

# Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 3 November 2016 at City Hall, Bradford

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Commenced: 5.30pm  
Concluded: 8.40 pm

**Present – Councillors**

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
Cooke M Pollard Rickard	Arshad Hussain Duffy Green Watson Warburton	J Sunderland

Observer: Councillor Hinchcliffe (Leader of Council)

Apologies: Councillor Adrian Naylor

**Councillor Arshad Hussain in the Chair**

**48. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

**49. MINUTES**

**Resolved –**

**That the minutes of the meetings held on 29 September and 6 October 2016 be signed as a correct record.**

***ACTION: City Solicitor***

**50. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.



## 51. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Resolved –**

**There were no referrals made to the Committee.**

## 52. MID YEAR FINANCIAL POSITION STATEMENT AND PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR 2016-17

The Director of Finance submitted a report (**Document “U”**) which provided Members with an overview of the forecast financial position of the Council for 2016-17 and a mid year performance report. It examined the latest spend against revenue and capital budgets and forecasted the financial position at the year end. It stated the Council’s current balances and reserves and forecasted school balances for the year.

The report was also being considered by the Executive at its meeting on 8 November 2016.

The Director of Finance stated that the report was a combination of service performance coupled with financial performance.

In relation to service performance, the Interim Assistant Director Policy, Programmes and Change drew Members’ attention to the recently approved District and Council Plan documents which in essence would herald a new set of indicator sets based on priority outcomes that the Council, its partners and the community will be working together to achieve around:

- Better Skills, more good jobs and a growing economy;
- A great start and good schools for all our children;
- Better health, better lives;
- Decent homes that people can afford to live in and
- Safe clean and active communities

In relation to current service performance the details were not comprehensive at this mid year stage, however more detailed and comprehensive data would be available at the end of the financial year, which will also highlight areas of improvement. Where there were concerns regarding performance, robust performance management measures were in place and portfolio holders had been privy to the discussions.

Overall current performance information identified that performance in many key areas was improving and remained on target although there continued to be areas where the district faced significant challenges and where performance was either deteriorating or not improving quickly enough and these were detailed in the report.



In relation to financial performance the Director of Finance stated that the Council was forecasting a £6m overspend above the approved budget of £378m and that although this had not materialised, it was a particular issue within Adult Services which was forecasting an overspend of £5.2m, primarily as a result of the overspend on purchased care and learning disability purchased care. Within Children's Services, a £3.1m forecasted overspend was predicted, primarily as a result of an increase in the number and cost of Looked After Children.

In relation to the £45.6m budgeted savings the Director reported that there were risks associated with the underachievement of a number of plans and it was forecasted that £9.0m of savings will not be delivered as intended, primarily linked to service areas dealing with Transport Assistance, Looked After Children, Older Residential Care, and Waste Disposal.

Reserves stood at £13.8m, which continued to be seen as potentially inadequate, in the context of reduced Government funding and savings to be achieved in future years. A position that had been confirmed by the Council's External Auditors.

Finally the Director drew attention to the Council Tax and Business Rates Collection rates, and although Council Tax collection rates were higher than forecasted, Business Rates collection was lower than expected with the Council receiving £2.5m less than the budgeted amount.

In conclusion he stressed that all departments were taking remedial action to bring the budget back on track.

During a lengthy discussion Members asked a number of questions of the Director of Finance as well as of the Strategic Directors / Assistant Directors that were present. The questions together with the responses are detailed below:

In relation to the proposal to develop a 69 apartment extra care home and a 50 bed residential care home in Keighley on the former Bronte school site, as part of the Great Places to Grow Old Strategy, a Member questioned the rationale behind this, as Local Authority care facilities costs 50% more compared to the private sector, and therefore why had the private sector not been tasked with meeting this shortfall. In response the Assistant Director stated that the proposals were specifically about addressing the short term bed shortage, when older people were discharged from hospital and waiting for a reassessment, and that the intention was not to provide long term care in the new facility.

In response to a question on how the Service was addressing the inefficiencies in long term care, the Assistant Director acknowledged that further work in residential care settings was being looked at.



In relation to the cost of internal provision versus the cost of external provision, a Member stressed that this issue should not just be looked at in terms of cost, but factors such as adequate staff pay and training for those employed by the local authority were equally important, and a balance had to be struck.

A Member stated that in order to ensure residential care costs were contained, financial contributions from the NHS were crucial. In response the Assistant Director stated that there were on going discussions with our health partners to address a number of issues, including how to bridge the shortfall in funding.

In relation to the issue of complex care, the Leader highlighted that in the context of insufficient competition, the cost of this type of care was generally high.

A Member questioned whether the budget set for Children Social Care was realistic in the context of the pressures being experienced in Looked After Children. In response the Assistant Director stated that the budget in this area was realistic as the number of children coming into care was on a downward trajectory during the last financial year and the budget had therefore been set within this context, however Bradford had seen a 9% increase in referrals to the Service, which mirrored the national picture of increased referrals. Within Bradford the primary increase in the number of children being looked after was from within the new emerging communities.

