

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
VALUE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
11 October 2011 (7.30 - 9.05 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Conservative Group Robby Misir (Chairman), Billy Taylor and Garry Pain

Residents' Group Ray Morgon (Vice-Chair) and Ron Ower

Labour Group

**Independent Residents
Group**

Apologies were received for the absence of Councillors Ted Eden and Damian White.

All decisions were taken with no votes against.

The Chairman reminded Members of the action to be taken in an emergency.

7 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7 July 2011 were agreed as a correct record subject to an amendment to the members of the Committee being present which should have read that Councillors Ron Ower and Damian White were not present. The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

8 REPORT ON FREEDOM OF INFORMATION - ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The Committee received a report that sets out how Access to Information is administered.

The report provided the following summaries:

- The Access to Information team
- The way the team works in regard to Access to Information (including an explanation of Freedom of Information and related legislation)
- An explanation of Exemptions
- Performance regarding Access to Information

The performance in responding to Freedom of Information requests in the period from January 2009 to August 2011.

In reply to Members enquiry, the Committee was informed that members of the public can not be charged for any additional unless the work takes over 18 hours to complete by law. That quite a minimal amount had been realised for the amount of work detailed in the report.

The Committee **noted** the presentations.

9 **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2011/12 - QUARTER 1**

A report that outlined the Council's performance against the Living Ambition goal that related to the Value Overview and Scrutiny Committee was presented to Members.

The report detailed that the Corporate Performance Report 2011/12 - Quarter 1 was circulated to Members on 6 September 2011. This report focused specifically on those indicators which are measuring our performance against the Living Ambition Goal – Value.

The report detailed 18 indicators under the Goal – Value and nine of the indicators had been given a RAG rating this quarter. Those indicators without a RAG rating include:

- Annual indicators – there were four annual indicators, which had been included for information purposes. These would be reported at the end of the year.
- No target – there were two indicators where it was not considered relevant to set a target but Quarter 1 data was included for information purposes.
- Data unavailable – there were three indicators where Quarter 1 data was not yet available.

The Committee **noted** the report.

10 **VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS 2010/11**

At its meeting on 7 July 2011, Members requested information on the total amount of grant awarded to the community and voluntary sector as part of their work programme. The information for 2010/11 was compiled and reported to the Committee.

The following summary was provided in the table below.

Total voluntary sector grants*, 2010/11

| Organisation | Amount (£) |
|---|---------------------|
| Core funding | 255,313.00 |
| Community Engagement Team - Regeneration, Policy & Planning | 52,357.85 |
| Community Safety Team - Legal & Democratic | 51,000.00 |
| Culture & Leisure | 520,397.00 |
| Children & Young People | 15,000.00 |
| Social Care & Learning* | 3,698,169.00 |
| TOTAL | 4,592,236.85 |

**This included both grants and contracted services.*

The information was broken down for specific community and voluntary sector groups in Appendix 1 of the report.

The Committee **noted** the report.

11 PRESENTATION DEALING WITH SERVICE REQUEST/COMPLAINTS

At the request of the Committee, Jeff Potter - Head of Customer Services provided the Committee with information on the CRM system.

The presentation detailed the services that had gone live on the system. The presentation also informed Members of how a resident request can escalate to a complaint if matter was not resolved within timescale.

The Committee agreed to receive a regular update even though they were aware that some issues can be categorised as seasonal.

The Committee also agreed to receive further updates on services that are yet to go live on the new CRM system with projected dates.

The Committee **noted** the presentation.

12 CRM REQUESTS AND COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

The Committee received an update on Corporate Complaints and Members Enquiries two sets of information that related to Corporate Performance Indicators 2011/12 and proposed Performance Indicators for inclusion in the Members' pack from quarter one 2011/12.

The Corporate Policy and Partnership Manager requested Members of the Committee to review the list entitled Corporate Performance Indicators 2011/12 and suggest any further indicators that Members would consider for inclusion in the proposed Performance Indicators Members' pack.

The Committee **noted** the presentation.

13 WORK PROGRAMME/ AGREEMENT OF TOPIC GROUPS

Following the presentation by officers at the meeting the Committee agreed to formulate the following Topic Groups:

1. Council Tax Collection
2. Voluntary Sector Grants distribution mechanism

Members at the meeting agreed to advise the Chairman directly on what they thought should be the objectives for each review.

The Committee requested a presentation on Business Rate Relief to be given at the next meeting. This arose because a Member was of the opinion that many small businesses were either not aware of what they can claim or the appropriate information was not getting through to them.

Chairman