

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

- * Councillor Gordon Jackson (Chairman)
- * Councillor Jo Randall (Vice-Chairman)

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| * Councillor Philip Brooker | * Mrs Maria Angel |
| Councillor Colin Cross | * Mr Charles Hope |
| * Councillor David Elms | Ms Gerry Reffo |
| * Councillor Mike Hurdle | * Mr Ian Symes |
| * Councillor Jennifer Jordan | |

*Present

Councillor Nigel Manning (Lead Councillor for Finance and Asset Management) was also in attendance.

CGS44 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Colin Cross and Ms Gerry Reffo.

CGS45 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

CGS46 MINUTES

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2015. The Chairman signed the minutes

CGS47 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2016-2017

The Committee considered the Treasury Management Annual Strategy Report 2016-17 and Treasury Prudential Indicators 2016-17 to 2020-21.

The Committee heard that there had been an increase to the debt cap for the Housing Revenue Account in 2016-17. The Director of Community Services had produced a business plan and development to the Housing Revenue Account would be achieved using the level of reserves rather than debt.

The Committee,

RESOLVED to note the Treasury Management Strategy for 2016, specifically:

- a) The investment strategy contained within Appendix 1, Section 4 of the report.
- b) The treasury prudential indicators and limits for 2016-17 to 2020-21 contained within Appendix 1 of the report.

Reason for Decision: To assist the Executive in formulating its recommendations to Council to approve the treasury management strategy statement, the annual investment strategy and the treasury and prudential indicators.

CGS48 FINANCIAL MONITORING 2015-16 PERIOD 8 (APRIL TO NOVEMBER 2015)

The Committee considered a report that summarised the financial monitoring position for Period 8 (April – November 2015).

Questions from the Committee raised the following points and information:

- The Committee noted that Building Control had struggled to achieve their income in recent years, as a result of the level of competition and aggressive marketing from local approved inspectors. Following the Building Control fundamental service review a business case was being drawn up for creating a shared building control service with other Councils in West Surrey.
- The Committee heard that the impact of the Housing and Planning Bill and the Welfare Reform and Work Bill would be substantial. The 1% cut in social housing rent would be managed through efficiencies within the service. The impact of the enforced sale of tenanted stock and pay to stay would prove hard to mitigate. The Council had responded to consultations and the Lead Member for Housing and Social Welfare had met with the local MP, his counterparts in other authorities and government ministers in order to put forward the Council's views on this issue.

The Committee,

RESOLVED to note the results of the Council's financial monitoring for the period April to November 2015.

Reason for Decision: To allow the Committee to undertake its role in relation to scrutinising the Council's finances.

CGS49 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION COMPLIANCE UPDATE

The Committee considered the Freedom of Information (FOI) Compliance update report.

Questions from the Committee raised the following points and information:

- The Council had received a high volume of FOI requests over the past few years, particularly regarding Local Plan related issues. Officers had carried out significant research in order to meet the requirements for these requests. The Monitoring Officer had been asked to ensure that officers only provided the information requested and did not spend time including additional information.
- The percentage of FOI requests dealt with within the required timescale varied significantly within the services. The Committee suggested that the services that had performed poorly were prioritised for training.
- The number of FOI requests received by the Council had decreased for the first time in 2015. This would allow officers the time to deal with any backlog of requests that had built up. The Committee noted that the Local Plan would come back into focus in 2016 and as a result of this the number of FOI requests received by the Council could increase.

The Committee,

RESOLVED to note the officer actions and continue to receive updates to ensure that the Council meets its objective of 90 percent compliance.

Reason for Decision: To ensure the Council meets its objective of 90 percent compliance.

CGS50 E-TENDERING - PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE RULES

The Committee considered a report proposing amendments to the procurement procedure rules, to support the introduction of e-tendering at the Council.

The Committee heard that two people would be present during the opening ceremony: the procuring officer and Director, or his nominee. This, coupled with the clear audit record of the procurement process provided by the e-tendering portal, ensured that there would be no real risk of corruption or bribery.

The Committee,
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RESOLVED to recommend to Council that the proposed E-Tendering Appendix setting out the rules and procedures for the use of e-tendering be added to the Procurement Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution.

CGS51 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCIL'S PETITION SCHEME

The Committee considered a report setting out suggested amendments to the Council's Petition Scheme.

The Committee,

RESOLVED, to recommend to Council:

- 1) approval of the suggested amendments to the Council's Petition Scheme set out in Paragraph 4.5 of the report, subject to the inclusion of the additional text in paragraph 10.2 of the Petition Scheme referred to on the Supplementary Information sheet; and
- 2) That the question as to whether implementation of any decisions pertinent to a petition under review by overview and scrutiny should be deferred pending completion of the review process be dealt with by the Director of Corporate Services on a case-by-case basis including, where necessary, convening special meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and/or full Council for this purpose.

CGS52 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered its work programme for the remainder of the 2015-16 municipal year.

Training for parish councillors would be dealt with as part of the Working Group's review of the Councillors Code of Conduct rather than as part of the report on the Councillor Training Programme.

The Committee,

RESOLVED to approve the work programme

CGS53 LATE SHEET

The meeting finished at 8.46 pm

Signed

Date

Chairman