In relation to a question regarding secure residential care, the Assistant Director stated that it was always the intention to try and house children within the district, however a small number of children sometimes had to be placed outside of the district in secure residential settings, as these children needed a level of care not available within the district.

In addition it was pointed out that there had been a significant increase in the cost of purchased placements and that those children placed in secure residential care were generally placed there on welfare grounds or they had been referred by the courts.

In relation to a question regarding fostering and the pressures being faced by the Service, the Assistant Director acknowledged that the service was under pressure and there had been a drive to recruit more foster carers, in particular those that were able to look after older children with particular needs. In addition the service was struggling to match the needs of a particular child to a foster carer.

A Member questioned that if the Council was more active at resolving issues when they first presented themselves, that would then reduce pressure on services. In response it was acknowledged that if early intervention and the early help offer was right, this would consequently reduce the number of children



coming into care and free up social work time to deal with more pressing cases.

A Member stated that in relation to Adult Social Care the strategy to contain costs was not working and there needed to be a debate on how we could address this. In response the Director of Finance stressed that the financial pressures facing adult social care and looked after children was a national issue and how provision is maintained going forward, in the context of reduced local government funding.

A Member questioned the impact of the imminent introduction of the Universal Credit on Council Tax collection rates and also the adequacy of the Council reserves going forward. In response the Director of Finance stated that it was difficult to estimate at this stage the impact of Universal Credit, albeit to say that there could be a corresponding impact on Council Tax collection rates. In relation to the reserves position, given the significant cost reduction targets the Council's reserves position was inadequate.

A Member questioned the rationale behind the proposal to close a care home and the proposals to build a new facility, as the demand for care was only going to increase over the long term. In response the Assistant Director stated that the closure of Home B was in a different part of the district whereas the proposal to build a new facility in Keighley was in a part of the district, where a particular need had been identified in respect of extra care beds.

In relation to the significant overspend in Children's and Adult Social Care, a Member ascertained what work, if any, had been done to look at the issue from a new angle such as obtaining a new perspective from officers outside of these two service areas, with a view to injecting some fresh ideas into the debate. In response the Director of Finance stated that some work had already been done in this area, including a review by Deloitte into Adult Social Care which had flagged up some weakness around implementation, in addition a new Strategic Director was now in post who would no doubt have a view on how the service functioned going forward.

A Member stressed that more public health work should be diverted towards Adult Social care and raising awareness around taking responsibility for our own care with a view to reducing dependency in old age.

The Chair thanked the Director of Finance and Strategic Directors/ Assistant Directors for attending the meeting and providing detailed responses to Member's questions.

**No resolution was passed on this item.**



53. **BRADFORD DISTRICT SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR QUARTER ONE APRIL - JUNE 2016 & REVISED BRADFORD DISTRICT SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES PLAN 2016-19**

The Assistant Director Environment and Sport submitted a report (**Document “W”**) which gave details of the Bradford District Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership Performance Report for Quarter One April – June 2016 and the revised Bradford District Safer and Stronger Communities Plan 2016-19.

A Superintendent from West Yorkshire Police responsible for an initiative to tackle perceived bad driving in the district named ‘Operation Streerside’ was present at the meeting to give an overview of the initiative and respond to Member’s question. During a detailed PowerPoint presentation the following aspects of the initiative were highlighted:

Chronology of headlines:

- STOP THE DANGER DRIVERS: Police admit driving standards in Bradford were a cause for concern.
- STOP THE DANGER DRIVERS: Councillor backs T&A campaign as police hunt hit-and-run driver who fled scene of three car crash.
- Heaton campaigners unveil new road safety banner and back T&A campaign.
- STOP THE DANGER DRIVERS: Police in Bradford mount covert patrols to catch motoring menaces.
- Police and Crime Commissioner backs the T&A's campaign to stop dangerous driving.
- Bradford Police draw up list of areas with worst driving as they back Telegraph & Argus campaign.
- Major police crackdown on Bradford's danger drivers starts - and 21 motorists are caught on first day.

Method: Studies show Killed or Seriously Injured collisions mainly result from:

- Not wearing seatbelt
- Inappropriate speed
- Drink / Drug driving
- Using a mobile phone whilst driving

Seatbelts: The sort of driver who does not wear a seatbelt is twice as likely to have a collision in the first place. Then, on having the collision they are twice as likely to die.



Inappropriate speed (not just exceeding a limit) is responsible for:

10% of all injury Road Traffic Accidents  
13% of all serious Road Traffic Collisions'  
24% of all fatal RTC's

In 2014 – 1775 deaths. 282 involved exceeding the speed limit, another 126 involved travelling too fast for the conditions

If we focus on the “fatal four”, we can have significant effect on KSI prevention.

