

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR SERVICES

3 SEPTEMBER 2015

Present: Councillors Westley (Chair), Fitzgerald, Scott, Turner, Charman, Edwards, Chowney, Forward and Pragnell (as the duly appointed substitute for Councillor Clarke)

Lead Members in attendance: Councillors Chowney and Forward

Apologies for absence were noted for Councillor Clarke

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members declared an interest in the following items:

Councillor	Minute Number	Interest
Scott	16 – Update on the Local Health Landscape	Personal – member of the Fire Authority

12. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 JUNE 2015 AND THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL JOINT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES HELD ON 18 JUNE 2015 (ATTACHED)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2015 and the Annual Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees held on 18 June 2015 be approved as a true record.

13. MEETING WITH KIER SERVICES TO DISCUSS WASTE MANAGEMENT AND STREETSCENE

The Chair informed the committee that Denzil Baldwin, Kier Contract Director, had been unable to attend the meeting in person to answer questions regarding waste management and streetscene. The Chair would collate any further questions to Kier and forward them for consideration at the Joint Waste Committee.

Members expressed their disappointment that Denzil Baldwin had been unable to attend the meeting. The committee thanked Madeleine Gorman, Partnership Manager, for her attendance.

14. QUARTER ONE PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

This item was moved up the agenda, with the agreement of the Chair.

The Senior Corporate and Democratic Services Officer presented a report to advise members of the performance against the 2015/16 targets and performance indicators in the corporate plan during quarter 1. The report also provided a summary of financial information. As agreed at the Annual Joint Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees in June, the format of the item had been reviewed as the council trialled new methods of reporting performance monitoring information. The Senior

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Corporate and Democratic Services Officer sought feedback from members on the new format of the performance monitoring report.

The Director of Operational Services gave an overview of performance in quarter 1, as well as other significant areas of work that had been undertaken in addition to the targets set out in the corporate plan.

Particular consideration was given to the target to protect public safety and quality of life, and how the changing demographic of the town may impact on community safety issues in the future. The council's targets in respect of community safety were linked to targets set by the Police. The Director of Operational Services explained that the council worked closely with the Police and a variety of other agencies to address public safety issues. The council had recently invested in upgrading its CCTV monitoring equipment, which had proved effective in tackling anti-social behaviour and provide reassurance for residents and visitors. The council continued to attend the Hastings Community Safety Hub, which supported joined up working between key agencies. However, it will be necessary for the council to monitor the implementation of the restructure of Sussex Police over the coming months, and the implications of any reductions in frontline policing on recorded crime and anti-social behaviour. Efforts would also be made to strengthen the deterrents in drug related crime in public places. At their annual meeting in June, Overview and Scrutiny members had agreed to undertake a review of community safety which would consider both the current performance and how the council can effectively contribute to multi-agency working in the future.

Discussion took place regarding the planned refurbishment of Bottle Alley. A condition survey of the structure had been undertaken which would help to inform the repairs schedule when tendering for the works. The Lead Member for Regeneration, Communities and Culture acknowledged that this was a significant project and the council would seek to maximise the impact of investment in the area. Bottle Alley recently hosted an extremely successful launch party for the Coastal Currents Arts Festival. This type of event highlighted the possible alternative uses for the site and the potential for increased community involvement once the restoration had been completed. Members noted that the works to Bottle Alley were supported by a range of other regeneration initiatives in the area, including the restoration of the pier and the refurbishment of the White Rock Baths.

Members were updated on plans to develop a new interpretive centre at Hastings Country Park. Two tenders for the building work had been received, both of which significantly exceeded the budget for the project. The Lead Member for Environment, Leisure and Amenities highlighted that this was an ambitious and complex project. The project board had already begun to consider options to bring the cost of the new visitor centre in line with the budget.

The committee were advised that performance in the planning service had been affected by staff vacancies and sickness, and as a result the targets for determining major and minor residential and commercial planning applications in quarter one had not been met. The Director of Operational Services noted that demand for planners in both the public and private sector was particularly high, and this had created difficulties recruiting to the vacant posts. A number of measures had been put in place

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to recover performance over the coming year; this included placing major applications with an external specialist to respond to increased demand for the service. The council had also recruited a former lecturer at Brighton University to assist with reviewing the improvements.

