

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda

**Thursday, 9 February 2017 at 6.00 pm**

Muriel Matters House, Breeds Place, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 3UY

For further information, please contact Michael Courts on 01424 451764 or email:  
[mcourts@hastings.gov.uk](mailto:mcourts@hastings.gov.uk)

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# Agenda Item 3 Public Document Pack

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**30 NOVEMBER 2016**

Present: Councillors Webb (Chair), Howard, Bacon, Batsford, Charman, Cooke, Rankin, Turner, Cartwright, Chowney, Davies, Forward and Atkins

Apologies for absence were noted for Councillor Dowling, Wincott and Poole

### **7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Councillors declared an interest at the meeting:

Councillor	Minute Number	Interest
Forward	9 – Quarter 2 2016/17 Performance and Financial Monitoring	Personal – she leases a property to the social lettings agency, which is within the selective licensing area.
Rankin	9 – Quarter 2 2016/17 Performance and Financial Monitoring	Personal – he owns a property within the selective licensing area
Chowney	9 – Quarter 2 2016/17 Performance and Financial Monitoring	Personal – he owns a property within the selective licensing area

### **8. MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2016**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 13 September 2016 be approved as correct record**

### **9. QUARTER 2 2016/17 PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING**

The Director of Corporate Services and Governance presented a report which advised members of the performance against the 2016/17 targets and performance indicators in the corporate plan for quarter 2. The report also updated on other key areas of activity over the last quarter and provided a summary of financial information.

The Director of Corporate Services and Governance advised that the quarter 2 target to increase the percentage of council tax and non-domestic rates collected in year had not been met. She explained that this was partly because more customers were now choosing to pay over 12 months rather than 10 months. The profiles for each quarter would be revised for next year.

Discussion took place regarding the implementation of welfare reforms locally, including the benefits cap and the roll out of Universal Credit, which was due to take place on 14 December 2016. The Director of Corporate Services and Governance

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**30 NOVEMBER 2016**

said that the council had been working closely with people affected by the benefits cap to help them review their spending habits. Members noted that there had been delays in payments of up to eight weeks for claimants when they move onto Universal Credit in other areas, and this would need to be monitored closely in Hastings. Because of the additional workload for the Revenues and Benefits team in implementing the welfare reforms, projects to develop online landlord portal and bailiff portal had been delayed.

The committee were advised that the Assistant Director, Financial Services and Revenues, continued to monitor progress with the internal audit. Capacity within the Internal Audit, Investigation and Procurement service had been affected by the long term sickness of a member of the team, however, additional resources may be provided to ensure the internal audit was completed on time.

At their quarter 1 meeting, the committee had received a detailed update on the council's ongoing organisational transformation programme. A further update was planned for later in the year on the channel shift from traditional telephone and face to face interactions as an increasing number of council services were made available online.

Following an earlier boundary review, the Electoral Services team were carrying out a review of polling places in the Borough. The team were also administering the annual canvass period ahead of the publication of a revised Register of Electors in December. The Director of Corporate Services and Governance commented that, given the lack of funding to support promotional activities during annual canvass, members would need to play a role in highlighting the importance of voter registration to their residents.

The Director of Corporate Services and Governance agreed to circulate additional information regarding the cost of work to the Town Hall to the committee.

Consideration was given to the council's selective licensing scheme. The Assistant Director, Housing and Built Environment, advised that take up of the early bird offer, which offered reduced rates to landlords who registered their properties in the first year of the scheme, had been higher than expected. The selective licensing team was now being restructured to enable them to pursue the required enforcement activities against properties which were not yet part of the scheme. Members were advised that learning from the exit review of the additional Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing scheme and the findings of a private sector house condition survey would help to inform the development of the scheme. The committee was mindful that rents in both the private and social sector had increased.

The committee welcomed improvements in performance across the Planning Services team. The Assistant Director, Housing and Built Environment, acknowledged the challenges that had been experienced in recruiting new members of the team. He added that the additional staff would help to ensure the improvements in performance could be sustained into the future.

