

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES 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 18th January 2022 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Wren (Chair), Swann (Vice-Chair), Allen, Caulcott, Connolly, Crane, Gaffney (substitute in place of Mansfield), Hammond, Lee, North, O'Driscoll and Stamp

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Bourne*, Farr, Lockwood* and Mansfield*

*These Councillors joined the meeting via Zoom. Councillor Mansfield, while a member of the Committee, therefore participated in a non-voting capacity

230. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 23RD NOVEMBER 2021

These minutes were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

231. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Farr, Lee and Mansfield declared non-pecuniary interests in agenda item 6 (public conveniences) on the basis that they were members of Godstone Parish, Whyteleafe Village and Caterham on the Hill Parish Councils respectively and that they would be speaking about sites within those parish areas as referred to in the report.

232. COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE 22/23 DRAFT BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

A proposed draft 2022/23 revenue budget and capital programme was presented. This explained that, due to current capacity constraints, a pragmatic approach had been taken regarding the distribution of pressures and savings to achieve a balanced budget position for 2022/23, namely:

Tranche 1 – savings and pressures which were straightforward to allocate (those for this Committee are shown in Appendix A).

Tranche 2 – those requiring more time to allocate correctly to each committee, including £367k of pressures (£193k of staffing increments and £174k of contract inflation) plus savings of £200k regarding staff vacancies. These were being held as 'corporate items' pending consideration during the next cycle of committee meetings.

Tranche 3 – the more complex cross-cutting savings totalling £450k, which would require service reviews and business cases to ensure accurate distribution to committees. The recently established Benefits Board would oversee this process to ensure that the benefits were being defined, owned and delivered. These budgeted savings were being held as 'corporate items' pending consideration during the June cycle of committee meetings.

In response to questions regarding budgeted savings, Officers explained that:

- the 'mechanical sweeper utilisation' saving involved the replacement of just one of the two present vehicles (an additional vehicle would be hired during the leafing season) and that proposals to revise the street sweeping schedule would be discussed with Members in due course;
- 'consolidating the lot structure' referred to the intended consolidation of current parks / grounds maintenance / playground contracts into ten lots (defined areas of work for which potential suppliers could bid, i.e. for one, some or all ten).

It was also suggested that parish and village councils should be able to procure additional street sweeping services from TDC to supplement its standard service and that a 'price list' should be made available (to parishes) accordingly.

The Chief Finance Officer advised that progress against budgeted savings would be reported to Members on a monthly basis.

Member suggestions for potential savings in 2023/24 were also discussed.

RESOLVED – that:

- A. the Committee's draft revenue budget for 2022/23 in the sum of £3.975m (as shown at Appendix A) be agreed, taking account of pressures and savings allocated as part of Tranche 1, and it be noted that a further two tranches of pressures and savings currently held in corporate items on behalf of other Committees will be distributed over the coming months;
- B. the Committee's final capital programme for 2022/23 in the sum of £522,000 (as shown at Appendix B) be agreed;
- C. the subjective revenue budgets in Appendix C, including movements from 2020/21 to 2022/23 and an estimated movement to 2023/24, be noted;
- D. it be noted that due to timing and capacity constraints across the Council, c£0.7m of savings (as part of a £1.1m savings programme) and c£0.4m of pressures could not be allocated in time for the January and February committee cycle and, as such, will be allocated in three tranches as follows:
 - Tranche 1 which are directly attributable to this Committee have been allocated as per Appendix A;
 - Tranche 2 will be brought to the March committee cycle for approval; and
 - Tranche 3 will be overseen and monitored by the Benefits Board and will be brought to the June committee cycle for approval.

In accordance with Standing Order 25(3), Councillor Allen wished it to be recorded that he abstained from voting on resolutions A to D above

233. REVIEW OF PROVISION AND FUNDING FOR PUBLIC TOILETS

A report was presented regarding options for the future provision of public conveniences throughout the District. This explained that the Council operated facilities at twelve sites but that the equipment (e.g. lavatories, sinks, hand driers) was approximately twenty years old and no longer serviced by manufacturers. The 2021/22 capital and revenue budgets were £550,000 and £94,030 respectively.

The report confirmed that the provision of public conveniences was not a statutory service and concluded that current maintenance costs were unsustainable. The Asset Management Team had therefore been asked to lead a review of the facilities with assistance from Operational Services. An initial desktop review was attached to the report with a commentary about the suitability of the twelve sites. This suggested that facilities at several locations were, for various reasons, no longer viable and that further discussions were required with local communities and businesses regarding longer term options. However, the two facilities on the A25 at Nags Hall, Oxted and the A22 at Godstone Hill (both on land owned by Surrey County Council) were recommended for immediate removal. The Nags Hall facility had remained closed since the 21st October 2021 for safety reasons arising from disrepair and both sites were known to attract anti-social activities / behaviour.

