

At a meeting of the BUILDINGS, LAND AND PROCUREMENT PANEL held at
Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters,
Eastleigh on 25 June, 2013

PRESENT:

Councillors: M. Kendal (Chairman), P. Edgar (Vice Chairman); J Wall; F. Pearce; K. House; M. Lyon

1 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for the meeting.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful of their duty to disclose at the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest they had in any matter on the agenda for the meeting, where that interest was not already entered in the Authority's register of interests, and their ability to disclose any other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in any such matter that they might have wished to disclose.

No interests were declared under this item.

3 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19 March 2013 were confirmed by Members as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman provided an update for Members on departmental news and developments. The launch of the Service's growth strategy in 2012 was yielding positive results, through expansion of shared services arrangements with other public sector organisations and responding to growth in the County Councils capital programmes. The 2012/13 financial year delivered a rise in income from £18.3m to £21.5m, representing a 20% increase.

External income from partnerships with other organisations including Reading Borough Council, Surrey County Council and West Sussex County Council grew from just over £6m in 2011/12 to £7.4m last year. The Joint Working agreement with Hampshire Constabulary and Hampshire Fire and Rescue was also leading to an increase in work for the Property team. The Council's Corporate Procurement, County Supplies and Hampshire Printing Services were also heavily involved in the Joint Working initiatives with the Police and Fire Services. This work would be delivering performance improvements and providing additional capacity across all three

organisations.

Business Units within the Directorate showed strong performance in 2012/13 as total income reached more than £42 million. Through the County Council's Catering Services, nearly 7.4 million school meals were served in Hampshire's primary schools during 2012/13. This represented an increase of around 8% on the previous year and an average uptake of 40.6%. Combined with a meal price that had been fixed at £2 since April 2009, this demonstrated evidence of the quality, popularity and value-for-money offered by the County Council's school meals service.

It was also noted that Property Services had received a Royal Institute of British Architects design award for the Runways End Activity Centre near Aldershot.

Members congratulated the Service on these achievements over the last year.

5 FIRE SAFETY IN COUNTY COUNCIL BUILDINGS AND THE APPROACH TO SPRINKLER PROVISION

The Panel viewed a sprinkler demonstration before the meeting organised by officers of Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS).

The Panel considered the report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services in relation to fire safety and sprinkler provision (Item 5 in the Minute Book).

The Director highlighted the County Council's risk-based approach to fire safety management. It worked in successful partnership with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service in order to deliver effective fire safety planning and reduce fire risk within its built estate. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority's (HFRA) sprinkler position statement was also closely aligned with Council policy.

Sprinkler installations were fitted as standard to all new build secondary school buildings and existing buildings which were deemed to be higher risk. Property Services were recommending a review of sprinkler installations in new primary schools to enhance asset protection. It was clarified that provision of sprinklers was in addition to the statutory provision of fire safety measures.

Fire evacuation in schools was discussed. Property Services provided schools with a fire safety manual template and local manager evacuation planning support was addressed through joint audits, but it was the responsibility of schools to produce fire safety plans for pupils, staff and visitors. This included tailored plans, where applicable, for pupils with additional support needs.

Members enquired about the frequency of fire safety inspections of schools. Property Services and HFRS carried out joint audits of County Council

buildings on a cyclical risk profile basis which included schools. The key focus however, was on building policy to ensure schools had effective management of their fire safety plans.

Consideration was given to further review of the Council's policy statement wording on fire safety and sprinkler provision in order to align it more concisely with that of the HFRA. Members wished to ensure it was clear that sprinklers were to be fitted as standard for new buildings except where the risk was low.

Action:

That Property Services would review the Council's policy wording in relation to its sprinkler provision statement, and that the wording in recommendation 5.3 (point 4) of the report would be amended to reflect that efforts would be ongoing to further align sprinkler provision statements of the Council and HFRA.

RESOLVED:

That the Panel would advise the Executive Member for Policy and Resources that:

The successful improvements to Fire Safety through Partnership working with the HFRS, risk assessment, targeted capital expenditure and a comprehensive Fire Safety Audit process be noted.

The County Council's risk based approach to sprinkler installation in new and refurbished building projects was re-affirmed be endorsed.

That efforts would be made to further align the County Council and HFRA's sprinkler policy statement and approach to fire safety as far as possible

Members noted that over £3.4 million had been spent on sprinkler installations to improve asset and life safety in 27 higher risk buildings.

The work to continue to develop a hybrid, property protection sprinkler system be endorsed.

A technical review of new Primary Schools be undertaken to ascertain whether an asset protection sprinkler system may be cost effective and deliverable within funding allocations.

6 MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE

The Panel considered the report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services in relation to the major projects being progressed within the Department (Item 6 in the Minute Book).

The Director highlighted key project developments taking place. The Joint Working Programme with HFRS and Hampshire Constabulary had commenced formally in April, including co-location of the Police property team to Council property offices in Winchester.

Members asked if the Police were being assisted and advised in terms of estates rationalisation. The Director was involved in the Estates Programme as a member of the project board.

An update was given regarding the Schools Basic Needs Programme and the Council's review of the increased demand for primary school places and its development of new and existing school expansion projects.

Members discussed the Energy Performance Programme (EPP) designed to deliver energy saving and cost reduction for the Council's built estate. Potential marketing of the Programme and promotion of district energy schemes was discussed. It was confirmed that the Council proposed to lead and fund the EPP Programme. Future consideration will also be given to the potential for supporting schools with renewable energy installations.

RESOLVED:

Progress on each of the projects was noted by the Panel.

7 KINGS WORTHY PRIMARY SCHOOL, KINGS WORTHY

The Panel considered the report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services in relation to project proposals for Kings Worthy Primary School (Item 7 in the Minute Book).

The Director highlighted the project proposals for a 3 classroom extension and additional internal accommodation support. The classroom extensions were to replace existing temporary buildings with permanent facilities in order to provide additional places for pupils at the School due to increased demand.

RESOLVED:

The Panel advises the Executive Member for Policy and Resources that:

The project proposals for the 3 classroom extension and other related support accommodation at Kings Worthy Primary School, at an estimated total cost of £1,250,000 (including fees) be approved.

8 PROVISION OF CHILDREN'S HOMES IN WINCHESTER, CHANDLER'S FORD AND HAVANT

The Panel considered the report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services in relation to the provision of children's homes in Winchester, Chandler's Ford and Havant (Item 8 in the Minute Book).

The Director updated Members on developments for the three homes which constituted the first phase of the programme. It was confirmed that the proposed sites had one design to suit all locations. Expenditure was reviewed including net and gross building cost, furnishings and equipment. It was noted that net build costs were proportional to the type of building. The new

developments were intended to create a greater sense of a home environment for children.

Members were supportive of the developments and approved the recommendations for the three homes.

RESOLVED:

That the Panel advises the Executive Member for Policy and Resources that:

The project proposals for three children's homes at Milesdown, Winchester; The Green House, Chandlers Ford; and Havant, at an estimated total cost of £2,750,000 (including fees), be approved.

9 STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2011/14

The Panel considered the report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services in relation to the Strategic Asset Management Plan (Item 9 in the Minute Book).

The Director updated Members on the 2011 – 14 Plan which would provide management of the Council's property assets in order to make them more efficient and capable of supporting improved services. The Council's Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Children's Services for maintained schools had been renewed during 2012 and development of a partnership arrangement with academies was also being progressed.

Within Adult Services, a reduction of existing assets had been achieved and the disposal of assets provided capital funding for the development of new ones. The second phase of the Extra Care Programme was underway which included both new build developments and conversion of existing sheltered housing schemes.

Capital receipts value for 2012/13 demonstrated a successful year in terms of revenue generation. Members enquired about the proportion of revenue being attributable to disposal of remaining land at the Council's site at Manydown, Basingstoke. It was proposed that the Committee could help review future development of the disposal strategy. For the longer term, it was noted that strategic land disposals would be a main source of income generation of capital assets from 2015 onwards.

Members noted new system developments as part of the Plan including the new Property Asset Management System. Members would be able to partake in demonstration of the system during October. It was confirmed that a new Strategic Asset Management Plan for 2014 -17 would be presented in due course for approval.

RESOLVED:

That the Panel advises the Executive Member for Policy and Resources that:

Progress on the Action Plan with the Strategic Asset Management Plan 2011-14 be noted.

A new Strategic Asset Management Plan 2014-17 be drafted and presented to Members for approval in due course.

10 BUSINESS SERVICES GROUP – 2012/13 ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

The Panel considered the report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services in relation to the 2012/13 annual report and accounts for the Business Services Group (Item 10 in the Minute Book).

The Director provided an update to Members on the performance of the business units within the BSG, including Hampshire Transport Management, Hampshire Printing Services, County Supplies and Corporate Procurement and Catering Services. Notice was also given to the wider contribution the services made to the County Council and public services.

For Hampshire County Council's Catering Service, direct engagement with schools was resulting in strong performance and the stability achieved in the price of a primary school lunch was noted by Members. Members commented that other local authorities appeared to be struggling with school meals services and compared this to the success being achieved in Hampshire. Members asked about the number of school meals which were subsidised. It was reported that there was no County Council subsidy to the school meals service, although it was the case that a significant number of students were eligible for free school meals.

Members noted the good performance across each of the services within the Business Services Group.

RESOLVED:

The 2012/13 annual report and accounts for the Business Services Group be approved.

The proposal to undertake renovation and improvement works at the Micheldever vehicle workshop be approved at an estimated cost of £524,500 (including fees); the funding to be drawn from the accumulated surpluses of the CCBS business units.

11 STRATEGIC REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S HOMES – REINVESTMENT OF CAPITAL RECEIPTS (EXEMPT)

The Panel considered the report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services in relation to the strategic review of Children's Homes and reinvestment of capital receipts (Item 11 in the Minute Book).

The Director updated Members on the strategic review and Members approved the report and its recommendations.

RESOLVED:

That the Panel advises the Executive Member for Policy and Resources that authority be given to:

Declare surplus and dispose of up to four children's homes or land, subject to the prior provision of replacement homes, as outlined in the report.

The retention of up to 100% of the net sale proceeds as a re-investment scheme to be applied as a contribution towards the cost of providing the replacement of facilities.

The submission of planning applications and entering into legal associated agreements with respective District Councils, as the local planning authority, in connection with securing the best price for the disposal of these properties.

The Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services (Strategic Manager – Assets and Development) to settle detailed terms and conditions.