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CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REVIEW WORKING PARTY

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2016 at 7.00 pm in Council Chamber, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillor Peter Campbell (Chairman); Councillors Dexter, Jaye-Jones and Rusiecki

192. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the following Members:

Councillor Connor;
Councillor Curran;
Councillor Dennis.

193. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

194. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillor Jaye-Jones proposed, Councillor Campbell seconded and Members agreed the minutes to be a correct record of the meeting that was held on 23 August 2016.

195. TOOL KIT FOR DETERMINING COUNCIL PROJECTS AS MAJOR OR NON-MAJOR

Gavin Waite, Director of Operational Services introduced the item for discussion. He said that the tool kit for managing corporate projects would if adopted by Council, improve council project governance management. Councillor Campbell, Chairman of the working party reminded Members that the purpose of the scrutiny sub group was to review corporate processes using the framework, once it had been adopted by the council.

Members asked for clarity on the on the meaning of strategic contribution and how that would be linked to corporate priorities and values. In response, Mr Waite said that the linkage was on how those priorities and values were met through the implementation of the processes set out by the corporate project management tool kit. Mr Waite would circulate an example (using Westcliffe Hall) outside the meeting in order to demonstrate the above explanation.

Members agreed that once the tool kit was in place, then the sub group could identify a limited number of corporate projects to review. They requested that criteria be made known to Members regarding designating council projects as major or minor.

Members noted the report.

196. EAST KENT HOUSING PERFORMANCE Q2 2016/17

Ms Deborah Upton, CEx of East Kent Housing introduced the report and provided some highlights in the report. Ms Upton said that the customer survey reporting had been re-designed and was to be piloted in the first three months in 2017. Contractors would be using text messaging to request for customer feedback.

Complaints were on average being dealt with in 5.5 days and were now being logged through a single central point. EK Housing were not able to reach an agreement with the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) regarding the voids. Instead, each time there were

voids; EK Housing would need to advise the HSE within three days. However the biggest challenge was for EK Housing to get the information about voids in time because they relied on tenants advising them.

One Member asked what the happened to individuals that were evicted due to rent arrears, on a long term basis. In response, Ms Upton said that if there were children to an evicted family, there was a duty to care which would lead a referral being made to the Thanet District Council for re-housing. She further said that rent collection was in Amber due to a bleep that is normally associated with the end of summer and children going back to school. This was a year on year trend in Thanet.

In another response to a Member query regarding the garage arrears, Ms Upton said that historically these statistics start high and come towards year end as payments are made at the end of the year.

Members noted the report.

197. Q2 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT 2016/17

Tim Willis, Director of Corporate Resources led the discussion on this agenda item. He said that officers were still working on the reporting format that would provide information on delivery dates for activities on the delivery plans for the various council services. He also said that moving forward the EK Housing and EK Services performance statistics will not be included in the TDC performance report as the partners would provide such information themselves. However Cabinet reports would continue to include such information because EK Housing and EK Services do not report to Cabinet separately but rather through TDC directorate.

The chairman acknowledged that the report had the sufficient detail in the explanatory notes which to a large extent answered questions that Members may have wanted to ask. Providing clarification for the Freedom of Information (FOI) performance data, Mr Willis said that officers were working on turning around the performance paying particular attention to the unsatisfactory areas. The next quarter's report should show improvement.

Rob Kenyon, Director of Community Services advised Members that the some of the performance targets in Community Services directorate (particularly housing) had been changed mid-year as part of a new formula what was adopted by TDC to set more challenging targets. A case in point is the target for 'Action taken to improve dwelling conditions' where the initial target was 200 but had since been changed to 320. This in a way had contributed to current distortions in performance data for some corporate activities.

In response to Member query about the details of activities that fall under 'Street Scene Enforcement Actions,' Mr Waite agreed to circulate the full list of enforcement actions outside the meeting.

Members noted the report.

198. EAST KENT SERVICES Q2 PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR TDC

Dominic Whelan, Director of Shared Services introduced the report and gave a brief explanation of his role, for the benefit of newer members to the working party. Mr Whelan said that the only area that was declared as 'Red' was in the Payments (Benefits) service which had experienced some problems and it was due to individual management performance in the team accuracy levels. However corrective action had been taken. The latest reports would show an improvement in performance for that indicator.

Mr Whelan outlined some of the digital and channel shift activity, noting that face to face contact remains an expensive way of interacting with customers. Enabling customers to use self-services facilities was the ideal option as this not only meets the needs for a large section of the community but it also a far more cost effective way of delivering. However, it was also noted that there needs to be careful consideration to the small section of society that may be unable to access online transactions. A Members Briefing would be held on this issue in early December. An appointments facility had been recently been launched at the Gateway and initial feedback shows a high level of customer satisfaction.

Council tax collection was showing good performance and call handling targets were on track. The Health & Safety Advisory Services was under review in order to ensure that it took account of the latest needs of the partnership. EK Housing would be coming under EK Services Payroll to ensure more effectiveness and achieve some savings.

Members commended the new appointments facility at the Gateway. They also said that that consideration needs to be made for the elderly population, many of whom may not be computer literate. Mr Whelan said that EK Services were providing some of the Age UK staff with computer training in order to help with teaching of computer use for the elderly. There was a need to ensure that measures were in place to cater for all sections of the community who assess services provided by EK Services.

Members were also advised that the take up of Universal Credit (UC) in Thanet had been slow. The programme would be moving to full roll out stage in 2017, which effectively starts to deliver the six benefits to all sections of the population, many of whom are currently not being dealt with by UC. This still does not include the existing caseload but will apply to new claimants. Currently most of the queries on universal credit had been about financial management and the Citizens Advisory Bureau was assisting with these queries.

Members noted the report.

Meeting concluded: 7.47 pm

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