

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES
SCRUTINY PANEL
HELD AT FOLLATON HOUSE, TOTNES ON
THURSDAY, 19 FEBRUARY 2015**

Panel Members in attendance			
* Denotes attendance		∅ Denotes apology for absence	
*	Cllr K J Baldry (Vice Chairman)	∅	Cllr J D Hawkins
∅	Cllr J H Baverstock	∅	Cllr P W Hitchins
*	Cllr I Bramble	*	Cllr J W Squire
*	Cllr C G Bruce-Spencer	*	Cllr J A Westacott MBE
*	Cllr R J Foss (Chairman)		

Members in attendance and participating
Cllrs A D Barber, B E Carson, T R Holway, M F Saltern, S A E Wright and R J Tucker

Item No	Minute Ref No below refers	Officers in attendance and participating
All		Executive Director Strategy and Commissioning (EDS&C) and Member Services Manager
8	CP&R.34/14	Strategic Lead for the Transformation Programme
9, 10, 11	CP&R.35/14, CP&R.36/14, CP&R.37/14	Monitoring Officer
12, 13	CP&R.38/14, CP&R.39/14	Customer Services Manager

CP&R.30/14 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Panel held on 20 November 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CP&R.31/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and officers were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting but none were made.

CP&R.32/14 PUBLIC FORUM

No items were raised.

CP&R.33/14 EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

There were no issues raised on the Executive Forward Plan.

CP&R.34/14 T18 UPDATE

The Strategic Lead for the Transformation Programme introduced the report and advised that there was little change since the recent detailed report to Council in December. She highlighted the main areas within the report and responded to questions.

During discussion the following points were raised:

It was confirmed that a Working Group of Members were working on the finer detail of the Locality model and at their next meeting they would be moving on to look at technology and trial options;

The under and over payments referred to in the report had purely arisen from a timing issue. An over or under spend on the Programme was not predicted;

One Member was not convinced that Locality workers needed accommodation or an outstation. The Strategic Lead for the Transformation Programme advised that discussions would take place with the Locality Manager once they were appointed but the issue of outstation accommodation was also an alternative for staff who were agile working.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

CP&R.35/14 THE CODE OF CONDUCT AND APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Monitoring Officer introduced a report that asked Members to consider the Code of Conduct implications for Members who had been appointed by the Council to serve on Outside Bodies. She confirmed that she would not recommend a blanket dispensation for Members on Outside Bodies as there were several mechanisms under which Members could be appointed.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

CP&R.36/14 REQUEST TO GRANT GENERAL DISPENSATIONS

The Monitoring Officer presented a report that asked Members to grant General Dispensations to all Members for the next Council term. She advised that the existing dispensation had been set for the term of the Council.

During discussion, concerns were raised about 'dual hatted' Members having a conflict of interest, for example, in instances where a district councillor, who was also a county councillor, negotiated with the county council on behalf of the district council. Some Members felt this was not appropriate, whilst others felt it should be left to the Member concerned to declare an interest where necessary and leave the room. On such occasions, a Member stated that the negotiations were usually undertaken by officers whilst the Members provide an overview.

To conclude this item, Members agreed to allow a general dispensation to dual hatted Members for a period of one year to May 2016 and allow a general dispensation as per paragraph 1.4 of the presented agenda report for the next Municipal Council ie until May 2019.

It was then:

RESOLVED

1. That a General Dispensation be granted to all dual hatted Members of South Hams District Council to speak and vote on matters where they were a Member of another local authority and in receipt of a Members' Allowance, until May 2016; and
2. That a General Dispensation be granted to all Members of South Hams District Council to speak and vote on all matters as set out in para 1.4 of the presented agenda report until the Annual Council meeting in May 2019.

CP&R.37/14 REQUEST TO GRANT DISPENSATION FOR CLLR CARSON

[Cllr Carson left the room for this item]

The Monitoring Officer presented a report that asked Members to grant a dispensation to Cllr Carson, in accordance with the application attached at appendix A of the presented agenda report.

The Monitoring Officer clarified the position of Cllr Carson as a SHDC representative on the CIC Board of DC Housing, but as a nominated representative rather than an appointed Member.

Whilst some Members felt that Cllr Carson should be able to take part in relevant discussions and not vote, the fact that he received remuneration for the position led other Members to feel he had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest. During discussion, Members were concerned that there was a public perception issue and for this reason the majority of Members voted to refuse the application.

It was then:

RESOLVED

That the request for a dispensation be refused.

CP&R.38/14 PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 2

Members considered a report that provided them with information on the key Performance Indicators at the end of Quarter 2 for 2014/15.

As the Quarter 3 report was also on the presented agenda (Minute CP&R.39/14 below refers), Members agreed not to discuss this item as the next agenda item being Quarter 3 had more up to date information.

CP&R.39/14 PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 3

Members considered a report that provided them with information on the key Performance Indicators at the end of Quarter 3 for 2014/15.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) The Executive Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economy and Community had been unable to attend the meeting but advised that the issue of performance in respect of Planning was known and significant changes were being made;
- (b) The Executive Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Customer Services asked Members to note the considerable improvement in customer contact times and added that steps were being taken to address staffing levels in advance of the additional workload that would result from the forthcoming elections;
- (c) One Member noted that performance in Planning could be improved if Members were to take decisions themselves rather than refer to Committee;
- (d) The Executive Director Strategy and Commissioning reassured Members that he was aware of the issues with Planning. He stated that the Council was going through a fundamental change programme and was trying to retain staff. In addition, that change programme gave the scope to look at how planning applications were processed and whether improvements could be made. In response to questions he confirmed that issues with planning reflected a national picture;
- (e) Members stated that the public were fed up with non determination and the issues in the Planning department were affecting the reputation of the Council. Another Member stated that the level of challenge to decisions impacted on the resource levels that were available;
- (f) The Executive Director Strategy and Commissioning concluded that an improvement plan was in place and he would welcome the opportunity to bring a further report to Members in the future.

It was then:

RESOLVED

1. That Members note the Key Performance Indicators for Q3 and have considered the action detailed to improve future performance; and
2. That the Panel agrees that Option 1 (as outlined in the presented agenda report) be the response to the following PI that had been at red status for two consecutive quarters:

- ICT & CS: Average call answer time

And that Option 2 (as outlined in the presented agenda report) be the response to the following PI that had been at red status for two consecutive quarters:

- PEC: % of Applications determined within a statutory time frame (Minor).

(Meeting started at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.00 am).

Chairman