

# Minutes



To: All Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Chief Executive, Chief Officers, All officers named for 'actions'

From: Legal, Democratic & Statutory Services  
Ask for: Michelle Diprose  
Ext: 25566

---

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FRIDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2015**

### **ATTENDANCE**

### **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

M Cowan (Vice-Chairman), H K Crofton, T W Hone (Chairman), A Joynes (Vice-Chairman), D E Lloyd, G McAndrew, M D M Muir (Substitute for T R Hutchings), R H Smith (Substitute for C Clapper), D T F Scudder

### **\*PARENT GOVERNOR / CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES (VOTING)**

\*R Osterley

*\*denotes members appointed for education scrutiny matters only*

### **PART I ('OPEN') BUSINESS**

#### **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Committee noted that Tom Hawkyard, Head of Scrutiny was still absent from work due to an operation, and wished him a speedy recovery.

#### **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on Wednesday, 4 November 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

# 1 INTEGRATED PLAN PROPOSALS 2016/17 AND FUTURE YEARS

ACTION

[Officer contact: Claire Cook, Assistant Director Finance, Resources & Performance (01992 555737)]

- 1.1 The Assistant Director Finance, Resources and Performance, provided the Committee with an overview of the Integrated Plan Proposals (IPP) for 2016/17 and future years. The briefing provided Members with an overview prior to undertaking their scrutiny of the Council's 'Integrated Plan Proposals (IPP) for 2016/17 and future years' early in the New Year. Members were provided with a timetable for the plan and received information regarding strategic direction plans, revenue budget and funding, the pressures and inflation.
- 1.2 Members were informed the IPP pack would be a similar format to previous years, although it would be indexed in Cabinet Panel order to ease navigation. The Committee was informed that there would be 2 new sections in the IPP pack; Insurance and Risk Strategy; and Invest to Transform (to show how resources were used). The IPP pack would also contain information in relation to all general and specific reserves.
- 1.3 Officers confirmed that, in order to meet the £56.4 million savings required over a three year period, £19.9 million savings were required to close the gap for 2016/17. It was noted that one of the key pressures facing the Authority was the National Living Wage (NLW) and the impact on National Insurance of the contracted out rebates. Members were informed the majority of employees were paid above the National Living wage; it was mainly school and contracted Care Workers where there would be a pressure – some of which was to maintain the differential in pay. Other key pressures included previous policy decision; demography; capital financing and interest on balances and one off contribution to the Pension Fund.
- 1.4 It was noted that following on from the Spending Review on 25 November 2015, Local Authorities were able to levy an additional 2% precept above the limit for council tax increases. The precept was to be used for the purpose of adult social care services. Members were informed that officers expected to have revised figures by mid-December when the Government announced the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, this was expected to include:
- reduction in core central Government funding
  - reduction in grants for Public Health
  - reduction in New Homes Bonus (movement of funding to supported care)
  - reduction in Education funding

2

**CHAIRMAN'S  
INITIALS**

.....

- increased Better Care Funding for social care pressures
- added infrastructure funding
- apprentice levy of 0.5%
- Proposals for 100% retention of business rates for local authorities by the end of the Parliament

1.5 The Committee noted that details of final Government Capital Grant funding was yet to be announced, and if reduced or increased it would need to be reflected in the draft capital programme. Officers confirmed although the flexibility in use of Capital Receipts could be used towards the Revenue budget in special circumstances; it would mean that the authority would need to borrow more to cover the gap in the Capital budget.

1.6 Members queried if whether placing 100% of estimates through the Capital Programme in the same year was prudent, especially when some projects took two to three years to complete. Officers advised that services had been challenged about capital building and capital financing was prudent and this had resulted in a reduction in the need for re-programming. .

1.7 Members discussed previous year’s inflation predictions and the accuracy of these. Officers agreed to include this information within the IPP pack.

Claire Cook

**Conclusion**

- 1.8
1. The Committee noted the report.
  2. The Committee requested that information on inflation predictions and the extent to which these had been accurate in previous years be made available within the IPP pack.
  3. The Committee identified the following areas for evidence gathering groups to focus on at the IPP scrutiny on 27 January:-
    - Benchmarking data; its availability and what it tells us about County Council services;
    - The impacts, or likely impacts of demographic changes on the Authority’s budgets and services for all Hertfordshire residents; and
    - The plans services have in place to fill the financial gap between income and expenditure by 2017/18.

Tom  
Hawkyard/  
Claire  
Cook/  
Michelle  
Diprose to  
note all

**CHAIRMAN’S  
INITIALS**

.....

**2. SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS: UPDATE**

[Officer contact: Tom Hawkyard, Head of Scrutiny (01992 555300)]

- 2.1 The Committee received a report providing the recommendations from the 'Ringway Contract Topic Group' and the 'Property Asset Management of Rural Estates Topic Group'.
- 2.2 Members noted that the Executive Member response to the Traffic Regulation Order Topic Group had been received.

**Conclusion**

- 2.3
  - 1. The Committee noted the recommendations set out in Appendices 1(a) and 1(b) to the report.
  - 2. The Committee noted the Executive Member response to scrutiny recommendations set out in Appendix 2(a) to the report, and agreed that the Monitoring of Recommendations Topic Group be requested to consider action taken on these in due course

Tom  
Hawkyard /  
Charles  
Weir

**3. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2015 – 2017**

[Officer contact: Tom Hawkyard, Head of Scrutiny (01992 555300)]

- 3.1 The Committee considered its work programme 2015 – 2017 noting those scrutinies recently concluded and those scheduled for the forthcoming period.
- 3.2 The Committee agreed to move the scrutiny for Flooding and Gully Cleaning higher up on the work programme as it was high on the public's agenda. The Committee also agreed to an earlier scrutiny of the Herts Waste Partnership and Recycling Review due to the potential savings that was deemed significant.

**Conclusions**

- 3.3
  - 1. The Committee noted the report and agreed:
    - (a) The Scrutiny Work Programme 2015 – 2017, as amended by 3.2 above, attached as Appendix 1, to the report

Tom  
Hawkyard  
Charles  
Weir/  
Michelle  
Diprose to  
note/ action  
all

**CHAIRMAN'S  
INITIALS**

.....

**4. OTHER PART I BUSINESS**

4.1 There was no other business.

|

**REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL**

A summary of all items will be reported to the County Council at its meeting on 23 February 2016.

| Michelle  
Diprose

**KATHRYN PETTITT,  
CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER**

**CHAIRMAN** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHAIRMAN'S  
INITIALS**

.....