Members noted that homelessness acceptances had increased when compared to quarter one in 2014/15. The situation in Hastings reflected national trends, which is also showed an increase in homelessness applications in a number of other authorities. The increase may be attributed in part to recent changes to case law which introduced a higher bench mark to classify an applicant as vulnerable, coupled with changes to the local housing market. The Director of Operational Services noted that if homelessness acceptances continued to increase then this may create additional resource implications for the council.

The committee received an update on progress to introduce a social lettings agency for the town, building on the success of the earlier Letstart scheme. Five units of accommodation had been leased in quarter one, the target was to lease a minimum of sixty units of accommodation by March 2016. The Lead Member for Housing, Communications and Equalities commented that the council had set a high standard for the privately rented accommodation it would lease as part of the scheme; this meant that not all of the accommodation put forward had been accepted. Overview and Scrutiny would continue to monitor progress with the new scheme over the coming months.

RESOLVED – (unanimously) that:

- 1) the committee's comments on quarter 1 performance be addressed by the relevant Lead Member(s) with appropriate action and report back;**
- 2) Members reflect and feedback on the new ways of reporting performance information being tested and set out in this report at the next Scrutiny Steering Group, and;**
- 3) staff in the Operational Services Directorate be thanked for their hard work and achievements in this quarter.**

The reason for this decision was:

To assist the council enhance performance management arrangements in the context of broader organisational transformation.

15. UPDATE ON THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

This item was moved up the agenda, with the agreement of the Chair.

The Senior Corporate and Democratic Services Officer presented an update on the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme. The initial meeting of the Task and Finish Group to review scrutiny functions, processes and potential streamlining had taken place in July. The remaining three areas of work that members had identified as a high priority at the Annual Joint Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees were due to begin autumn 2015.

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16. UPDATE ON THE LOCAL HEALTH LANDSCAPE

Overview and Scrutiny Members have a long-standing interest in local healthcare provision, and at the annual meeting in June members agreed to undertake a piece of work on this subject. However, before this work could be progressed, it was necessary for members to receive an update on the current local health landscape.

Members welcomed Dr Elias, Local GP and CCG Chair, Dr Susan Rae, Governing Body member and Richard Watson, Healthy Hastings and Rother Programme Manager, to the meeting.

The committee was given an overview of the local NHS provision, including the role of the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The CCG plans, co-ordinates and commissions most local NHS services, to meet health needs, on behalf of the people in Hastings and Rother. The CCG is also responsible for monitoring and evaluating the services delivered by providers to ensure that they are safe, high quality and meet patient's needs.

The CCG has commissioned a number of projects to address the priorities identified in this area, including maternity, paediatric and mental health services. Hastings and Rother CCG has also joined the East Sussex Better Together programme, a commissioning partnership between the 3 local CCGs and East Sussex County Council (ESCC), which aimed to integrate and improve local health and social care.

The presentation noted that challenges remained in the local area, including improving provider performance, particularly following the recent CQC inspection of East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust. It was also necessary to address the shortage of GP's in the local area.

The committee were updated on efforts to reduce health inequalities, which affected both wellbeing and health outcomes. Health inequalities are caused by social, economic, lifestyle and accessibility factors. The CCG has identified a number of priority areas which addressed health inequalities in Hastings and Rother.

Discussion took place regarding the lifestyle factors which impacted on health inequalities, including efforts to tackle drug and alcohol abuse and promote positive lifestyle choices. Members noted that it was especially important to encourage children and young people to take up a healthy lifestyle, particularly given national and local trends showing an increase in obesity.

Consideration was given to the shortage of local GP's. It was noted that the proportion of GP's to patients varied significantly between practices, however, the number of GPs in Hastings remained below the national average. The CCG were considering a number of options to address the shortage, including support for GP federations, and developing the role of other healthcare professionals, including primary care nurses, through improved training opportunities.

The committee discussed how local health services responded to acute medical conditions, including strokes. Members were advised that the centralised stroke unit

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at the Eastbourne District General site continued to meet its targets and performance in this area was monitored closely.

Members thanked Dr Elias, Dr Rae and Richard Watson for their presentation.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at. 8.25 pm)