

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes and report to Council of the meeting of the Committee held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Station Road East, Oxted on the 11th January 2022 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Bourne (Chair), Langton (Vice-Chair), Black, Bloore, Botten, Caulcott, Cooper, Davies, Elias, Gillman, Pursehouse and Stamp

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Allen*, Connolly*, Crane*, Farr, Gaffney, * Groves*, Mills*, Ridge, Steeds, Swann and N.White

* These Councillors joined the meeting via Zoom.

220. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 2ND DECEMBER 2021

These minutes were approved and signed as a correct record.

221. FINANCE TRANSFORMATION

A report was presented which sought approval for a revised staffing structure for the finance function. The report explained that, following a selection process for posts in the previously agreed structure, it had not been possible to recruit suitable candidates to the posts of Senior Finance Business Partner (Deputy s151) and Finance Business Partner (corporate finance). These vacancies had been covered by additional support from Surrey County Council and other external sources when required.

In the circumstances, alternative staffing structures had been considered and the following revised changes were proposed (as per the organisation chart at Appendix 1 to the report):

- (i) appointment to a full time s151 / Chief Finance Officer (CFO) leadership role; the current CFO (Anna D'Alessandro) would continue to provide support and mentoring to this role both during transition to the new model and then provide ongoing support for 10-20% of her time - the costs of this will be included in the Joint Working Agreement;
- (ii) remove the Deputy s151 role from the structure (HOS 2) - the CFO post would absorb more of the operational leadership responsibilities that would otherwise have been vested in the Deputy role, the remaining responsibilities of which will be shared between the posts referred to in (iii) and (iv) below;
- (iii) create a new Senior Finance Business Partner (SFBP) role to oversee all the service facing functions (HOS 1) - the two service facing FBPs and the Assistant FBP would all report to this role;
- (iv) create a new Exchequer Manager role (M3) to oversee the exchequer team – the role would report directly to the CFO post;
- (v) the corporate finance structure to remain unchanged.

The Committee was advised that the changes would have a neutral financial impact as the increased costs arising from (i), (iii) and (iv) above would be offset by the removal of the Deputy s151 role. In response to Members' comments about this, the Chair agreed to liaise with the Chief Executive after the meeting about whether a cost comparison analysis of the old and new finance staffing structures to could be provided for Members.

The report also clarified the status of the Joint Working Agreement (JWA) with Surrey County Council. As opposed to a 'contract for services' it was confirmed that this is a partnership agreement for the creation of a shared finance team to work with staff directly employed by TDC to achieve agreed key aims and objectives. A draft JWA had been circulated to Committee members the day before the meeting. The report proposed that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to vary the JWA in light of the new staffing structure. However, following a proposal from Councillor Pursehouse, it was agreed that the revised JWA should be brought to the Committee's meeting on the 1st February 2022 for approval.

RESOLVED – that:

- A. the new finance structure as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be agreed; and
- B. the revised Joint Working Agreement, reflecting A above, be submitted to the Committee's meeting on the 1st February 2022 for approval.

ACTION:

	Officer responsible for ensuring completion	Deadline
Chair to liaise with the Chief Executive about whether a cost comparison analysis of the old and new finance staffing structures to could be provided for Members.	Chief Executive / Ricky Fuller	24.01.22

222. STRATEGY & RESOURCES QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee considered an analysis of progress against its key performance indicators, together with updated risk registers, for the second quarter of 2021/22. Members discussed some of the five 'red risks' in the corporate risk register and the associated mitigations. The Chief Executive advised that the emerging Tandridge transformation programme would seek to address the long-standing risks as well as the scope for redesigning the delivery of services. The need for more work to be done to progress the climate change action plan was acknowledged, including opportunities for engaging with Surrey County Council via its climate change strategy partnership initiatives.

RESOLVED – that that the Quarter 2 (2021/22) performance and risks for the Strategy & Resources Committee be accepted.

223. WELLBEING PRESCRIPTION SERVICE CONTRACT EXTENSION

A report was presented to update the Committee about the Wellbeing Prescription Service (WPS) which had been operated by TDC, in partnership with Reigate & Banstead Borough Council, since 2015. The service was provided under the terms of a contract with the NHS East Surrey Integrated Care Provider and allowed GPs and other agencies to refer residents to a trained wellbeing advisor, e.g. to improve lifestyles and maintain independent living. The duration of the current contract was for three years to March 2021, with an option to extend to March 2023. The Committee was invited to endorse the contract extension which was being observed in practice by the parties, although the variation agreement had not been signed due to delays arising from the Covid pandemic.

The report also informed Members about:

- an independent evaluation in April 2021 which concluded that the service was supporting the aims of the Surrey Health and Wellbeing Strategy and delivering demonstrable benefits
- performance metrics and client feedback
- current resourcing and funding arrangements
- the need to review future contractual arrangements, including costing and pricing elements.

