

Finance and Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Held at:	Zoom - remote meeting
Date	Tuesday, 3 November 2020
Present	Councillors Peter Gane, Connor McConville (Chairman), Patricia Rolfe and Rebecca Shoob
Apologies for Absence	None
Officers Present:	Kate Clark (Case Officer - Committee Services), Gavin Edwards (Performance and Improvement Specialist), Cheryl Ireland (Chief Financial Services Officer), Charlotte Spendley (Director of Corporate Services), Lee Walker (Capital and Treasury Senior Specialist) and Jemma West (Committee Service Specialist)
Others Present:	Councillor David Monk

1. **Declarations of interest**

Councillor Patricia Rolfe made a voluntary announcement as she is a member of New Romney Town Council. This relates to Agenda item 3 (Key Performance Indicators review 2020/21 and Half Year Performance report Q1 and Q2).

Prior to moving onto the next agenda item the Chairman, Councillor Connor McConville, clarified to members that the reports being considered are Cabinet reports and the recommendations listed are for Cabinet and this committee will not be voting upon them. All comments would be noted and expressed to Cabinet. He added that in accordance with the new adopted proposals this committee could make additional recommendations to Cabinet, any such recommendations must be proposed, seconded and voted upon accordingly.

2. **Key Performance Indicators review 20/21 and Half Year performance report (Q1 and Q2)**

Report C/20/49 set out a proposed list of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to be monitored during 2020/21 in line with the Council's current Corporate Plan strategic priorities and objectives. The report also set out

performance data for the first two quarters of the year against these proposed key performance indicators.

There is a small amendment to the report; Number of private rental properties provided through the Social Lettings Agency & Property Solutions – Target figure should read 15 per quarter.

Members were advised that there are a total of 72 KPIs, 15 removals and 7 new KPIs introduced.

Councillor Patricia Rolfe, in focusing on the new KPIs, was keen to suggest further additions; More Homes – encourage high quality sustainable new homes across the district; More Jobs – proactively supporting the development of the Romney Marsh Business Hub; Appearance Matters – encourage public realm improvements in the district's high streets.

Councillor Rolfe's main concern was around Health Matters, where she considered more improvements are needed especially during this pandemic. A suggestion would be to introduce a measure to ensure that S106 or CIL payments made by developers contribute towards health services.

The Leader pointed out that although this is a good ambition it is not a simple solution and would require a change in policy. Discussions on this could be taken forward as a separate matter, perhaps looking at incorporating within the new Corporate and Recovery Plan.

Members comments also included:

- Monitoring could be undertaken on hub support.
- £188,000 CIL receipts, how had these been allocated?
- Exception reporting – clearer target reporting to show increases or decreases.
- Second lockdown imminent, so this could have an impact on results, however all KPIs have been checked and considered relevant.

Proposed by Councillor Connor McConville
Seconded by Councillor Patricia Rolfe and;

RESOLVED:
That report C20/49 is received and noted.

(Voting: For 4; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

3. **Update to the 2020/21 General Fund Budget**

Report C/20/47 set out the proposed amendments to the General Fund budget for 2020/21 to reflect the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's financial position in year.

Members were taken through the report and advised it was written without the knowledge of the impending lockdown from 5 November, however the budget will be closely monitored.

Members raised the following points:

- Reduction in ICT maintenance budget, this will not impact on services.
- Members felt a better indication would be given on the budget in January.
- Pesticide motion delayed, a reasonable decision bearing in mind the pressure on officers.
- Corporate Estate and Maintenance, a reduction in budget, however members were assured this would not have any impact on health and safety.
- Climate change reserve. Closely monitored and will ensure that any external Government funding will be utilised.
- DWP new burdens grant funding – funding is usually confirmed in the new financial year, however a prudent approach is taken to anticipated funds.
- Homelessness Prevention – it was noted that there is no movement in this figure. Grant funding has been received in-year and prior years' funding and has been rolled forward at this time.

Members thanked all involved for a comprehensive report.

Proposed by Councillor Peter Gane
Seconded by Councillor Connor McConville and;

RESOLVED:

That Report C/20/47 is received and noted.

(Voting: For 4; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

4. Update to the General Fund Medium Term Capital Programme

Report C/20/46 updated the General Fund Medium Term Capital Programme for decisions which have occurred since the Council approved the budget on 19 February 2020. It also considered a proposal to provide loan funding met from prudential borrowing to Veolia Environmental Services Limited for the provision of the new fleet and equipment required for the new Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract. Changes to the Capital Programme are required to be submitted to full Council for consideration and approval.

Members were advised that Section 2 of the report lists the four main Capital Programme changes.

The main focus of this report at Section 3 was the proposed provision of loan funding to Veolia Environmental Services Ltd for new fleet and equipment. Members agreed this was a good proposition, especially considering the net annual rebate of £100,000 to the Council.

Members were advised that the Council's Procurement team in conjunction with Dover District Council are in negotiations with Veolia, including considering a securing a charge on the equipment until the loan is settled.

Proposed by Councillor Connor McConville
Seconded by Councillor Rebecca Shoob and

RESOLVED:
That Report C/20/46 is received and noted.

(Voting: For 4; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

5. **Briefing on the Medium Term Financial Plan**

A presentation was given to members, points mentioned by the Director of Corporate Services; the Medium Term Financial Strategy is considered to be the beginning of the budget cycle; the Budget Strategy will be presented to Cabinet in December 2020 with a further detailed Budget Strategy to come forward to Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet in January 2021.

Members noted the following:

- There is reliance on parking charges income which seems to go against carbon reduction. However, all vehicles, regardless of fuel type, require parking.
- 4% increase in staff wages which includes incremental rises as well as annual percentage increase, however Transformation has contributed to cutting costs.
- Members agreed that COVID-19 infections will continue, however it was good to note that this district has one of the lowest infection rates as many residents adhere to the Government guidelines.
- A prudent financial approach has been taken in anticipating the ongoing situation. Continuous monitoring and update of the current budgets is undertaken.
- Assurance given that this committee would be able to review the MTFS further.

Members thanked officers for the informative presentation.