The Assistant Director, Environment and Place, noted a correction to the reported figure in quarter 1 for missed bin collections. He commented that the council's Waste

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and Recycling team held weekly meetings with the contractor, and this was having a positive effect in reducing the number of missed collections. The contractor had also re-organised their staffing and supervisory arrangements to ensure these improvements continued. Members had previously considered a report on the longer term contractual arrangements for the waste and street cleansing service.

The committee welcomed an update that the first Syrian refugee family had been resettled in Hastings. It was noted that the council had played a key role in delivering a government- funded scheme on behalf of all the authorities in East Sussex. Members highlighted the importance of ensuring sufficient access to appropriate support networks to ensure the families could be fully integrated into the local community.

The Assistant Director, Regeneration and Culture, agreed to circulate the latest performance update on the work of the Locate East Sussex initiative. The committee also recommended developing the profile of Hastings as a place for new businesses to invest on the Famously Hastings website.

Members requested an update from the Assistant Director, Regeneration and Culture, on the playground facilities refurbishment at Hare Way, which formed part of a broader piece of work arising from the new play facilities strategy and action plan.

The committee noted 44 units of accommodation had been secured by the Social lettings Agency by the end of quarter 2, against a target of 35 leases. The Assistant Director, Housing and Built Environment, advised that no additional leases would be accepted by the scheme until the government had clarified the funding position in respect of this work.

Members thanked all those who had been involved in supporting events to mark the 950<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Hastings. The Assistant Director, Regeneration and Culture, noted that a strong strategic partnership, the Cultural Leaders Group, had been formed to co-ordinate these activities and efforts would be made to develop this approach further. The group would also carry out monitoring of feedback from the events.

Discussion took place regarding the longer term plans for the regeneration of the White Rock area. Councillor Chowney advised that a stakeholder meeting had taken place with a variety of organisations from the private and voluntary sector, about potential ways to develop the site. The feedback from the meeting had been broadly supportive of an approach which combined commercial, leisure and residential uses for the site, whilst maintaining areas of open space.

### **RESOLVED that:**

- 1. The committees comments on quarter 2 performance be addressed with appropriate action and report back to the committee where necessary, and;**
- 2. Staff be thanked for their hard work and achievements in this quarter**

The reason for this decision was:

To assist the council undertake performance management arrangements.

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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### 10. **BRIEFING FROM THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP TO REVIEW THE COUNCIL'S NEW WEBSITE**

The Corporate and Democratic Services Officer updated the committee on the work of a task and finish group of overview and scrutiny members who had been reviewing the council's new website.

At their annual meeting in July, members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had noted that a key aspect of the council's organisational transformation programme was to make a number of council services available online. The Customer First Communications Champion and his team had work with services across the council to review the content and overhaul the layout of the website.

The members of the task and finish group were Councillors Howard, Rankin and Dowling. The group had tested the customer journey on the new website carrying out a range of transactions. The group's recommendations had then been followed up by the Customer First Communications Champion and his team. Members requested further information about the monitoring of the new website that would be undertaken over the coming months.

The committee welcomed the work of the task and finish group. It was noted that the use of practical exercises could have applications to other overview and scrutiny work.

### 11. **UPDATE ON THE 2016/17 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Continuous Improvement and Democratic Services Manager updated the committee on progress on the key work programme activities they had agreed at their annual meeting. He noted that a number of the updates they requested had now been scheduled.

Councillors Howard, Webb, Cooke and Rankin agreed to form a review team to consider the effectiveness of the council's new structure for overview and scrutiny.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**30 NOVEMBER 2016**

Members requested an updated on the implementation of the recommendations of an earlier review of educational attainment in the town.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at. 7.53 pm)

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## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**26 JANUARY 2017**

Present: Councillors Webb (Chair), Howard (Vice-Chair), Bacon, Batsford, Cooke, Dowling, Rankin, Turner and Wincott

Lead Members in attendance: Councillors Chowney and Forward

Apologies for absence were noted for Councillor Charman and Atkins

### **1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Councillors declared an interest in the minutes:

Councillor	Minute	Interest
Forward	2 – Draft Corporate Plan 2017/18 to 2018/19 and 3 – Consultation on the Revenue Budget 2016/17 (Revised) and 2017/18, plus Capital Programme 2017/18 to 2018/19	Prejudicial – she leases a property to the Social Lettings Agency.  Prejudicial – she is a Trustee of the Foreshore Trust.
Dowling	3 – Consultation on the Revenue Budget 2016/17 (Revised) and 2017/18, plus Capital Programme 2017/18 to 2018/19	Personal – her wife is employed in the Community Contact Centre.
Howard	3 – Consultation on the Revenue Budget 2016/17 (Revised) and 2017/18, plus Capital Programme 2017/18 to 2018/19	Personal – he is a member of Unison.
Wincott	3 – Consultation on the Revenue Budget 2016/17 (Revised) and 2017/18, plus Capital Programme 2017/18 to 2018/19	Personal – he is a ward Councillor for Ore.

