

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
(STEWARDSHIP) COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL
OFFICES, CORKS LANE, HADLEIGH ON TUESDAY, 17 JULY 2012

PRESENT: Mr D M Busby – Chairman

Mr S R Barrett	Mr F R Lawrenson
Mr J R B Cave	Mr C A Roberts
Miss D L Kendall	Mr D C Rose

Mr D G Grutchfield, Mr R E Kemp and Mr J M Nunn were unable to be present.

13 SUBSTITUTES

It was noted that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 5, a substitute was in attendance as follows:-

Mr D C Rose (substituting for Mr J M Nunn).

14 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2012 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

15 PETITIONS

None received.

16 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

17 FINANCE, RISK AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT – 2011/12 YEAR END MONITORING REPORT

The Head of Corporate Resources and the Head of Corporate Organisation submitted a joint report (Paper M53) providing the Committee with an exception-based strategic assessment of the Council's achievements for the financial year ending 31 March 2012 across a range of areas including finance, risk management and various aspects of performance linked to the Delivery Plan.

Members noted that in the table contained in paragraph 4.2 of Paper M53, the two risks categorised as "significant" should be updated to "medium/low". Also in the first bullet point of paragraph 6.3 of page 5 of Appendix C of Paper M53, the figure "£171k" to be replaced with the figure "£117k".

Further clarification was sought over the wording of the first sentence of paragraph 1.3.1 of Appendix B as it was considered to be potentially misleading. This sentence to be replaced by "The new integrated staff teams (Tiers 4 and 5) to be co-located on the basis that there is no reduction, and if possible an improvement, in ease of access to the service for customers, residents and Members."

During consideration of this item a lengthy discussion ensued and a number of issues were raised by Members including the following:-

- Homelessness (Action H31) – refer to the Housing Panel for further review and analysis of this issue.
- Average time to re-let local authority housing (former BV212) – more information to be requested from the Housing Panel regarding the 9 properties which are proving very difficult to let.
- Trade Waste (Action G14) – request additional information on what is being done to improve trade waste performance; Member Champion to be invited to speak to the Committee on this matter if required.
- Hamilton Road, Sudbury (Action E19) – Councillor Barrett advised the Committee that this was one of the issues to be addressed by the Pilot Steering Group in Sudbury.
- A number of Budget and finance matters, including investment in the cleaner and greener priority, integration and pension costs and car parking income, which officers will address and report back on accordingly.
- Treasury Management and credit rating changes – Members agreed to invite the Council's advisors, Arlingclose Ltd to attend the next meeting of the Committee to advise on the current position and opportunities. Officers would also include appropriate benchmarking information in the annual treasury report.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the key points relating to performance exceptions against targets/ milestones for the 2011/12 Delivery Plan actions, strategic performance indicators and service standards be noted.**
- (2) That the position on managing the Council's significant business risks and the latest position on BMI risks as referred to in paragraphs 8.13 to 8.15 and summarised in Appendices A and B to Paper M53 be noted.**
- (3) That the position on the Council's progress against budget and the Treasury matters detailed in Appendices C and D to Paper M53 be noted.**

18 JOINT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2011/12

The Head of Corporate Organisation submitted a report (Paper M54) reviewing each Council's Corporate Governance arrangements as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011.

The Overview and Scrutiny (Stewardship) Committee from Babergh and the Scrutiny Committee from Mid Suffolk have the responsibility for being satisfied that the Council's assurance statements, including the Annual Governance Statement, properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it.

It was noted that the Scrutiny Committee at Mid Suffolk District Council had considered the Joint Annual Governance Statement at its meeting on 28 June 2012 and their comments were included in Appendix A to Paper M54. It will be resubmitted to them for approval on 26 July 2012.

During consideration of this item Members raised the following comments and suggestions in relation to amendments to the Joint Annual Governance Statement:-

- The wording around the role of the Chief Executive to be amended to better reflect responsibility arrangements; and
- Similarly, the wording around the role of elected members to be amended to better reflect responsibilities.

The Committee agreed that should any further minor amendments be required by Mid Suffolk's Scrutiny Committee on 26 July, these could be approved by the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny (Stewardship) Committee.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Joint Annual Governance Statement in Appendix A to Paper M54, supported by the Council's assurance statements, be approved subject to the above amendments and subject to the Head of Corporate Organisation in consultation with the Chairman of this Committee being authorised to amend the Statement further if necessary following Mid Suffolk's Scrutiny Committee meeting on 26 July 2012.**
- (2) That it be noted that following the completion of (1) above, the Chairman of Babergh's Strategy Committee and the Leader of Mid Suffolk District Council will both sign the 2011/12 Joint Annual Governance Statement on behalf of their respective Councils.**

19 WORK PLAN

The Head of Corporate Organisation submitted a report (Paper M55) providing details of the Committee's anticipated work for the year.

RESOLVED

That the Work Plan set out in Paper M55 be noted.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 10.40 a.m.

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Chairman