The Committee praised the WPS team for its work in delivering this valued service and noted that there was sufficient capacity (within the resources provided by the current contract) for dealing with increased levels of demand. Officers undertook to provide information about the number of face to face well-being appointments arranged for clients at two GP surgeries in the Lingfield area.

RESOLVED – that:

- A. the current two-year extension of the existing contract with the NHS East Surrey Integrated Care Provider until the 31st March 2023 be endorsed;
- B. the future work of the Wellbeing Prescription Service be supported and proposals be developed for a new contract in 2023, including cost implications, risks, funding options, and a memorandum of understanding to be agreed between partners; and
- C. a report on the outcome of B above be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee.

ACTION:

	Officer responsible for ensuring completion	Deadline
Information to be provided to Councillor Steeds about the number of face to face well-being appointments arranged for clients at two GP surgeries in the Lingfield and surrounding area.	Nicola Boreham	18.01.22

224. RENTAL GRANT SUBSIDY APPLICATIONS

The Committee considered applications (and officer recommendations) for rental subsidies from three tenant organisations, namely the East Surrey Museum, Caterham Community Association and Warlingham Sports Association. The applications had been submitted in accordance with the Council's policy which sought to provide transparency regarding the extent to which it subsidised community organisations which utilised Council owned land and buildings.

Rod Stead, a trustee of the East Surrey Museum, addressed the Committee (as permitted by Standing Order 31). He welcomed the prospect of a 15-year lease and confirmed that the museum should be able to take responsibility for the central heating system within the premises (1 Stafford Road, Caterham) as proposed within the report. However, he expressed concern at the requirement for the museum to contribute towards rental costs after the first three years of the new lease, especially as grants from other sources were unlikely to be available for running costs. He also questioned the recommended condition that the museum should *'take steps to improve the energy performance of the building'* given that it only occupied the ground floor. Regarding this latter point, officers clarified that the intention of the 'energy performance' condition was for the museum to install more energy efficient light fittings etc as opposed to having to insulate the building.

During the debate, it was suggested that future consideration of the museum's lease renewal be deferred, pending the establishment of a Working Group to offer strategic support to the trustees in developing a sustainable business plan to reflect the requirements of the new lease. The Committee concluded that the proposed lease and associated conditions should be agreed forthwith, but that the Working Group initiative, as proposed by Councillor Botten, should still be progressed.

The proposed leases and conditions for the Caterham Community Association and Warlingham Sports Association were agreed.

RESOLVED – that:

A. regarding the East Surrey Museum:

- (i) a 15-year lease be granted, with a stepped rent of £1,500 from the 3rd anniversary, £3,000 from the 4th anniversary and rent reviews in year 5 and year 10, and a tenant option to break the lease on or after each review date;
- (ii) the lease continues to be excluded from the security of tenure provisions of the 1954 Landlord & Tenant Act to give the Council the flexibility it needs, should circumstances be different at the end of the lease;
- (iii) the museum prepares a detailed business case setting out its vision for improving and modernising the museum and providing detailed plans showing how it intends to deliver its vision;
- (iv) a rental grant subsidy of 100% be granted in years 1 to 3, approximately 90% in year 4 and approximately 80% in year 5 be awarded (as per (i) above) subject to the museum:
 - taking responsibility for replacing the boiler and heating controls, and ensuing compliance with Part L of the building regulations

- taking steps to improve the energy performance of the building, thus achieving greater alignment with the Council's key objective of '*becoming a greener and more sustainable District*'
 - seeking grant funding from non-Council sources and/or fundraising to achieve the above two conditions;
- (v) a Working Group of Members and Officers be formed to offer strategic support to the trustees in developing a sustainable business plan to reflect the requirements of the new lease;
- B. regarding the Caterham Community Association:
- (i) a 15-year lease be granted, with a rent reviews in year 5 and year 10
- (ii) the lease continues to be excluded from the security of tenure provisions of the 1954 Landlord & Tenant Act to give the Council the flexibility it needs, should circumstances be different at the end of the lease;
- (iii) the Association submits a detailed business case setting out its vision and delivery plan;
- (iv) a rental grant subsidy of 95% be awarded, subject to the Association:
- continuing to be responsible for the repair and maintenance of the building and grounds in full;
 - taking steps to improve the energy performance of the building, thus achieving greater alignment with the Council's key objective of '*becoming a greener and more sustainable District*'
 - seeking grant funding from non-Council sources and/or undertaking fundraising to achieve the above two conditions;
- C. regarding the Warlingham Sports Association, a new five-year lease be granted, with a 30% rental grant subsidy, subject to the Association taking responsibility for all internal repairs and maintenance and statutory compliance at the Hamsey Green pavilion.

ACTIONS:

		Officer responsible for ensuring completion	Deadline
1	Formation of a Member & Officer Working Group to offer strategic support to the trustees of the East Surrey Museum in developing a sustainable business plan to reflect the requirements of the new lease	Alison Boote	04.02.22
2	First meeting of the Group with trustees	Kate Haake	25.03.22

Rising 8.57 pm