

Review Committee – 12 November 2013

Minutes of the meeting of the **Review Committee** held on **12 November 2013** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr C J Lumley
Vice-Chairman: Cllr D J Sperring

Cllr Mrs L A Butcher
Cllr R R Dray
Cllr J D Griffin
Cllr Mrs A V Hale

Cllr B T Hazlewood
Cllr M Hoy
Cllr C G Seagers
Cllr I H Ward

VISITING MEMBER

Cllr Mrs J E McPherson

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs T J Capon, J R F Mason, Mrs C E Roe and Mrs M J Webster.

OFFICERS PRESENT

A Dave	-	Chief Executive
C Cox	-	Financial Services Manager/Chief Accountant
A Lowing	-	Strategic Partnership Officer
P Gowers	-	Overview and Scrutiny Officer
M Power	-	Committee Administrator

228 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 OCTOBER 2013

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

229 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr C J Lumley declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 6 of the Agenda by virtue of his wife being Chairman of Rayleigh, Rochford and District Association for Voluntary Service (RRAVS).

230 MID-YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Finance with a mid-year review of the Council's treasury management.

In response to Member questions, the following was noted:-

- The Council's advisers provide credit ratings for all financial institutions. The Council then ensures that all investments are kept within agreed limits with organisations that meet the Authority's agreed acceptable credit

criteria. Investments are spread to ensure that risk is minimised.

- The indication that the economy is recovering is based on a view of the economy as a whole; it is not focussed on the local situation. Likewise, it is indicated that pay growth is increasing in the economy generally. Credit ratings for individual banks are provided to the Council and this will determine whether the Council will invest in them. The Co-operative Bank is currently the Council's bank.
- The original forecast by Capita has now been amended to show interest rates increasing later in the 2014/15 year.
- Capita would be asked to advise on the potential for local authorities to consider legal action against banks to recover the lost income due to Libor fixing.
- Estimates for capital expenditure have been revised to include expenditure that has been rolled over from the previous year, as well as changes to the programme. All changes are agreed by Members.

Resolved

That the contents of the Mid Year Treasury Management Review be submitted to the Executive. (HF)

231 REVIEW OF HOW VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY GROUPS FUNCTION IN THE DISTRICT

[Cllr J E McPherson declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item by virtue of her employment with Southend Association of Voluntary Services.]

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive, which provided Members with an update on the recommendations in the Report of the Review Committee on 'How Voluntary and Community Groups Function in the District' published in January 2013.

The following updates were provided:-

- There were 25 voluntary and statutory organisations present at the 'Your Community' event in Rayleigh on 8 November, with 40 attendees.
- Rayleigh, Rochford and District Association for Voluntary Service (RRAVS) is preparing documentation for a grant submission to Rochford District Council; the deadline for receipt of the application is 22 November.

In response to Member questions, the following was noted:-

- The Council's website now has a page with information on voluntary organisations in Rochford, which includes links to guidance notes on how to apply for voluntary sector grants and an application form and map of

voluntary groups in the District.

- The Council's Asset Manager is in conversation with the Citizens Advice Bureau in respect of reviewing their use of the accommodation they occupy in Rochford and Rayleigh; recommendations will be made to the Council's Senior Management Team when available.
- Although the 'Your Community' event was publicised widely, via the Rochford District Council website and posters and flyers around Rayleigh, Members commented that there had been little advertising on the day, in particular outside the Mill Hall where the event was held. To encourage greater attendance, it was suggested that future events could be held on a Wednesday, when the market is held in Rayleigh and when Wyvern Community Transport provides transport into Rayleigh. There could also be advertising in Rochford market on the Tuesday before the event and details of the event forwarded to all District Councillors. These suggestions would be fed back to RRAVS.
- Castle Point Association of Voluntary Services (CAVS) have been advised that when delivering projects in the Rochford District they must work in partnership with RRAVS.
- Castle Point Council provides accommodation for CAVS and helps towards funding the salary of the CAVS Chief Executive. It was requested that Castle Point Council be asked how much it gives in total to CAVS.
- Although the local Voluntary Service organisations are encouraged to work in partnership, there are no plans for them to be merged, as it is important that a local delivery in Rochford be retained.
- A letter had been sent to the Cabinet Office by the Portfolio Holder for Young Persons, Adult Services, Community Care & Wellbeing, Health and Community Safety raising the issue of various Government departments providing full advice to their clients, rather than letting individual CAB offices deal with problems that occur because of the lack of clear guidance and assistance from these departments. A response will be chased.

Resolved

That the report be noted. (CE)

232 WORK PLAN

The Committee discussed its work plan for the current year. The following was noted:-

- The Chairman requested that the Portfolio Holder for the Environment, Leisure, Arts and Culture and the Head of Environmental Services be

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invited to attend the Review Committee meeting with SITA UK scheduled for 3 December.

- During discussion of additional work items that could be programmed for the remainder of the 2013/14 year, it was agreed that the proposed review of Highways services in the District should be split into two parts, as follows:-
 - ‘Delivery of local highway maintenance services’ (to be undertaken first).
 - ‘Highways plans in respect of the proposed new developments in the District’.
- In addition to County Highways representatives, Members requested that The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation and the Head of Planning and Transportation be invited to attend these meetings.
- A project team (Cllrs B T Hazlewood, M Hoy, C J Lumley, Mrs C E Roe, D J Sperring and I H Ward) would be established to undertake the review, ‘Maintenance of the buildings within the Leisure contract’.
- The other two suggested items for review, ‘Strategic Review of the Council’s football provision to include a review of the pavilions and possible improvements’ and ‘Implementation of the changes to the welfare system’ would be undertaken if time permits.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

Chairman

Date

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