### **2. DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2017/18 TO 2018/19**

The Continuous Improvement and Democratic Services Manager presented the draft Corporate Plan 2017/18 to 2018/19. Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were invited to comment on the draft plan, as part of the consultation period.

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26 JANUARY 2017

The committee commented that the refreshed layout of the corporate plan had improved the accessibility of the document. The council's activities had been grouped around 5 thematic areas of cleaner and safer, support when it's needed, driving economic growth, strategic planning and income generation. Iconography from the council's new website has also been used throughout the plan and the text has been written in plain English.

Discussion took place regarding opportunities which might attract new business to town. The Director of Operational Services commented that a wide range of measures contributed to creating a business friendly environment. These include a safe, clean town, cultural offer, good schools as well as specific business support measures. The council participated at County and regional levels to encourage investment and its planning policies were intended to provide opportunities to encourage business development

Consideration was given to potential performance indicator targets for income generation. The council had recently appointed an Income Generation Manager to lead and support income generation activities. The Income Generation Manager would work closely with the Income Generation Board to set appropriate targets and timescales for individual projects and the overall income generation programme. Staff across the council would be engaged in the council's new approach to income generation and encouraged to submit ideas and suggestions. The council would also look at examples of good practice from other authorities who have already developed similar income generation programmes.

The Continuous Improvement and Democratic Services Manager added that the performance indicator targets for 2017/18 would be set in June 2017, once members have had the opportunity to consider the year-end performance information from 2016/17.

The draft corporate plan stated that the council would continue to support Higher Education provision in the town and the development of provision to succeed the University of Brighton. The Director of Operational Services advised that the College has set up a University Centre which was to be welcomed. The 3 local councils would continue to seek further growth and there were ongoing discussion.

The committee considered options to increase the supply of affordable housing in the town. The council continued to work with Housing Associations and developers on this issue. The committee were mindful of recent changes to planning legislation, in respect of the provision of affordable housing on new developments. Councillor Forward, having declared a prejudicial interest in the Social Lettings Agency, left the chamber when this matter was discussed.

**RESOLVED that the comments of the Budget Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the council's draft corporate plan for 2017/18 – 2018/19 be referred to Budget Cabinet for consideration**

The reason for this decision was:

To ensure the joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee comments can be considered by the Budget Cabinet, prior to final recommendations being made to the Full Council.

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26 JANUARY 2017

### 3. CONSULTATION ON THE REVENUE BUDGET 2016/17 (REVISED) AND 2017/18, PLUS CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18 TO 2018/19

The Assistant Director, Financial Services and Revenues, presented a report to consult members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the revenue budget and capital programme, as part of the public consultation process. The report noted significant ongoing reductions to the council's funding and ongoing uncertainty regarding the economic conditions the council would be operating in. Significant risks to the authority were also posed by the compensation claim in respect of Hastings Pier and business rate appeals. The council continued to pursue opportunities to achieve savings, efficiencies and generate additional income.

Discussion took place regarding options to retain staff within the authority, given the limited increase in pay across the public sector. Members were mindful that retaining key staff was key to the council's income generation activities. The committee were advised that staff were engaged with the income generation programme, as a way of improving the long-term sustainability of council services. The council continued to develop the training and career progression opportunities it offered for staff.

Members noted that demand for council services were likely to increase over the coming year. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee were due to receive an update from the Corporate Customer Services Manager on the channel shift in customer enquiries, as an increasing number of council services were made available online.

