effective partnership working between the council and its contractor was essential in order to achieve the best outcomes from the contract. The Deputy Leader of the Council explained that he continued to attend meetings of the Joint Waste Committee, with the Leader of the Council. The Joint Waste Committee reviewed performance on refuse, recycling and cleansing services across the Borough. Representatives of Kier Services had attended a meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Services. Members would consider writing to Kier Services or holding a further follow up meeting at the next meeting of Scrutiny Steering Group.

Consideration was given to the food hygiene rating system. The Director of Environmental Services explained that the system was administered nationally by the Foods Standards Agency, and the council provided links to this information on its website. Members were also pleased to note that it was anticipated the council would complete all of the food hygiene inspections originally programmed for the year.

Members noted recent increases in audience figures at the White Rock Theatre. The Head of Amenities, Resorts and Leisure explained that the theatre had recently undergone a change of management and regular meetings were held to review progress. Over recent months, the theatre had moved towards staging fewer, high quality productions which had a positive impact on audience numbers. The theatre had also hosted a successful pantomime, which would develop its profile in attracting other high quality acts.

Members were advised that fourteen of the town's most deprived wards had been included on the 2014-2020 UK Assisted Areas map. This designation would improve flexibility in access public investment via the South East LEP and other national and European funding programmes.

The committee discussed ongoing efforts to tackle homelessness. The housing team had worked closely with the snowflake shelter over recent months, to support vulnerable people.

Members congratulated the Lead Member for Housing and Community Services and the team of officers who made it possible for the council to continue to lead a range of community programmes through the community cohesion strategy.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The committees comments on quarter 3 performance be addressed by the relevant Lead Member(s) with appropriate action and report back, and;**
- 2) Staff in the Regeneration and Environmental Services Directorates be thanked for their hard work and achievements in this quarter**

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The reason for this decision was:

To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to undertake their performance management function.

22. **UPDATE ON THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15**

The Senior Corporate and Democratic Services Officer advised the committee that all three pieces of work that Members had identified as a high priority at their annual meeting were now underway. The Overview and Scrutiny review of outsourced contracts was due to report to quarter 3 Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Resources.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at. 7.15 pm)