Upon debating the matter, the Committee accepted the recommendation to close the A25 (Nags Hall) facilities but argued that those on the A22 (Godstone Hill) should remain open until the need for any repairs made it financially unviable for the Council to maintain them. The need to provide adequate WC's for lorry drivers was cited as a key reason for this, notwithstanding the proximity of the Clacket Lane service station on the M25. It was also suggested that, in view of the income received by Surrey County Council (SCC) from mobile catering vendors on the A22 site, SCC should pay for the provision and maintenance of any replacement toilet facilities at that location.

Members also argued for the retention of toilet facilities at other locations, including where sites were adjacent to bus stops / termini. It was agreed that a more comprehensive review of the sites should be undertaken, including the scope for:

- design features seeking user safety and disabled access
- pay per use options
- partnership options involving alternative funding sources (although some Members doubted whether Parish Councils would be willing / able to take responsibility for WC facilities)
- seeking Community Infrastructure Levy funding (although Officers advised that CIL could not be used to offset revenue costs)
- reassessing the demand for facilities at the respective sites with a view to providing a more robust evidence base for any proposed closures.

RESOLVED – that:

- A. the toilet facilities at the A25 layby in Oxted be closed and removed;
- B. the A22 Godstone Hill facilities remain open until such time as the need for any repairs will make it financially unviable for TDC to continue to do so and that, in the meantime, dialogue be established with Surrey County Council regarding the possibility of them (SCC) providing replacement WC facilities on the site and taking responsibility for their ongoing maintenance and repair at no cost to TDC;
- C. refurbishment works at the toilet facilities at Ellice Road, Oxted be procured and that improvements to facilities at Queens Park and Whyteleafe Recreation Ground be taken forward in conjunction with the Open Space Strategy Action Plan;
- D. regarding toilet facilities at other sites:
 - (i) consideration be given to a reduction in the provision of facilities, while exploring opportunities for alternative methods of service delivery in consultation with Surrey County Council, Parish Councils and local businesses; and
 - (ii) no decision to change the management arrangements or to close any facilities be taken without the approval of this Committee following consideration of a report to a future meeting.

234. SHARED ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE - PERFORMANCE REPORTING FOR FOOD HYGIENE STANDARDS

The Quarter 2 (2021/22) performance report for the Committee's meeting on the 23rd November 2021 recommended that KPI CS5 (% of establishments with a score of 3 or better under the food hygiene rating scheme) be removed from future performance reports. This was on the basis that the KPI reflected the performance of businesses rather than the joint (Tandridge / Mole Valley) environmental health team. However, Members concluded that food hygiene standards should continue to be reported to the Committee, and it was resolved that:

“a decision on the future of performance indicator CS5 (food establishment ratings) be deferred until the next meeting on the 18th January 2022, pending consideration of potential alternative means of measuring both the food hygiene standards of businesses and the performance of the food safety team”

Since the previous meeting, officers had assessed the quarterly performance information submitted to the Tandridge & Mole Valley environmental health / licensing partnership board and suggested that two of the KPI's concerned be included in the future quarterly performance reports to this Committee. This proposal was agreed.

RESOLVED – that future quarterly performance reports to this Committee include:

- (i) continued reporting against the current KPI CS5 (percentage of establishments with a rating of 3 (generally satisfactory) or better under the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme); and

- (ii) the performance information most recently submitted to the Tandridge & Mole Valley environmental health / licensing partnership board in respect of:
- the percentage of category A and B (food hygiene) risk premises inspected within 28 days of the inspection becoming due; and
 - the percentage of unrated food premises inspected, including registered premises not yet trading.

Rising 8.56 pm

Appendix A - 2022/23 Revenue Budget Movements, including pressures and savings allocated as part of Tranche 1

COMMUNITY SERVICES

	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	Total £000
Brought forward budget	3,993	3,975	

Pressures

Theme	Description	Pressure		
		2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	Total £000
Service Demands	Trees – Increase in provision for Ash die back	20	20	40
Service Demands	Playground inspection and maintenance contract (Jul	8	0	8
Service Demands	Increased net costs of Handy Man service	20	0	20
Service Demands - subtotal		48	20	68
Fees and Charges	Bulky waste collection charges are below initial estimates	39	0	39
Fees and Charges	Parking and Penalty Charge Notice revenue is down in 2021-22 and expected to continue into 2022-23	125	0	125
Fees and Charges	Additional recycling credits	(93)	50	(43)
Fees and Charges - subtotal		71	50	121
Total Pressures		119	70	189

Savings

Theme	Description	Saving		
		2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	Total £000
Service Efficiency	Mechanical Sweeper Utilisation	(20)	0	(20)
Service Efficiency	Move to fully cashless at Car Parks	0	(8)	(8)
Service Efficiency	Alteration to Specifications (Frequencies) and task approach for Parks activities	0	(10)	(10)
Service Efficiency	Through consolidating the lot structure, drive economies of scale	0	(25)	(25)
Service Efficiency	Route Mapping Exercise for Street Cleansing Service	0	(38)	(38)
Service Efficiency	Efficiency and income improvement on various regulatory services	(16)	(16)	(32)
Service Efficiency - subtotal		(36)	(97)	(133)
Fees and Charges	Increase Garden Waste charges	(64)	0	(64)
Fees and Charges	Charge schools for recycling collections	(25)	0	(25)
Fees and Charges	Tandridge Commercial Services works to Housing - Full cost recovery	(9)	0	(9)
Fees and Charges	Charge for contaminated Bin Clearances	(2)	0	(2)
Fees and Charges	General Maintenance Works to Housing - Full cost	0	(6)	(6)
Fees and Charges	Review of lease at Parks Cafes	0	(2)	(2)
Fees and Charges	Increase Garden Waste charges	0	(23)	(23)
Fees and Charges - subtotal		(100)	(31)	(131)
Total Savings		(136)	(127)	(263)

