

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE, AUDIT & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

3 NOVEMBER 2014 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Miss DM Taylor - Chairman

Mr PR Batty, Mrs R Camamile, Mr PAS Hall, Mrs L Hodgkins, Mr R Mayne (for Mr JS Moore) and Mr K Morrell

Officers in attendance: Julie Kenny, Rebecca Owen, Rob Parkinson and Katherine Plummer

229 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Moore, with the substitution of Councillor Mayne authorised in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.

230 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was moved by Councillor Camamile, seconded by Councillor Hodgkins and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

231 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this stage.

232 ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER

Sophia Mouyis of PWC presented the draft Annual Audit Letter 2013/14.

RESOLVED – the draft Annual Audit Letter be endorsed.

233 FEES & CHARGES UPDATE

In response to a previous request of the committee, an update on the areas highlighted by internal audit in their fees and charges benchmarking report was provided to members.

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

234 PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR STREETSCENE & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The Committee was provided with an update on the financial, performance and risk position of Street Scene Services and Environmental Health as part of the programme of service update reports.

The £188,000 underspend was highlighted, and it was reported that this was due to temporary vacancies and staff changes, and fuel efficiency savings. It was noted that some of this underspend would be used to offset the pressure from the recycling contract.

It was noted that dry recycling had been identified as a risk and included in the risk register and there was still uncertainty about how the County Council would structure the recycling credits. Improving the quality of recycling was also highlighted as a risk and measures were being put in place to address this.

In response to members' questions, it was agreed that the following information would be provided to members following the meeting:

- A progress update on Mallory Park
- How Ash Die Back disease was being treated and whether lime trees were being planted to replace Ash.

#### 235 TREASURY MANAGEMENT

The Committee was informed of the Council's Treasury Management activity to the second quarter of 2014/15.

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

#### 236 HOUSING REPAIRS UPDATE

In response to a request of the previous meeting, members were updated on the Housing Repairs service, including numbers of repairs completed and complaints about the service. It was reported that the average repair time was 12 days if the priority 4 repairs (planned works) were not taken into account and that satisfaction remained high. It was noted that the number of repairs requests reported by councillors had increased.

A member questioned the cost of employing agency workers, and in response it was noted that this was within existing budgets. Concern was expressed regarding a contractor who had carried out only a small number of allocated jobs due to capacity issues.

A member highlighted the increase in complaints and enquiries from councillors and felt that many of the complaints were about poor customer service. He explained that some employees had told residents that the reason for the long waiting time for repairs was because the council had run out of money, and in response members were reassured that this was not true and that employees had been told not to give this message out.

In response to members' questions, the following was noted:

- Complete loss of heating or hot water would usually be attended immediately
- The summary of complaints in the report was taken from the complainant's point of view, not the findings of the investigation into the complaint
- A lot of work was being undertaken to improve the experience for the tenant by having a more holistic approach
- Whilst satisfaction was high, the response to satisfaction surveys was low and this had been discussed with Together for Tenants to see if they could help.

It was requested that a case summary example be provided to members to show where heating and/or hot water issues had taken time to resolve.

#### 237 AGED DEBT UPDATE

The Committee was provided with an update on the position with regard to sundry debts. It was noted that, as a result of a change of responsibilities within the Estates and Asset Management team, the commercial estates debts had reduced.

238 BUSINESS RATES UPDATE

In providing and update on business rates, members were informed that the County Council had been modelling regarding options for pooling from 2015/2016.

239 WORK PROGRAMME

It was agreed that the Housing and Community Safety service review would be brought forward to the January meeting and the Resources service review put back to February.

(The Meeting closed at 7.29 pm)

---

CHAIRMAN