

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Scrutiny Committee

HELD ON TUESDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 6.30 PM

MEETING ROOM 1, 135 EASTERN AVENUE, MILTON PARK, MILTON,
OX14 4SB

Present:

Richard Pullen (Chairman)

Elaine Hornsby, Toby Newman (as substitute for Ian White), David Turner, John Walsh, Steve Connel and Pat Dawe

Apologies:

Ian White tendered apologies.

Officers:

Adrian Duffield, William Jacobs, Ron Schrieber, Cathie Scotting and Mark Stone

Also present:

Councillors Felix Bloomfield and Jane Murphy. Simon Hewings, Chief Accountant (Capita)

15 Declarations of interest

None.

16 Urgent business and chairman's announcements

None.

17 Public participation

None.



Listening Learning Leading

18 Financial outturn 2016/17

The committee considered the report of the head of finance/chief accountant (Capita) on the final year end position for revenue and capital expenditure against budget for the financial year 2016/17.

Simon Hewings, chief accountant (Capita), introduced this item. Also present to answer questions were Councillor Jane Murphy, Cabinet member for finance, and William Jacobs, head of finance.

With regard to revenue, Table 5 of the report showed a £2.7m variance in income in 2016/17 when the impact of the Crowmarsh office fire was excluded. This was largely due to the council receiving significant amounts of unbudgeted grant together with income from fees and charges being above budgeted levels. For expenditure, there had been an increase in the underspend, year on year, of £0.7 million. Once carried forward budgets were taken into account, there was an overspend on expenditure of £0.4 million. Further information on income and expenditure was detailed in the report and appendices 1 and 2.

Capital expenditure for 2016/17 was £3.2 million, a variance of £1.4 million against the approved programme for the year. The £6.2 million remaining in the provisional programme related to schemes (detailed in appendix 4a) that had not progressed for a number of reasons, including the emergence of higher priorities or scheme delays. These would be rolled forward to 2017/18. Appendix 4b listed those capital schemes where budget holders had concluded that it would not be possible to spend the 2016/17 working budget in year. These schemes, totalling £7.2 million, had been slipped to future years.

In response to members' questions, it was reported that:

- When carry forwards and higher than expected income was excluded, there was little difference between the budgeted and actual revenue outturns.
- The Cabinet member and Capita staff were currently considering ways to improve the budget forecasting process. It was anticipated that the introduction of the new general ledger system, Integra, might assist budget holders in reviewing and updating their forecast during the financial year, and consideration would be given to asking Capita to bring forward quarter three budget monitoring activity to enable any material issues identified to be incorporated into the budget.
- The outturn had no impact on the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. The uncommitted underspend would be added to general fund balances.
- Further information would be circulated on the overspend on HR, IT revenue operations and the underspend on planning policy.

RESOLVED: to note the overall financial outturn position of the council in 2016/17 as well as the outturn of individual service areas.

19 Revised Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulation 123 List and S106 Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document

The committee considered the report of the head of planning services which updated the committee on the review of the current CIL Regulation 123 List and the S106 Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which was currently out for public consultation.

Councillor Felix Bloomfield, Cabinet member for development management, introduced this item. Also present to answer questions were Adrian Duffield, head of planning services and Cathie Scotting, major applications officer.

Councillor Bloomfield reported that the current CIL Charging Schedule was being reviewed in line with the emerging new Local Plan and revised Infrastructure Delivery Plan that reflected new development growth and infrastructure requirements. Work was ongoing, however, it was anticipated that the revised CIL Charging Schedule would not be adopted before autumn 2018 so that it would come into effect at the same time as the Local Plan.

Due to the current number of speculative planning applications, officers proposed an interim update to the Regulation 123 list and S106 SPD to accommodate speculative housing development. Waiting for the adoption of the new Local Plan might mean missing the opportunity to capture S106 contributions for necessary infrastructure to support new speculative development.

Key proposed changes to the Regulation 123 list and S106 SPD had been highlighted in appendices to the report and included:

- Where large new development sites generate the need for a new school, (whether on or off site) community facilities and health services' financial contributions will be negotiated, subject to viability, and secured through S106 legal agreements.
- Retirement housing is exempt from CIL. However, where the need arises for enhanced or expanded community and recreation facilities or to improve the public realm in town/village centres, financial contributions will be negotiated and secured through S106 legal agreements.
- A table setting out the types of play areas that may be required was included.

In response to members' questions, it was reported that:

- As a general rule, a development of 700 houses would generate the need for a new primary school. However, the cumulative effect of a number of smaller developments would be taken into account as would the capacity of schools in the area.
- Where the size of a development warranted an extension or improvements to an existing school, this would be funded via CIL
- Proposed changes to health care CIL funding were set out in the revised Regulation 123 List and revised S106 SPD.

The committee thanked the Cabinet member and officers for their clear and informative report.

RESOLVED: to note the report and ask the Cabinet member for development management to take the committee’s views into account.

20 Work schedule and dates for all South and Vale scrutiny meetings

The work schedule had been circulated and was noted.

The democratic services officer reported that, since the publication of the work schedule, an “Ask the Leader” item had been confirmed for the meeting on 23 January 2018.

The committee agreed that an item on planning appeals should be added to the committee’s work programme.

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm

Chairman

Date