Operation Steerside – action taken:

- Analysis of previous incidents gave top 5 areas.
- Dedicated patrols within these areas with officers targeting “Fatal 4”.
- Engage with the press (route to public) and social media to inform and educate via anecdotal stories. Photos speak a thousand words.
- Officers tasked with patrol in identified areas together with live time intel sent from dedicated phone voicemail, reports to police and officer knowledge of areas.
- Utilising equipment as trained (IE. Speed gun, fingerprint device, in-car CCTV)
- Officers are briefed on goals of the operation and expectations placed on them working it (number of offenders dealt with). Expectation of minimum of 10 processes per shift.
- Where possible obtain photos for use with social media and press.

Operation Steerside – results Feb-Oct 2016:

- Speed – 1894 incidents
- Phone – 544 incidents
- Seatbelt – 1835 incidents
- Other – 659 incidents
- Insurance – 437 incidents
- Total – 5372 incidents
- Vehicle seized – 447 incidents

Operation Steerside – results:

- Total actions taken 3,318
- Speed 1,164
- Phone 318
- Seatbelt 1,168
- Other 420
- Insurance 248
- Vehicles seized 264





Public feedback on the initiative:

- “I am pleased....and feel safer when driving in the area now, as I was becoming less happy to drive around Bradford. Thank you.”
- “It's about time this was done... I've seen the difference. Keep up the good work, and that is something I thought I would never say about the driving in Bradford.”
- “....I have to say that I was amazed how little traffic there seemed to be. Totally different to what I normally see. The standard was nowhere near as bad as it usually is....Could it be this initiative is actually working? I hope so”.

Moving on Steerside 2, 3:

- Do YOU have any recordings that we can use in the initiative?:  
Bradford police now have a dedicated email address:  
**[bd.steerside@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:bd.steerside@westyorkshire.pnn.police.uk)**  
For dash cam recordings; pass on information about illegal drivers or cars and tell us about areas where you think we need to patrol

Steerside 3- Dedicated days of Multi-Agency Action over next few months.

During the discussion Members asked a number of questions. The questions together with the responses are detailed below:

In relation to a question on how the initiative will continue after the funding comes to an end, the Superintendent from West Yorkshire Police explained that it was the forces intention to amalgamate the work done in Operation Steerside into mainstream policing, as well as ensuring that the media spotlight was maintained.

A Member expressed concerns that action was not always taken in relation to people using a mobile phone whilst driving. In response the Superintendent acknowledged that further work was being done with all police officers to ensure that action was always taken when a violation occurred.

A Member raised an issue around parking on pavements and how it was now perceived as normal behaviour. In response the Superintendent explained that the Police were trying to tackle this issue in conjunction with the Council Warden Service who were responsible for enforcing parking violations. The Assistant Director Neighbourhoods and Customer Services added that all Council Wardens had received appropriate training regarding parking enforcement and that an ANPR vehicle was also being utilised to deal with parking problems outside schools.

A Member commended the work done during Operation Steerside to tackle poor driving and suggested that the issue had to be kept alive and that more work was needed in respect of driver training.





In relation to the wider report, a Member commented that a considerable amount of police work was focussed around the city centre at the expense of other areas of the district. She also questioned what policies existed in relation to the arrest policy around cannabis use and drug dealing.

In addition, a Member raised a query around how incidents of burglary were classified and recorded and that some clarity was needed in this area.

In relation to the issue of hate crime, the Assistant Director acknowledged that given the low level of reporting that more work was needed to address this, and he cited the work being within certain communities around cultural barriers that may exist which inhibited people from reporting hate crime.

A Member commented that in the context of the low level reporting of hate crime, that resources could be diverted to tackle other crimes. However another Member stressed that hate crime should be given due regard and tackled. The Assistant Director acknowledged that there was anecdotal evidence about an increase in this type of crime and that it was therefore important to act on this information.

**Resolved –**

- (1) That this Committee recognised the success of Operation Steerside and request that officers write to the Police and Crime Commissioner to continue funding for this project.**
- (2) That this Committee requests that the arrest policy for drug dealing and drug use be presented to this Committee.**

***ACTION: Assistant Director Neighbourhoods and Customer Services***

**54. REPORT ON INCOME GENERATED BY COUNCIL SERVICES FROM FEES AND CHARGES**

The Director of Finance submitted a report (**Document “V”**) which provided Members with details of the main sources of income from fees and charges that funded the Council’s annual gross expenditure.

During the discussion a Member questioned the rationale behind retaining the service relating to the income received and generated from trading with schools. In response the Director of Finance stated trading with schools was cost effective and that schools trusted the Council as a supplier of services and the economies of scales it provided.

A Member acknowledged that in relation to trading services, schools still wanted to retain certain links with the Council.



A Member commended officers for providing a detailed report which highlighted all the key issues in relation to the Council's income streams and suggested that future reports should contain information pertaining to internal recharging, income portfolio and tax liabilities.

**No resolution was passed on this item.**

**55. CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17**

The Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee submitted a report (**Document "X"**) which included the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2016/17.

**Resolved –**

**That the work programme 2016-17 continues to be reviewed regularly during the year.**

***ACTION: Overview and Scrutiny Lead***

Chair

**Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER

