

Chichester District Council

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15 November 2016

Report from the Corporate Plan Task & Finish Group

1. **Contacts**

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2. **Recommendations**

The committee is requested to note this report from the Corporate Plan Task and Finish Group and to confirm that it is satisfied that the Council is achieving satisfactory levels of performance against the targets and activities in the 2016/17 Corporate Plan mid-year progress report.

3. **Background**

- 3.1 The Task and Finish Group met on 2 November 2016 to consider the Corporate Plan mid-year progress report from April to September 2016. The aim was to review the Council's performance, identifying individual areas where performance was below that expected, and to reduce risks to an acceptable level.
- 3.2 Members were Mrs P Dignum (Chairman), Mr N Galloway, Mr L Hixson and Mr S Morley. Apologies were received from Mrs D Knightley.
- 3.3 Members used the Council's Covalent performance indicators to examine areas of the Corporate Plan that had not reached their targets.

4.0 **Monitoring and Review**

- 4.1 Rise in crime in the Chichester area: the aim was a 0% increase but ours was 8.5%, still lower than average. It comprises opportunistic thefts, greater numbers of reported assaults and sexual offences.

Members were reassured by Cllr Galloway's report of a talk given to the City Council this week, addressed by Chief Inspector Burtenshaw, who had spoken positively of the new policing methods, deploying police constables and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) quickly where needed county wide and dealing with mental health problem sufferers by taking a mental health nurse with them when a remand might be necessary.

New laws meant new things being recorded as crime – for example throwing a crisp bag at someone now counted as assault.

Ms Bushby, Community Interventions Manager, mentioned that the new police attitude was to respond only to situations involving threat, harm or risk (which did not include all burglaries). She felt the greater reporting of sexual offences was a good thing because it suggested a more receptive attitude: many reports are historic, not present. Domestic abuse was on-going and often private. The Community Safety Partnership was meeting its targets. Vulnerable people migrated to city centres and keeping CCTV in the city was important. The work of Stonepillow and the City Angels was most important in containing crime. The Council's team, with its Rough Sleepers Panel and joined-up thinking, was working unseen all over the district to help vulnerable and sometimes difficult-to-help individuals. Ms Bushby's personal, proactive ideas last year had cut thefts from building sites.

Members felt reassured by the wealth of information showing the width of the Council and its partners' efforts to tackle crime in the district. They also wanted to request the Chief Inspector to speak to the committee in a year's time when police reorganisation had had time to bed in. Mrs Lintill, the portfolio holder with responsibility for this area, already raises concerns on the Police Crime Panel and West Sussex County Council has a scheme for perpetrators of violence.

- 4.2 Staff absence rates: our target is 7 days lost per employee per year, and our current figure is 8.8.

Mr Radcliffe, HR manager, said this was not the highest ever recorded at the Council, and it compared with public organisations nationally. The figures were easily skewed by a few long-term sickness cases, as had happened here, although some of those people had now left the Council. The organisation has no slack and temporary/agency staff were expensive.

Injuries, anxiety and depression were some causes of sickness absence. The HR and Wellbeing teams worked with those affected. The Employee Assistance Programme had been introduced which offered phone counselling 24/7 and opportunities for eight face to face discussions a year. There were fitness, sports, and mindfulness sessions, health checks and advice available. Men did not always take these up. Staff had an opportunity to raise issues during the annual appraisal process; flexi-time was helpful; working from home was a solution for some injuries and illnesses. Team consultations kept up morale.

Mr Radcliffe undertook to provide further information regarding comparisons with other local authorities and analysis of outturn over a number of past years.

Members felt reassured that staff absence had causes already being cared for, that the Council offered staff a number of ways to maintain good health, and felt men should be encouraged to use these services more.

- 4.3 Wellbeing: Improving the health of our communities and workforce – (Update following the meeting - The indicator is showing amber as Wellbeing staff have been unable to meet the target of delivering the Make Every Contact Count training to 100 frontline staff. When the training was piloted with other services it was found that staff struggled to see the relevance for themselves so the content of training for future sessions is being reviewed.)