Net movement for committee budget	(17)	(57)	(74)
--	-------------	-------------	-------------

Indicative Budget Requirement	3,975	3,918
--------------------------------------	--------------	--------------

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

COMMITTEE SCHEMES	Current Programme 2021/22	Estimated Programme 2022/23	Estimated Programme 2023/24	Estimated Programme 2024/25	Total Programme 2021-25
	£	£	£	£	£
Community Services					
Current Continuing Programme					
Children's Playground Improvements	432,500	179,200	99,500		711,200
Parks, Pavilions & Open Spaces	252,800	114,200	114,500		481,500
Grange Meadow Access Works	250,000	0	0		250,000
Vehicle Fleet Renewals	625,600	167,900	5,000		798,500
Car Park Equipment/Maintenance	34,800	34,900	35,000		104,700
Public Conveniences	550,000	0	0		550,000
Litter Bins	8,200	8,300	8,400		24,900
Roads&Paths at St.Mary's Church Cemetery	7,600	0	0		7,600
Land Drainage	13,700	10,000	10,000		33,700
Plant & Machinery Replacement Programme	8,000	8,000	10,000		26,000
Waste Vehicles	668,900	0	0		668,900
Garden Waste Bins	123,200	25,000	25,000		173,200
Recycling, food waste and refuse bins	111,000	90,000	90,000		291,000
Playground Improvements (Match Funding Pot)	50,000	0	0		50,000
Total Current Continuing Programme	3,136,300	637,500	397,400	0	4,171,200
Revisions and New Bids					
Children's Playground Improvements		(152,000)	75,000	131,800	54,800
Parks, Pavilions & Open Spaces				114,500	114,500
Grange Meadow Access Works					0
Vehicle Fleet Renewals		36,400	117,500	115,100	269,000
Car Park Equipment/Maintenance				35,100	35,100
Public Conveniences					0
Litter Bins				8,500	8,500
Roads&Paths at St.Mary's Church Cemetery				7,600	7,600
Land Drainage				10,000	10,000
Plant & Machinery Replacement Programme					0
Waste Vehicles					0
Garden Waste Bins				25,000	25,000
Recycling, food waste and refuse bins				90,000	90,000
Playground Improvements (Match Funding Pot)					0
Total Revisions and New Bids	0	(115,600)	192,500	537,600	614,500
Proposed Programme					
Children's Playground Improvements	432,500	27,200	174,500	131,800	766,000
Parks, Pavilions & Open Spaces	252,800	114,200	114,500	114,500	596,000
Grange Meadow Access Works	250,000	0	0	0	250,000
Vehicle Fleet Renewals	625,600	204,300	122,500	115,100	1,067,500
Car Park Equipment/Maintenance	34,800	34,900	35,000	35,100	139,800
Public Conveniences	550,000	0	0	0	550,000
Litter Bins	8,200	8,300	8,400	8,500	33,400
Roads&Paths at St.Mary's Church Cemetery	7,600	0	0	7,600	15,200
Land Drainage	13,700	10,000	10,000	10,000	43,700
Plant & Machinery Replacement Programme	8,000	8,000	10,000	0	26,000
Waste Vehicles	668,900	0	0	0	668,900
Garden Waste Bins	123,200	25,000	25,000	25,000	198,200
Recycling, food waste and refuse bins	111,000	90,000	90,000	90,000	381,000
Playground Improvements (Match Funding Pot)	50,000	0	0	0	50,000
Total Proposed Programme	3,136,300	521,900	589,900	537,600	4,785,700

Appendix C - Subjective Revenue Budgets from 2020/21 to 2023/24

	2020/21		2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	Annual Budget £k	Outturn £k	Annual Budget £k	Annual Budget ¹ £k	Estimate ² £k
Salaries	2,235	2,087	1,363	1,363	1,363
Car Parking-On Street	0	52	(100)	(25)	(25)
Car Parking-Off Street	(58)	98	(64)	(14)	(22)
Hackney Carriage/Private Hire	(18)	(0)	(18)	(18)	(18)
Leisure & Community Grants	230	212	260	260	260
Waste Services	3,077	3,094	2,023	1,877	1,904
Environmental Services	298	304	294	278	263
Cesspool Services	(107)	(114)	(109)	(109)	(109)
All Operational Services	(1,109)	(865)	(172)	(152)	(152)
Parks and Open Spaces	566	590	500	519	521
Streets & Public Conveniences	10	29	16	(4)	(67)
Covid-19 - Sales, Fees and Charges Reimbursement		(159)			
Community Services	5,125	5,328	3,993	3,975	3,918