Discussion took place regarding the social lettings agency. Councillor Forward, having declared a prejudicial interest in this matter, left the chamber during the debate. Members were advised that the social lettings agency was not accepting any new leases until the government's review of homelessness payments. The social lettings agency was a key initiative for addressing homelessness in the town, and the council would review the scheme once the government had clarified future grant arrangements.

Members noted that the selective licensing scheme had achieved a small surplus over the past year. The Assistant Director, Financial Services and Revenues, advised that this surplus would be used to repay the reserves used when the scheme was operating with a deficit. The initiative was still forecast to break-even over the life of the scheme.

The East Sussex Procurement Hub had undertaken an exercise on behalf of the council in respect of the publication of public notices. Although a limited number of companies could meet the required criteria, the Hastings Independent Press had won the tender. The paper was published fortnightly and had a circulation of around 14,000.

Discussion took place regarding the proposed closure of public conveniences in Ore Village. A suggestion had been put forward during the consultation period to introduce

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**26 JANUARY 2017**

a charge for using the toilets, although it was difficult to estimate whether the income from the charge could cover the cost of maintaining the facilities.

A saving was proposed by removing a council tax exemption period for properties undergoing structural alteration. Concerns were raised that this may discourage residents from improving neglected properties. The Assistant Director, Financial Services and Revenues, responded that the proposal reflected the council's financial position, a council tax support scheme had already been approved which was intended to protect vulnerable sections of the community.

Members were mindful that the budget setting process included the deletion 8.9 full time equivalent (FTE) posts. A number of the posts identified for deletion were already vacant. The Director of Corporate Services and Governance explained that the council sought to minimise the number of compulsory redundancies by exploring options to re-deploy staff where possible. A comprehensive programme of service reviews was also underway across the council, which would engage teams across the organisation.

Discussion took place regarding the impact of changes to interest rates on the council's investment strategy. The Assistant Director, Financial Services and Revenues, commented that interest rates were expected to remain low for some time, and any increases would happen gradually. The council would continue to monitor its approach to investment to reflect broader economic conditions.

It was noted that members were issued with parking permits to assist them with carrying out their duties; consideration was given as to whether parking scratch cards would be a cheaper alternative. The committee requested that revised guidance be circulated to members and staff on the use of car parks around the town, to ensure parking remained available in the town centre. The committee were advised that routine works would be undertaken in the car park at Rock-A-Nore to remove pot holes. Councillor Forward, having declared a prejudicial interest in this matter left the chamber during the debate.

Members noted an item in the capital programme to introduce a new ERP system, which would replace the council's existing financial, income, and HR systems. The project was being delivered in partnership with Rother District Council.

The committee discussed the council's property disposal programme. The Assistant Director, Financial Services and Revenues, explained that each disposal was considered on a case by case basis, the council was also exploring potential additional income generation opportunities from the land and assets it owned.

Consideration was given to ongoing cultural regeneration of the town. Members commented that the events to mark the 950<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Hastings, including the ROOT1066 festival, had attracted around 75,000 visitors to the town and approximately 4,000 local people had participated in the events. The festival had also developed the profile of Hastings as an exciting place to visit.

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Members were advised that the additional income from investment properties outlined in the budget, included rental income from the industrial estate the council recently purchased.

**RESOLVED that members comments will be reported back to the Budget Cabinet on 13 February 2017**

The reason for this decision was:

Members views are sought as part of the consultation process.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at. 7.32 pm)

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# Agenda Item 5



**Report to:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 9 February 2017

**Report Title:** Performance and Financial Monitoring Quarter 3 2016/17

**Report By:** Jane Hartnell, Director of Corporate Services and Governance and  
Simon Hubbard, Director of Operational Services

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## Purpose of Report

To advise Members of the performance against the 2016/17 targets and performance indicators in the corporate plan for quarter 3 (1st October to 31st December), to update members on other key areas of activity during quarter 3 and to provide associated financial information.

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## Recommendation(s)

1. That the Committee's comments on quarter 3 performance be addressed with appropriate action and report back to the committee where necessary.
2. That staff be thanked for their hard work and achievements in this quarter.

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## Reasons for Recommendations

To assist the Council undertake performance management arrangements.

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## Introduction

1. The Council meeting on 24th February 2016 agreed the corporate plan for the period 2016/17 to 2018/19 – these documents set out the Council's strategic direction and outlines associated work areas for 2016/17.
2. The Overview and Scrutiny committee monitor progress against the targets and performance indicators set out in the corporate plan on a quarterly basis.

### Performance Monitoring

3. The accompanying Director reports assist in steering the focus for scrutiny debate, covering key exceptions (performance shortfalls) and highlighting where there are deviations from expected performance against corporate plan targets, but also updating members on additional areas of activity absorbing officer time and resources.
4. A further supplementary document is also provided. The first part of this document complements the Director reports and highlights quarter two performance exceptions – those areas not meeting expected performance.
5. The latter part gives Members a progress update against all commitments in the corporate plan, highlighting expected performance over the year and flagging associated risks and mitigation.
6. It is intended that Members do not go through this supplementary document in detail at the meeting, as the Director reports flag the key performance exceptions.
7. Progress against each key activity is assigned a RAG (Red ,Amber, Green) status:

Targets 'on target' or 'achieved' are identified as Green.

Targets where there is 'slippage' or 'potential slippage' are identified as Amber.

Targets that 'will not meet target' are identified as Red.

Progress against Performances Indicators for the year up to the end of the quarter are shown as either 'Met' or 'Not Met'.

8. In the main, targets have been agreed for completion within the 2016/17 year, but increasingly a number of targets activities may complete or extend within or beyond the 2016/17 year, examples of this are the Transformation Programme and EU funding programme that are reported on separately.

### Summary of Council-Wide Financial Information

9. Revenue Budget – The current forecasted outturn position at quarter 3 as shown in the table 1 below is an overall favourable variance to budget of £271,000.



10. The overall variance for the Council is (£271,010) which is made up of £80,779 Operational Services and Corporate Resources of (£351,788). However this position is after the net use of reserves of (£85,017) as shown in table 1 below
11. The overall variance in the operating revenue budgets may change as the budget progresses and does not reflect the changes in funding, investments and PIER changes that increase the deficit to (£610,000).
12. The overall variance for the Council is (£271,010) which is made up of £80,779 Operational Services and Corporate Resources of (£351,788). However this position is after the net use of reserves of (£85,017) as shown in table 1 below

### 13. Revenue

Table 1: Corporate Resources and Operational Services – Revenue position

Directorate	Original 2016/17 Net Budget	2016/17 Draft Forecast Outturn	Variance	Use of Reserves	2016/17 Estimated Outturn Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Operational Services</b>	10,786	11,215	429	(348)	81
<b>Corporate Resources</b>	5,333	4,718	(615)	263	(352)
<b>Total for Hastings Borough Council</b>	16,119	15,933	(186)	(85)	(271)

14. Corporate Services are forecasting a favourable variance (£352,000) to budget which is mainly due savings on rent following the purchase of Aquila House (£170,065). The gross saving on rent was £270,770 but interest only of £100,705 will be paid in 16/17. The prudential borrowing used to fund the purchase will incur costs from 2017/18. There was also saving of £58,000 of Housing Benefit payments due to the net movement between payments made and grants received. The rest of the variance is made up of small positive and negative variances throughout the directorate
15. Operational Services are forecasting an adverse variance of £81,000. There are numerous variances throughout the Directorate but the most notable of which are adverse variances on Selective Licensing £200,000 and the Housing Licencing Team £204,000. These are partially offset by use of reserves £348,000 and other favourable variances through the Directorate.

### 16. Capital

17. Capital Programme – as Table 2 shows that the gross expenditure to 30 December 2016 was £15.627m with a full year forecast of £17.260m against a budget of £11.5m which includes £0.9m of carry forwards.

Table 2 Capital Programme

Directorate	Original Budget 2016/17	Carry-forwards	Revised Budget	Spend to date including commitments 2016/17	QTR 3 Projected to year end	Qtr 3 Variance to Revised Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate Resources	6,049	362	6,411	13,746	14,577	8,166
Operational services	4,522	566	5,088	1881	2,683	(2,405)
	10,571	928	11,499	15,627	17,260	5,761

18. Within the Corporate Directorate there have been two large additions (Muriel Matters House and Sedlescombe Road North Retail Park) to the capital programme that were not in the original budget as the acquisitions were unknown at the time the budget was set.
19. Corporate Resources are showing additional costs on a number of projects such as the new factory unit £40,000 and Town Hall works £29,000.
20. In regards to the Churchfields Estate there has been changes to both projects. There has been a delay on the Land £620,000 and a Factory proposal has now been cancelled (£370,000).
21. Operational Services are forecasting an underspend due to a number of large projects such as the Harbour Arms & New Groynes (£175,000), Castle Access and Interpretation (£238,000) and Country park Interpretive Centre (£161,000) incurring delays in the programme. Some of these relate to timing of external funding decisions but it is anticipated by managers that the programmes will be delivered to budget.

