

AUDIT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 22 January 2019 (6:15 pm – 8:02 pm)

PRESENT:

Councillor Holes (Chairman); Councillors Rushton, Atkinson, Dean, Manning, Irish, Trace and Tyson-Payne

Also in attendance: Councillors Grajewski, Campbell and Craig

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bourne

RESOLVED ITEMS (SUBJECT TO QUESTIONS ONLY)

63. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Councillor Grajewski asked if the Committee would consider requesting an update from officers on the status of the Hampshire Community Bank, as there appeared to be little progress at the present.

The Corporate Director – Support Services, advised that she would get an update and report back at a future meeting.

64. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2018 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

65. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in relation to items of business on the agenda.

66. EXTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS

The Corporate Director – Support Services, reported that there was now a new EY team in place to audit the Council accounts, and they would be attending the next meeting.

67. CERTIFICATE OF CLAIMS AND RETURNS ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

This item was deferred to 12 February 2019 meeting when EY would be attending.

68. ACTION LIST

This item was considered earlier on the agenda, as item 7.

The Committee considered the Action List, which set out the recent decisions and subsequent actions arising from the Committee.

It was AGREED -

That the Action List be noted and the first action could be removed as the system development would be closely monitored by the Chief Internal Auditor and progress reported as part of her regular monitoring reports.

69. CABINET FORWARD PLAN

This item was considered earlier on the agenda, as item 8.

The Committee considered the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

It was AGREED -

That the current Forward Plan be noted.

70. CAPITAL STRATEGY

The Deputy Chief Financial Officer introduced the Capital Strategy (Agenda item 7), which was a new document for 2019/20, and to be recommended for approval by Cabinet on 31 January 2019. It gave a high level overview of how capital expenditure, financing and treasury management activity contributed to the provision of local services, along with an overview of how associated risk was managed, and the implications for future financial sustainability.

Members considered the report in depth and sought clarity on a number of matters within the document including Capital Expenditure, and Investment Indicators, as set out in Appendix C1 to the report.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

71. DRAFT BUSINESS PLANS: THE POINT AND THE BERRY THEATRES

The Chair welcomed Councillors Craig and Campbell, Cabinet Portfolios for Health, and Social Policy respectively, who had both been involved with the development to drive the Vision for Arts and Culture in the Borough.

The newly appointed Arts and Culture Manager then introduced her draft business plans for The Point and The Berry Theatres (Agenda item 8) and gave an overview of the content, although not finalised, it provided a strong and stable platform from which to grow and develop.

Whilst it was essential to develop the Business plan, it had been necessary to take immediate action in adopting a more commercial focus. This included the successful submission of a small capital bid to the Arts Council in July 2018, for £368k.

There were eight areas of Arts and Culture Provision delivered at and from The Point and The Berry Theatres. The provision consisted of specific programmes:

- Professional Performances
- Professional Artists development programme
- Start-up provision for emerging creative businesses
- Community and commercial hire programme
- Schools Engagement programme
- Arts Development programme offering accessible participation across the Borough
- Festival programme
- Café/Bars and Events Programme

In considering the draft Plan, Members suggested that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) be included in the final document, and that it made reference that people enjoyed a good night out at the theatre.

In response to a question on finances, the Deputy Chief Finance Officer advised that as the figures had not previously been split into the eight specific areas it was not possible to extract exact figures, but what was spent on each theatre was set out in the Budget Book.

Members requested that the Theatres' Business Plans be kept as an item on the Work Programme until the financial figures and the EIA were available for scrutiny.

Councillor Craig thanked the Arts and Culture Manager and her team for all their hard work; they had stripped it back to the bare bones and were now rebuilding for the future. She added that they would approach and inform this Committee with updates as and when they occurred.

The Corporate Director - Support Services advised that the Performance and Governance team would include Arts and Culture in the Key Performance Indicators, and a joint committee with Policy and Performance Scrutiny Panel would be convened at a future date to look at performance against the finances of the Business Plan.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Arts and Culture Manager and all involved in carrying out a massive piece of work, and extended their thanks to Councillors Craig and Campbell.

72. UN-ADOPTED LAND - VERBAL UPDATE

The Corporate Director – Support Services updated the Committee with the following response from the Corporate Director – Service Delivery (Agenda item 9) under whose portfolio un-adopted land came:

It was advised that an appropriate graduate was to be appointed (aiming to be in post from April 2019) to develop a land register and audit which would also link to the Council’s GIS software system.

The post holder would work with the Local Area Committees, Local Area Managers, Highways, Localities officers, Estates, Development Management and other professionals to:

- Identify neglected sites and confirm ownership and map sites which had not been identified as Eastleigh Borough Council (EBC) property; and
- Co-ordinate responses to requests for leasing or purchasing sites owned by EBC.

To provide context, an analysis of insurance for damage to property, accident and injury claims was conducted for the preceding three years and it was found that land management related claims presented what was seen as a marginal level of risk in the region of £30,000/annum on average. In fact most, if not all of these claims were on sites known to be in the Council’s ownership.

Councillors previously raised the issue of development where small areas of land, not forming part of the viable development, were not maintained and then caused issues in the future. In the last year, planning applications had been required to show “SLOAP” (Space Left Over After Planning) as well as the developable area. A condition was now imposed on approved developments requiring details of how all land was to be managed in the future. This provided clarity on future ownership and responsibilities.

73. VERBAL UPDATES FROM MEMBERS REPRESENTING STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT GROUP (SRMG) / PROCUREMENT EXECUTIVE GROUP (PEG)

(a) Strategic Risk Management Group (SRMG)

Councillor Irish reported that the next meeting was to be held on 28 January 2019.

(b) Procurement Executive Group (PEG)

Councillor Atkinson reported that PEG had met that morning and considered the following:

Signing off Procurement Policy (PP) – It was advised that the PP could not be signed off because internal checks found there was a discrepancy with the EBC policy about Disabled Facility Grants (DFG). Legislation trumped internal policies but the conflict between the policies meant the Council needed to suspend publishing the PP until those conflicts were resolved.

- The Action Plan – discussion around a number of headings including:
 - Key Performance Indicators
 - Training - ongoing
 - Economic Indicators
 - Purchase Orders
- Sustainability – looking at electric vehicles at the Depot; Modern Slavery statement had been approved by Cabinet; and looking to reduce carbon footprint.
- Brexit and Procurement – Nobody really knew what was going to happen but Council was having meetings.
- Feedback from this Committee on use of credit cards – Operations Manager to report back at next meeting.

The next meeting was 26 February 2019.

74. A&R WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered its current Work Programme.

It was AGREED -

That the Work Programme be noted.

75. EXEMPT BUSINESS

As Agenda item 15 was deferred, moving Exempt Business was no longer required.

76. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER (TO BE TABLED)

This item was deferred to a future meeting.

77. THANK YOU

In drawing the meeting to a close, the Chair, along with other members of the Committee, congratulated Cheryll Kemsley, Democratic Services Specialist, on taking early retirement after 20 years at the Council. They thanked her for all her help and support over the years and wished her all the very best for the future.