

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Scrutiny Board held on 26 January 2016

Present

Councillor Branson (Chairman)

Councillors Cousins, Keast (Vice-Chairman), Lenaghan, Mackey, Perry, Shimbart, Smith K, Howard, Wade and Pike (Standing Deputy)

Councillor Francis was invited to join the Committee as co-opted member.

39 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Heard.

40 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Development Management Committee held on 12 January 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

41 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

42 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

43 Chairman's Report

The Chairman had nothing to report.

44 5 Councils' Corporate Services procurement - contract award report

The Board was given an opportunity to consider and comment upon the 5 Councils' Corporate Services Procurement - Contract Award Report. The Cabinet Lead for Marketing, the Chief Financial Officer and the Service Manager (Finance) answered members' questions in connection with the report.

The Chairman reminded the Board that the 5 Councils' Procurement Scrutiny Panel had been created to scrutinise the contract procedures and gave an update on this project

The following key points were raised during the course of the discussion:

1. certain services will be located together in "centres of excellence" for Lot 1 which was an extension of the existing arrangements with Capita: those services that need to have local interaction will be located at the Plaza;
2. the process would be reversible;
3. East Hampshire District Council would continue to have joint services with Havant through the new contract even though they were not named on the original public procurement advertisement. To achieve this they were prepared to enter revised inter-authority agreement covering the new arrangements with this Council;
4. the Contractors would be responsible for the day to day management of the services with the Council retaining responsibility for framing the policy framework;
5. where the service was standard across the five councils there would be little flexibility to make changes to the service. However, where a Council had a specific service e.g. Havant's mayoral functions there would be room for changes;
6. the Inter-Authority Agreements would be legally binding;
7. both contractors had expressed a willingness to work together;
8. the costing of the service level agreements was designed for the long term

9. It was proposed to establish and delegate the scrutiny function of the contract's services to a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Full Council would be recommended to amend its constitution to accommodate this Committee and the proposed Joint Management Committee

Although the Board agreed in principle with the recommendations set out in the report, it was considered that a final recommendation should not be made until the 5 Council's Procurement Scrutiny Panel had concluded its scrutiny into the soundness of the contract's procedures. It was also considered that due to the short timescale within which the scrutiny of the Contract had to be made, it would be impracticable for the Panel's reports to be submitted to the Board before a decision was made by the Cabinet or Council.

The Board noted that the Panel was due to complete its scrutiny of the procedures at its meeting on 2 February 2016.

It was therefore,

RESOLVED that authority be delegated to the 5 Councils' Procurement Scrutiny Panel to make a report and recommendations to the Cabinet and or Council on the scrutiny of the 5 Council's procurement Contract

45 Draft Revenue and Capital Budget 2016-17

The Board was given an opportunity to consider and comment upon the draft Revenue Budget for 2016/17. The Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader, the Chief Financial Officer and the Service Manager (Finance) answered members' questions in connection with the report.

The Board noted that the higher level penalty charge for car parking in Appendix G should read £70 and not £7.

The following key points were raised during the course of the discussion:

1. there was no demand for season tickets at Beachlands by non residents so it was proposed to remove this charge from the Budget;
2. the introduction of the individual registration system had increased the workload of the electoral registration teams at Havant and East Hampshire which could only be met by a permanent increase in the workforce
3. the additional work created by transformation projects such as the Joint Venture Company and 5 Councils had led to a temporary increase in Human Resources staffing
4. There had been a reduction in car parking income: a review of the car parking strategy (including fees) would be undertaken in 2016/17.

5. The Cabinet had carefully considered the Scrutiny Board's recommendations to retain CCTV and explored other ways to make savings. However, it had been concluded that, in view of the need to find significant savings, the retention of CCTV could not be justified for the following reasons:
- (ii) the ratio of arrests to the costs of CCTV did not justify the retention of CCTV
 - (ii) the provision of CCTV was not a statutory requirement;
 - (iii) the Police and Crime Commissioner had refused to contribute towards the costs of the provision of CCTV although the precept raised by the Police was due to increase this year
 - (iv) an attempt to raise a contribution towards the funding of CCTV from local Businesses had failed
 - (v) evidence indicated that CCTV did not reduce crime: the police had not provided information to show that CCTV in the Borough had led to convictions or reduced anti social behaviour, the main reason for introducing CCTV in the Borough. A Welsh Council had demonstrated that the removal of CCTV reduced crime; and
 - (vii) there had been a national reduction in the level of crime
 - (ix) new legislation will place additional burdens and costs on CCTV which the Council could not afford
- (6) the draft budget had not taken into account decisions which the Council was expected to make e.g. the Joint Venture scheme
- (7) the changes to fees and charges for pest control were part of a review being undertaken by Environmental Health
- (8) charges reflected a number of factors, including staff costs. Therefore an increase in staff costs would not automatically lead to an increase in a fee or charge;

Although the Board raised no objection to the recommendations set out in the report concern was raised that, contrary to public demand, it was proposed to cease the CCTV system. The Board questioned the robustness of the case for the removal of CCTV and whether additional income could be generated or savings made elsewhere e.g. not proceeding with the proposed purchase and installation of poster frames at a cost of £61,000.

During the debate, the Chief Financial Officer strongly advised the Board that reserves should not be used to fund running costs of the CCTV system.

The Board considered that, in view of the delay in issuing the budget papers, it was impracticable for the Board give proper consideration to the Budget. It was therefore

RESOLVED that

- (i) authority be delegated to the 5 Councils' Procurement Scrutiny Panel to complete the scrutiny of the budget and make recommendations, on behalf of the Scrutiny Board, to Cabinet: and
- (ii) that members of the Scrutiny Board be appointed as members of the 5 Council's Scrutiny Panel to be held on 2 February 2016.

46 The Scrutiny Board Work Programme

The Board was given an opportunity to review progress with regard to the work undertaken by the scrutiny and policy development panels since the last meeting and to identify any additional matters of inclusion in the Board's work programme.

RESOLVED the work programme be noted.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and concluded at 7.15 pm

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Chairman

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