

Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 28 January 2016

Wards: All

Subject: **Scrutiny of the Business Plan 2016-2020: comments and recommendations from the overview and scrutiny panels**

Lead officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services

Lead member: Councillor Peter Southgate, Chair of Overview & Scrutiny

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Recommendations:

- A That in determining its response to Cabinet on the business plan 2016-20, the Overview and Scrutiny Commission considers and takes into account the comments and recommendations made by the overview and scrutiny panels.
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out the comments and recommendations of each of the overview and scrutiny panels following consideration of the business plan. The Overview and Scrutiny Commission is recommended to take these into account when determining its response to Cabinet.

2. DETAILS

- 2.1 On 7 December 2015, Cabinet agreed to forward a draft business plan for consideration by scrutiny, including draft revenue savings proposals, draft service plans, draft equalities assessments and latest amendments to the capital programme.
- 2.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission has a constitutional duty to coordinate the scrutiny responses on the business plan and budget formulation. The outcome of scrutiny by the panels (described in section 3 below) is presented to Commission for this purpose.
- 2.3 The substantive report on the Business Plan 2016-2020 is contained elsewhere on this agenda for the Commission's consideration.

3. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS

- 3.1 Appendix 1 contains comments and recommendations made by the scrutiny panels.
- 3.5 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission is recommended to consider the comments and recommendations put forward by the scrutiny panels when determining its overall scrutiny response to Cabinet on the Business Plan 2016-20.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The Constitution requires the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to consider the comments and recommendations put forward by the overview and scrutiny panels and to agree a joint overview and scrutiny response. Cabinet is then required under the terms of the Constitution to receive, consider and respond to references from overview and scrutiny.

5. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 5.1 The Constitution contains the requirements for consulting scrutiny on the budget and business plan. There is an initial phase of scrutiny in November each year, with the second round in January/February representing the formal consultation of scrutiny on the proposed Business Plan, Budget and Capital Programme.

6. TIMETABLE

- 6.1 Round one of scrutiny of the 2016-20 Business Plan was undertaken as follows:-

- Children & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Panel: 3 November 2015
- Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel: 11 November 2015
- Healthier Communities & Older People Scrutiny Panel: 10 November
- Overview and Scrutiny Commission: 24 November 2015

- 6.2 Comments and recommendations from round one were reported to Cabinet on 7 December 2015.

- 6.3 Round two of scrutiny of the Business Plan was undertaken as follows:-

- Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel: 7 January 2016
- Children & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Panel: 13 January 2016
- Healthier Communities & Older People Scrutiny Panel: 12 January 2016
- Overview and Scrutiny Commission: 28 January 2016

- 6.4 The responses from round two will be presented to Cabinet on 15 February 2016. A meeting of full Council will then take place on 2 March 2016.

7. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 These are detailed in the substantive reports elsewhere on this agenda and in the reports considered by Cabinet on 19 October and 7 December 2015.

8. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The process for developing the budget and business plan is set out in Part 4C of the Council's Constitution. The role of the Overview and Scrutiny

Commission and panels with regard to the development of the budget and business plan is set out in Part 4E of the Constitution.

- 8.2 The legal and statutory implications relating to the Business Plan are contained in the reports elsewhere on this agenda.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None directly relating to this report.

10. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 It is a fundamental aim of the scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process through public involvement and engagement.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 These implications are detailed in the reports elsewhere on this agenda.

12. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

Appendix 1: comments and recommendations made by the scrutiny panels in relation to the Business Plan 2016-20.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 13.1 Minutes of the meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny Panels in January 2016

References/Comments from Scrutiny Panels to the Overview & Scrutiny Commission 28 January 2016

Scrutiny of the Business Plan 2016-2020

Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel: 7 January 2016

The Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel asked questions and made comments about individual savings proposals:

- ENV33 – “Development of emissions based charging policy for resident/business permits recognising the damage particularly from diesel engine motor vehicles”. The Panel noted that it would receive a report on air quality in the new municipal year
- ENV35 – “Efficiency measures to reduce domestic residual waste rounds by 1 crew following analysis of waste volumes and spread across the week” The Panel noted that this saving includes a financial marker and further detail will be provided to the Panel in due course.
- EN36 – “Review and removal of neighbourhood recycling centres”. A panel member expressed concern that this proposal could result in an increase in fly-tipping if re-cycling centres are removed. The Cabinet member for Environmental Cleanliness and Parking said she has received requests from within the community to remove the centres as they encourage people to leave their unwanted goods next to the centres and can become unsightly. The Head of Street Scene and Waste said the department will keep levels of fly tipping under review and look at the outcomes from Sutton who have already removed their recycling centres.
- EN11 – “Building and Development Control staff reduction deputy area team leader”. A panel member expressed concern about losing staff in the planning department given the volume of planning applications.
- A panel member expressed concern about the proposed loss of 3.5 posts in housing as set out in the service plan and asked what the implications will be. The Head of Housing Needs and Strategy said that the emphasis will be on fulfilling statutory obligations.

The Panel RESOLVED to note the budget and business plan report.

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel: 13 January 2016

The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel noted the additional information on the approach that had been taken to the provision of services for children, including disabled children.

The Panel asked questions about the detail of the draft capital programme 2016-20 and resolved to note the capital programme.

The Panel considered the draft savings proposal CSF2015-07 “review of CSF staffing structure beneath management level” set out on page 61 of the consultation pack and the associated equality impact assessment on page 145. The Director of Children Schools and Families explained that, because the proposal relates to 2017/18 and

2018/19, the description is high level at present. The proposal provides the financial envelope for service redesign but may be re-profiled between the two years once detailed planning work and discussion, including with schools and other partners, has taken place. Alternative proposals would be drawn up if required once the impact of service redesign had been fully assessed. Panel members requested that updates be provided to the Panel during the course of the service transformation work.

The Panel therefore RESOLVED to accept the savings proposal CSF2015-07 “review of CSF staffing structure beneath management level” in principle, subject to receiving progress reports at appropriate points setting out the proposed mechanism and predicted impact for delivery of this saving.

Panel members commented that the performance targets set out in the draft service plan for Education did not seem to be sufficiently challenging. The Assistant Director of Education undertook to review these and to provide the most up-to-date national comparative data as part of the school standards report to the Panel meeting on 10 February 2016. The Cabinet Member for Education agreed that he would be involved in this review.

The Panel RESOLVED to note the draft service plans.

Healthier Communities and Older People O&S Panel: 12 January 2016

The Panel considered the results of the consultation on adult social care savings and was addressed by speakers from Adults First, Carers Partnership Group, Merton Centre for Independent Living and South Thames Crossroads, an individual service user and a carer.

The speakers all expressed concern at the proposed savings in adult social care and gave examples of the impact that these would have on vulnerable older people and disabled service users and their carers.

Panel members asked lots of questions and expressed concern about the impact that the savings may have on the quality of life of individual service users.

The Panel RESOLVED to ask Cabinet to:

1. reconsider the overall reduction in support packages, specifically CH02 and CH29 (page 82 of consultation report on the supplementary agenda):
 - CH02–“ promoting independence – efficiencies to be found in the hospital discharge process and by enabling customers to regain and maintain independence”
 - CH29 – “older people – managing crisis (including hospital admissions to residential care) This would include a number of activities to reduce admissions to residential care placements. WE would be looking to families to continue to support people at home for longer. This would fit in with our overall approach to enable independence.”
2. Reconsider de-commissioning the South Thames Crossroads service for carers (CH60 – set out on page 80 of the consultation report on the supplementary agenda). The Panel noted that 72 carers would lose their support services.
3. Reconsider the reduction in the assessment and commissioning staffing budget, specifically savings CH04, CH20, CH58 and CH22 (on pages 78 and 79 of the supplementary agenda) that would impact on service users:

- CH04 – “reduce management costs and reduction in staffing costs – Access and Assessment. Staffing restructure to deliver efficient processes and building on planned shift of some customers to manage their own processes”
- CH20 – “staffing reductions in Assessments and Commissioning teams. Staff savings 12FTE to be deleted in 2016/17 across all service areas. Reduction in the ability to carry out assessments and reviews, social work support, safeguarding activities, DOLs responsibilities and financial assessments”
- CH58 – “Staffing reductions in Assessments and Commissioning teams. Reduction of a further 19-23 FTE posts, in addition to the 12FTE in CH20. Total FTE affected is 30-35 for 16/17”
- CH22 – “ Commissioning Employees – staff savings – 4FTE to be deleted. Reduced capacity to monitor quality within provider services, reduced capacity to monitor performance within services and a reduced capacity to proactively work to sustain and develop a local provider market”