- 4.4 Wellbeing: Increase the number of referrals to the Wellbeing hub - Referrals to the hub for cardiovascular disease and cancer by GPs were below the desired level. Members were advised that this was possibly because the Wellbeing team was focusing on smaller businesses with fewer advisors, but spending longer quality time with them. (Update following the meeting – the latest outturn is 91% which brings this indicator into the ‘In Progress/green’ status.)
- 4.5 Participation in Sport in the community: The target was not met during the Westgate Leisure contract changeover time. (Update following the meeting – this indicator has been superseded by key performance indicators (KPIs) in the Leisure Contract which will be monitored separately.)

Mr Morley raised the continued heating issues in the dance studio at the Grange. (Update following the meeting: The heating system in the dance studio has been altered to stop the air flow being directed at the floor and the temperature was raised. Some of the yoga sessions have moved to alternative rooms which the participants prefer. The contractor is responsible for the operational maintenance of the building and service agreements and these are monitored on a monthly basis. The Council is responsible for the structural maintenance.)

- 4.6 Your Energy Sussex (YES): CDC had not achieved its goals of reducing fuel poverty, improving energy efficiency etc. as the Government had cancelled its Green Deal scheme and scaled back its energy obligations.

(Update from Mr T Day, Environmental Co-ordinator, following the meeting - The latest position with YES is that work continues on solar photovoltaic schemes on WSCC land and on social housing. Work is also on-going on procurement for a Sussex Energy Tariff to be offered to householders and businesses. However we became involved with YES mainly to offer an integrated energy efficiency offer to residents. The cancellation of the Green Deal scheme by the Government without any replacement and the cuts in Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding have led to the collapse of the two schemes offered to householders. These are national problems that all local authorities are struggling with. The launch of ECO2 next year may offer some slim hope of funding again becoming available. The YES milestones have been made out of date by the above developments and new targets are being worked up.)

- 4.7 Parking Charges review: The new proposed charges for 2017-18 have this week been agreed by the Cabinet and put out to consultation. Several new payment schemes were planned, with payment by credit, debit and contactless cards, and by phone, over coming months. Members felt all was progressing well here.
- 4.8 New Ways of Working Phase 2: The CAB move into the Council offices was proceeding well with understandable delays.
- 4.9 Syrian vulnerable persons relocation programme: There was a request to have a report on how refugees were housed and assimilated into the local community to a future OSC meeting to answer questions such as – Is the Council meeting its obligations? Is Government money being received? Has there been an increase in hate crime? What help is there for emotional and financial problems, exploitation and trauma?

- 4.10 Think Family Programme: Challenges had been raised in the media to earlier indications of success in this scheme claimed by some councils. An update on this is provided at Appendix 1. Mr Hixson advised that the scheme had been a great success in Chichester East.
- 4.11 Fly-tipping: The group suggested a report be provided to the committee in a year's time to assess whether there had been an increase in fly-tipping following the reduced hours put in place at local recycling depots.
- 4.12 New Tourism strategy: Mr Morley asked about the position of Midhurst, now there was no Council contact point at the Grange. He would see if the library offered information. The Tourism Strategy would cover the whole district and was due to be considered by the committee in January 2017. A tourism information point would still be available at the Grange.
- 4.13 Avenue de Chartres repairs: Members queried the setting of the new milestones following Council approval of the additional works. (Update following the meeting – The programme of works had been received from the contractor and the additional work relating to lighting, work on the barriers and the five towers was now being integrated into the project plan.)

5.0 Outcomes

- 5.1 The group considered that there were good explanations for areas of the Corporate Plan where targets had not been met; some were outside our control, others showed great council input making a difference, some needed a little more time.

While several requests were made for further scrutiny or information, there was a feeling that the limited number of concerns raised from a huge range of projects showed the Council's high standards and care in carrying out its Corporate Plan priorities.

6.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – copy of an email relating to the Think Family programme at para 4.10

7.0 Background papers

Corporate Plan 2016-17 mid-year progress report