

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4 SEPTEMBER 2018

Present: Councillors Webb (Chair), Rankin, Barnett, Battley, Beaney, Cox, Evans, and O'Callaghan

Apologies for absence were noted for Councillor Berelson, Cllr Charman, Cllr Foster

### 34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor	Minute	Interest
Evans	36 – Performance and Financial Monitoring for 2018/19 – Quarter 1	Personal - She has a Freedom Leisure membership pass
Rankin	36 – Performance and Financial Monitoring for 2018/19 – Quarter 1	Personal – He owns property in Hastings.
Webb	36 – Performance and Financial Monitoring for 2018/19 – Quarter 1	Personal – He is an East Sussex County Councillor.

### 35. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 JULY 2018

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Annual Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 12 July 2018 be approved as a correct record of the meeting.

### 36. PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING FOR 2018/19 - QUARTER 1

Coral Harding, Senior Continuous Improvement and Democratic Services Officer presented a report on the performance and financial monitoring for 2018/19 in quarter 1. She stated that the performance indicators for some topics had been changed so that they displayed more information.

Councillors raised a question about the figures in paragraph three of the report, and whether they were incorrect. The response was that there would be an amendment to the figures, in that Corporate Services Outturn should be £3.7 million, with the variant being £3679.

The committee asked about the reasons behind the variations in the report and requested some elaboration as to what they mean. Simon Hubbard, Director of Operational Services stated that the Quarter 1 figures are the projected view over the entire year. However, he stated that certain things are to be taken in to mind, such as

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high levels of homelessness affecting statistics such as the overspend of £97,000 for example on homelessness.

The Local Land charge register was shown to have an adverse variance of £31,000, which was down to the fact that private sector housing seems to be cheaper, whilst the Council prioritises reliability of housing, however it is unknown whether this trend will remain permanent.

It was stated furthermore that there was a £98,000 deficit on energy generation, as there has been delays on getting on-shore wind generation set up due to government policy, however the council was now looking in to getting photovoltaic cells.

He further stated that Democratic Services had an underspend of £17,000 whilst Internal Audit had an underspend of £16,000. This was due to vacant staff posts that have since been filled

The group discussed performance indicators. It was stated that the street cleaning service had not accomplished the targets, but on the other hand, the bin collection target had been exceeded, with over 100 bin collections. Furthermore, the recycled household waste target had been achieved.

A discussion was had around the state of emergency placement, and it was suggested to perhaps invite colleagues from housing to talk on the matter. This had increased, as well as the amount of complex needs individuals in the town.

It was discussed that the planning department was achieving for the year, despite being understaffed.

Jane Hartnell, Director of Corporate Services & Governance went on to speak about the targets for benefits claims being increased, and then that there had been a change of circumstance in regards to the work that the council was doing as an organisation.

She stated that a lot more generic working was taking place, which was different to how the organisation had operated before, but was worthwhile to provide resilience for vacancies and sickness absence.

The group also discussed the museum, with questions being raised in regards to whether the targets that were set for the amount of visitors to the museum were realistic and achievable. The answer to these questions was that recently, there had been a managerial change, with the new manager being very enthusiastic and dedicated. Furthermore, there would be a stated increase with the Dino Day event being such a success.

The group discussed an item of clothing that was being displayed in the Hastings Museum that was a traditional garb from Hawaii. They discussed perhaps selling this piece of clothing on, to bring money back to the council but the viability of this, and the possibility of this was something to be discussed in the future.

The group asked whether there was a pattern to sickness absences, but it was said that there was no regular pattern, with all sicknesses coming down to a mixture of stress, skeletal, infection, stomach and flu. Jane Hartnell mentioned that the

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organisation would aid employees in returning to work and leaving work also. The group questioned whether it was stress that was the highest factor towards illness, but it was stated that the issue was more complex than stress simply being the highest factor.

The committee discussed at the meeting that in regards to the Council Tax reduction scheme may need help with councillors to have the public take part in the consultation. It was encouraged to promote taking part in this consultation, due to the wide-reaching affects that this has on the town.

The committee asked about what kind of future proofing there was in place, and whether the trajectory of such a contingency was more difficult in the upcoming years. The answer was that future proofing plans included improvements to prioritization and the refocusing of work. Regeneration was one of the plans to try and keep viable funding coming in, such as projects like energy generation too.

### **RESOLVED (unanimously) that:**

- 1. That the committees comments on 2018/19 performance be addressed by the relevant Lead Member(s) with appropriate action and report back**
- 2. That staff be thanked for their hard work and achievements**

The reason for this recommendation was:

To assist the council to undertake performance management arrangements

### **37. UPDATE ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19**

Coral Harding, Senior Continuous Improvement and Democratic Services Officer presented the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2018/19. She stated that the Meet the Leader meeting had been completed, and a meeting for the education review was upcoming on Tuesday, 11 September 2018.

The Vice-Chair of the Committee was drafting a response to the Bohemia Action Plan, which was still currently in progress, with the lines of inquiry set out.

Councillor Barnett was said to be leading on the regeneration funding review, looking at historic and current funding from regeneration.

Councillor Rankin was leading on the continuation of the education review, and gave a rundown. He stated that last year's work of the sub-group was good. However, he stated that the schools were still performing the same. There was a possibility that an Opportunities Area Board inquiry could be productive towards the review.

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**RESOLVED** that:

The committee note the updates to the overview and scrutiny work programme for 2018/19

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.20pm)