

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REVIEW WORKING PARTY

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 August 2016 at 7.00 pm in Council Chamber, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillor Campbell (Chairman); Councillors Connor, Curran, Jaye-Jones and D Saunders

In Attendance: Councillor M Saunders

186. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the following Members:

Councillor Dennis;
Councillor Dexter, substituted by Councillor D. Saunders.

187. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

188. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillor Jaye-Jones proposed, Councillor Curran seconded and Members agreed the minutes to be a correct record of the meeting that was held on 18 July 2016.

The Chairman hoped that the CEx would be in attendance at the next meeting of the working party to report on 'criteria was used to define council projects as major and how the report structure on maintaining an overview of major projects council is involved in would look like.'

189. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1 2016-17

Tim Willis, Director of Corporate Resources presented the report on the council's corporate performance for the first quarter of 2016/17. Mr Willis said that the targets for this financial year were more challenging. One Member observed that the resident survey results showed that 27% of the respondents were dissatisfied and 20% were very dissatisfied with the council's performance regarding street cleaning services. This was a worrying result.

Mr Willis said that council was addressing the issue regarding getting more mechanical sweepers to support street cleaning service and improve the street scene in the district. He also said that the targets set for this year were challenging and the council had also decided to be more transparent in sharing the performance results as a way of addressing service improvements.

Members further queried the presentation style of some of the graphs adding that some of the targets had not changed from previous years, to which Tim Willis said that agreed that officers would be reviewing the presentation style to make the report clearer. Mr Willis acknowledged that the key focus areas would be enhanced by the inclusion of deadline dates for delivering the actions.

With regards to the 'Starters and Leavers', Tim Willis explained that the downward trend in net movement was as a result of re-organisations in Operational Services and Corporate Resources. Members suggested that the report should refer to both head

count and posts as separate headings in order to give a more accurate picture of the status of the issue being reported.

One Member observed that the reason why street cleaning was viewed as unsatisfactory was because the mechanical sweeper was unable to reach some of the inaccessible areas and such areas needed greater attention to clean them up. Another Member reported that the Margate Recycling Centre had become untidy over the last six months with hand written signs and staff looking unmotivated. Tim Willis agreed to refer these issues to Operational Services/KCC. In response to members' questions regarding the poor recent performance in street cleanliness, he indicated this might partly be explained by a more stringent approach when conducting inspections.

Councillor Jaye-Jones proposed, Councillor Connor seconded and Members agreed to note the report.

190. EK SERVICES Q1 PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR TDC 2016/17

Andrew Stevens, Assistant Director of Customer Services (East Kent Housing) introduced the item. Mr Stevens said that the head performance figures were on target. He said that the council tax and business rates collection was marginally less than at this stage last year, but officers were not overly concerned as this would soon improve.

Mr Stevens reported that EK Services would continue to encourage service users to embrace digital methods to communicate with the Service online for all services and particularly focussing on benefits related issues as this would improve efficiency of managing and responding to customer queries and requests. This included encouraging the public to use smart mobile phones to send photographs of documents they are required by staff for processing applications rather than for applicants to come into the Gateway to request that staff photocopy documents for them.

There however were some concerns by EK Services management about the number of incidents of verbal and in one case in Margate physical abuse of staff by some service users. Although the issues were reported to the Police, the response time was not usually within the time the issue was reported. EK Service management was working on guidelines for managing these situations moving forward.

Members observed that the targets set for EK Services and EK Human Resources for 2016/17 were not as challenging as those that were set and to a large extent achieved in 2015/16.

In response, Tim Willis said that with regards to EK Human Resources, the service was more inward looking and supporting the internal operations of the Council and were not necessarily of significant interest to the public. Officers were working on a more meaningful approach for measuring qualitative performance of the human resources service. He said that currently the council was monitoring EK Services performance relating to customer services and revenue and benefits services.

Members noted the report.

191. EAST KENT HOUSING PERFORMANCE REPORT Q1 2016/17

Deborah Upton, the new Chief Executive of East Kent Housing (EK Housing) introduced the report. Ms Upton said that EK Housing performed strongly in income collection, repairs and maintenance and customer satisfaction. She acknowledged the following challenges being faced by EK Housing this year:

1. Voids Performance, Nearly 75% of voids in Thanet are flats, which have a higher turnover of residents, thereby leading to more voids. When there are empty

properties there is a policy requirement to carryout asbestos inspection and if there is evidence of a particular type of asbestos, there is a requirement to give a 14 day notification the Health and Safety Executive (HSE);

- a. This automatically adds 14 days to the void turnaround time;
 - b. EK Housing is negotiating with the HSE to see whether it is possible to hold an annual licence for Trove Court and Kennedy House, which would allow them to carry out the work without the fourteen day notification to the HSE each time.
2. The Capital Programme is a consistently problematic area for the organisation. There is a need to address the issue of asset management under the capital programme through a number of initiatives:
- a. Need to develop an asset management strategy based on understanding the stock condition. This would be started this year.
 - b. A review from a leading consultancy (HQN) had recently been commenced of the asset management service; Recommendations from that review will be taken on board by EK Housing management and will be monitored by a task group of the Board.
 - c. New middle managers have been recruited;
 - d. Dedicated senior staff (at director level) will be in place during this financial year and one director level post would have a focus on property;
3. Performance is under target for heating repairs for housing stock in Thanet.
- a. This underperformance is unique to Thanet stock only;
 - b. The Managing Director of the service provider (independent contractor) has been asked to meet with the EK Housing Chief Executive to look at how they will resolve this issue. They have been asked to provide weekly performance reports until the problem has been resolved and performance has improved to expected standards;

Customer Satisfaction: The Chief Executive explained that the current approach to customer satisfaction with repairs involved residents being asked by the contractor at completion of the job. This was unlikely to provide any meaningful data that could be used to improve the service, and the current excellent level of satisfaction was unlikely to be realistic.

A new approach to collecting customer satisfaction data was to be introduced, which could include random sample surveys) to be conducted by individuals other than the person who would have carried out the repairs.

Members noted the report.

Meeting concluded: 7.46 pm