## Wards Affected

Report Template v28.0

None

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## Policy Implications

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	No
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	No
Risk Management	No
Environmental Issues	No
Economic/Financial Implications	No
Human Rights Act	No
Organisational Consequences	No
Local People's Views	No
Anti-Poverty	No

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## Additional Information

Director Reports- Corporate Services and Governance and Operational Services  
Performance Exceptions  
Supplementary Performance Information

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## Officer to Contact

Officer Name Mark Horan  
Officer Email Address mhoran@hastings.gov.uk  
Officer Telephone Number 01424 451485

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# Briefing Note



Subject: **Corporate Services and Governance Director's Quarter 3 report**

Submitted to: **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Date: **9 February 2017**

Prepared by: **Jane Hartnell, Director of Corporate Services and Governance**

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Quarter 3 is a key quarter for performance and organisational processes. The outcome of the significant all-council corporate and financial planning work completed in quarter 3 informs the draft budget and corporate plan.

Where performance is not meeting expectations by the end of this quarter, remedial action needs to be decided. I am pleased to report that performance on key indicators across the services have improved this quarter, and the majority are now on target for year end. Other issues and successes are also included below.

## Performance Exceptions

### Revenues and Benefits

1. The only indicator identified as Not Met this quarter is:

#### **6.1 Increase the % of Council Tax collected in year to 96.3%**

Quarter two performance was **88.7%** compared to profile target of **Q3 – 90.2%**

The Revenues Manager is still confident that this target will be met by year-end. Our approach to pursuing debt has been refined, we are working differently with customers, having more telephone contact and accepting payments at time of the call. This has the benefit of avoiding court attendance and less use of bailiffs, thereby freeing up time for officers to chase up customers and avoids customers building up further debts. Performance in recovering debt after year-end is also improving – this therefore leads to a higher collection rate overall.

2. Other issues for the team are:

- a. The software and processes for issuing bills for the Town Centre Bid levy have been implemented in time for annual billing; there was a very short

turnaround time for this work as it obviously could not be started prior to the outcome of the BID election.

- b. The benefit grant subsidy claim has been submitted but is still awaiting sign off by external auditors.
- c. The roll out of Universal Credit for working age new claimants has been underway since December. Although numbers to date have been not significant, there are some teething problems and some issues with communications with DWP are emerging. As we no longer deliver housing benefits to these residents, our housing colleagues do not have a direct channel for communications with DWP over individual case issues which is challenging for us and our residents.

### **Revenues and Community Contact Centre**

- d. Planning for annual billing is underway with CCC colleagues – the aim is to mitigate the expected spike in customer contact by clarity of communications, promotion of Myhastings to encourage self-reporting and self-service and forward planning with services to avoid other significant contact at this time.

### **Organisational staffing issues**

- 3. The People and Business Support team are working with South Coast College Hastings prior to implementation of the new apprenticeship levy from April. Together they are understanding the apprenticeships standards and how we can use them to address our organisational skills needs/gaps which have been identified in our strategic workforce planning.
- 4. I am pleased to report that sickness performance is on target for quarter 3, however there are some areas where long term sickness is impacting in very small teams – Audit being but one example – additional resources will be needed to complete the audit plan for this year, these are being sourced currently.
- 5. There are a number of internal staffing moves across the council where colleagues have applied for new roles which, whilst positive in the longer term, cause short term issues for service delivery. These gaps are being addressed initially by offering additional hours for colleagues across HBC and have the additional benefit of people learning new skills in another area.

### **Transformation Programme**

- 6. The priority for resources in quarter three has been business process mapping to contribute to the service reviews and budget discussions. Capacity of service managers, their teams and colleagues supporting the transformation programme determines the speed at which progress can be made. The 'as is' position is completed for the priority service review areas, work is on-going to develop the 'ideal' and then to agree and resource implementation plans.

7. Further priority customer transaction processes have been launched on My Hastings including complaints and FOI.
8. Significant work was undertaken in qtr 3 to develop the business case for the new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system which Cabinet approved in early January.
9. Members requested at the last meeting more details about channel shift and a presentation will therefore be given to the performance review meeting and O & S.

### **Continuous Improvement**

10. Significant work has been undertaken with members and senior managers to design a new style corporate plan and streamlined supporting processes. These are being piloted over the next few months and members views will be very welcome to ensure they meet all needs and are fit for purpose.

### **Financial Services and Internal Audit**

11. The revised budget process and development of 2017/18 budget has again been a challenging time for finance colleagues as well as service managers. The vacancy of the senior accountant post has been an additional strain this year.

### **Legal Service and Elections**

12. The Pier arbitration process has required a significant input from the Legal team as well as the Chief Legal Officer who has been needed at the arbitration for 8 working days to date.
13. The elections team have two vacant posts following the departure of two administration officers. The experience in the team is now limited to that of the Elections Manager. Additional support has been identified to assist the team from March – end May with the ESCC election, in the form of a very experienced retired ex-employee. This post holder will provide some resilience and support for the manager and will assist in the training and development of the new post holders once recruitment has taken place.

Jane Hartnell, January 2017

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# Briefing Note



Subject: **Briefing by Director of Operational Services**

Submitted to: **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Date: **9 February 2017**

Prepared by: **Simon Hubbard, Director of Operational Services**

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For Q3 I have identified both performance issues and positive news from each of the 3 service groups in the Directorate. I am pleased to be able to report that progress has been made to address both planning and waste collection performance in particular and would like to thank the planning and waste teams for their work – often in challenging circumstances. However, I hope members will note that colleagues are providing services effectively and well across the Council as well as supporting the successful delivery of our transformation programme.

## Regeneration & Culture

### Performance Issues

#### 1. Hastings Museum

Hastings Museum has attracted 34,401 visitors so far, which is marginally less than the 35,000 target for the first three quarters of the year (a 1.7% variance). However, the number of theatre-goers to the White Rock Theatre exceeded the 9 month target by 10.45%, and the number of people using the Council's leisure centres exceeded the 9 month target by 2.3%.

#### 2. Seafront Projects

Lack of staff capacity (exacerbated by ill health absence), as well as contractor delays have resulted in slippages to some projects. The most notable of these are planned improvements to Bottle Alley and the improvements to the Promenade near White Rock Baths (which are now complete). Phase 1 of the major works to mitigate flood risk which involved the construction and reinforcing of groynes has been successfully completed. Improvements to some of the Castle signage and visitor facilities have also been completed.

#### 3. White Rock Area Action Plan

A wide range of representatives from community groups, organisations and other stakeholders attended a workshop held before Christmas to consider current and future opportunities for the White Rock Area. The outcome of this successful workshop will help inform plans that will be drawn up to improve the area as a destination for a variety of cultural, recreational and other activity.

Discussions with ESCC transport colleagues have identified the desirability of some detailed analysis and modelling of potential changes/improvements to the road network, in order to identify preferred options for inclusion in the Area Action

Plan consultation document for the Town Centre and White Rock area. This will take some time, and warrants a slippage in the current proposed Qtr 4 timeframe for preparation of this document.

## **Updates**

### **4. External Funding**

The Council's submissions under the complex and multi-stage approval processes for a second Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) programme and Community Led Local Development (CLLD) continue to be successful, and the new FLAG programme is due to be launched in the final quarter of this year. Final approval of the CLLD programme is anticipated in early 2017-18.

### **5. BIDs**

The ballot for the establishment of a Business Improvement District (BID) in Hastings Town Centre was successful, and the Council will be supporting the establishment of a new BID organisation over the coming months. This is a very positive development. The process was supported by staff from a number of teams including finance, electoral services and regeneration.

### **6. 950<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and ROOT 1066**

The 950<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Hastings, and associated ROOT1066 programme, generated very considerable local, regional, national and international publicity for the town. A lot of staff were involved in these events, and I would like to acknowledge the contribution they made to their undoubted success as well as the input of many partners in Hastings, Bexhill and Battle.

## **Environment & Place**

### **Performance Issues**

#### **7. Waste Contract**

Earlier in the year Members raised concerns about poor waste contract performance particularly missed refuse and recycling collections. The Waste and Streetscene Manager has been working with Kier to improve this performance, and I am pleased to be able to report that the cumulative average for quarters one to three inclusive was 133/100,000 collections, which is very close to the target of no more than 130/100,000.

As requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee we also arranged a special meeting for all Members to brief them on the operation of the waste contract in relation to missed collections, including the application of the rectification and default provisions of the contract.

## **Housing & Built Environment**

### **Performance Issues**

#### **8. Planning Performance**

Planning performance saw a further improvement in Quarter 3 with performance returning to target levels. All target indicators were met or exceeded in Quarter 3 going some way to recovering the year-end target position including that for

performance on major applications which were affected by a performance shortfall in Q1. As outlined before it is unlikely that cumulative targets for the year will achieve annual performance. However, it does seem that the team led by Eleanor Evans have moved to first stabilise and then improve performance.

The full staffing complement should be in place by Q4 and is anticipated therefore that performance in the later part of 2016/217 will be consolidated in 2017/2018

## **Updates**

### **9. Additional Licensing Scheme**

The existing additional licensing scheme ended in September. A stock condition survey has also been carried out and a final report is anticipated shortly. The survey will form part of an exit review of the last scheme and help inform proposals for any replacement additional scheme to be considered by Cabinet early in 2017/18

### **10. Selective Licensing**

Extremely good progress has been made with the implementation of the selective licensing scheme. In excess of 4000 license application have been received to date and the number of private sector dwellings brought into line with the statutory standard has already exceeded the annual target.

As reported previously the early bird discount offered at the start of the scheme will require the 5 Year Business Plan to be adjusted over the life of the project. Once the backlog of applications has been cleared officers will be redoubling their efforts to pursue enforcement against the owner's properties that remain unlicensed, to ensure that all properties are licensed and that the project is self-funded over the life of the scheme

### **11. Housing Company**

Cabinet approval was given in principle for the establishment of a Local authority owned housing company in December. Officers will be developing a business plan for the first acquisitions in 2017/2189.

## **Income Generation**

We welcome Marcus Lawler as our new Income Generation Manager who has worked in this type of role at Maidstone Council.

Marcus is getting to know his way around the Council but will bring forward an income generation strategy and action plan. This will be discussed at the Income Generation Board and then Cabinet in the near future. Additionally we have had the early support of the LGA efficiency advisor Robin Porter who is a Director of Luton Council. Robin will review our progress and structure with an outside eye to help us make sure we are clear and focused in how we balance risk and opportunity going forward. The adoption of more commercial ways of thinking will change us as much as the current transformation process is doing and both need to be viewed as essential for the Council to remain effective and relevant.

Simon Hubbard

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# Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2016/17 – Quarter 3 Update

Phase

Quarter 1

Meeting with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council – the future of the council and corporate prioritising – **meeting held in September 2016**

Update on the organisational transformation programme at Q1 committee meeting – **update submitted to committee**

Update to Q1 committee meeting on EU funding programme – **update included in Director's briefing to committee**

Briefing on waste and street cleansing in advance of Q1 committee meeting – **briefing circulated. Update meeting held in December 2016.**

Quarter 2

Base Budgeting – learning from cleaning contract procurement process – **to be considered by Scrutiny Steering Group**

Update to Q2 committee meeting on Cultural Regeneration – **meeting held in January 2017.**

Quarter 3

Update to Q3 committee meeting on the Planning Service – potential special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – **meeting scheduled for March 2017.**

Commence review of Scrutiny functions – **initial meeting scheduled for February 2017.**

Update on initiatives as part of a greener town and associated income generation opportunities – **to be considered by Scrutiny Steering Group.**

Update to Q3 committee meeting on application IT to assist transformation, including use of blockchain technologies – **format of update to be considered by Scrutiny Steering Group.**

Quarter 4

Concluding the 2016/17 work programme

Agenda Item 6

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