CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15 July 2014

*Councillor Terence Patrick – Chairman
*Councillor Pauline Searle – Vice-Chairman

*Councillor Melanie Bright
*Councillor Adrian Chandler
*Councillor Lizzie Griffiths
*Councillor Angela Gunning
Councillor Jayne Hewlett
Mrs Stella Howarth
*Councillor Philip Hooper
*Councillor Jennifer Jordan

*Councillor Diana Lockyer-Nibbs
*Councillor Julia McShane
Mr Mike Parsons
Councillor Tony Phillips
*Councillor Mrs Jennifer Powell
Councillor Neil Ward
*Councillor Jenny Wicks

*Present

Councillor Richard Billington, Lead Councillor for Community Safety and Health, Councillor Monika Juneja, Lead Councillor for Planning, Councillor Matt Furniss, Lead Councillor for Environment, Councillor Paul Spooner, Lead Councillor for Licensing and Governance and Councillor Caroline Reeves, were also in attendance.

CC12 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES
Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Jayne Hewlett, Tony Phillips and Neil Ward. There were no substitutes in attendance.

CC13 – LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT – DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS
There were no disclosures.

CC14 – MINUTES
The minutes of the meeting of the Customer and Community Scrutiny Committee held on 13 May and 20 May 2014 and the minutes of the Joint Scrutiny Committee held on 13 May, 15 May and 17 June 2014 were confirmed and signed.

CC15 – WEY AHEAD NEWSLETTER ITEMS – COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS
No questions were received.

CC16 – RESPONSE TO FLOODING 2013/14 – THE FINDINGS OF THE FLOOD REVIEW GROUP
The Committee received a detailed report which set out the work of the Flood Review Group, established following flooding in the borough during December and January 2013/14. The Lead Councillors for Community Safety and Health, and Environment welcomed Doug Hill and Ian Tomes from the Environment Agency to the meeting who provided a presentation to accompany the report.

The Flood Review Group, consisting of representatives from all relevant partner organisations, had concluded the following:

- the rapid rise in river levels were as a result of significant rainfall and resulting flow of the River Wey and its tributaries, not because of the operation of the sluice gates.
- the flood and emergency plans were followed well, with council staff and partners, showing great commitment and professionalism throughout the period especially in relation to relocating residents and activating a rest centre.
The Flood Review Group had produced a comprehensive Action Plan and identified specific action plans for flooding ‘hotspot’ locations, which would result in improvements to the management of future flooding events.

The Committee noted that it was intended that the Flood Review Group would continue to meet and monitor the implementation of the Action Plan. Councillors raised concerns regarding surface water flooding, particularly in relation to potential new developments and at the junction of Ladymead and Woodbridge Meadows, which was a key route onto the A3. The Lead Member for the Environment confirmed that, in relation to potential new developments, landowners were involved in discussions concerning maintenance and flood mitigation measures. In relation to the concerns regarding surface water flooding at Ladymead, the Committee noted that Surrey County Council was the responsible authority and it was agreed that Officers would refer the concerns to the Surrey Flood Risk Partnership Board at the earliest opportunity.

The Environment Agency confirmed that it provided full comments when consulted on planning applications, particularly in areas prone to flooding. In addition, the Environment Agency worked closely with Borough and District Councils on policy development and welcomed the invitation to comment on Guildford’s draft local plan.

Having thanked officers and the representatives from the Environment Agency, the Committee

RESOLVED: That the Executive be advised that the Customer and Community Scrutiny Committee supports the proposed action plan and recommends that the Executive:

(I) acknowledges the work of the Flood Review Group and approves the findings and supports the Action Plan as set out in Appendix 6 of the report to the Committee, subject to the additional action as follows:

- concerns regarding surface flooding at Ladymead be referred by Officers to the Surrey Flood Risk Partnership Board at the earliest opportunity.

(II) agrees that the Flood Review Group continue to meet and deliver the actions detailed in the Action Plan.

(III) agrees that the Executive Head of Environment and the Executive Head of Housing and Health, in liaison with the Lead Councillor for Community Safety and Health, submit a capital bid into the 2015/16 budget as part of the business planning process to request funding of £100,000 for the purchase of temporary flood defences or a contribution to a more permanent flood defence, subject to a further report to the Executive.

CC17 – FUNDAMENTAL SERVICE REVIEW OF THE PLANNING SERVICE
The Lead Councillor for Planning and Executive Head of Development introduced the report which set out the proposed scope of the Planning Service Fundamental Review (FSR) and asked for a maximum of four councillors to join the FSR Board.

The Committee noted that the Planning Service had been subject to other earlier reviews that had covered specific aspects of the service, however this FSR would aim to consolidate all outstanding review recommendations in one place; incorporating Development Control (including Planning Committee), Building Control, Planning Policy, support services and
Local Land Charges. The Lead Councillor for Planning assured the Committee that the review would not revisit the conclusions of the Planning Committee Councillor Review Working Group as agreed by Planning Committee and Council on 8 and 10 April 2014 respectively.

Councillors expressed concern regarding the timing of the review, given the workload of both development control officers and the planning policy team. However, having been reassured that Alexander consultants, who had been engaged to carry out the review, would minimise the impact on service delivery and fully engage with staff in the planning service teams, the Committee

RESOLVED: (I) That the proposed scope and timing of the Planning Service Fundamental Service Review as set out in the report to Committee be approved;

(II) That the following two councillors be appointed to the Fundamental Review Service Board:
  - Councillor Caroline Reeves; and
  - Councillor Jenny Wicks.

(III) That nominations for the remaining two councillor positions on the Board be sought from Group Leaders.

CC18 – CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME
The Committee considered the work programme proposed for the Customer and Community Scrutiny Committee as recommended by the agenda setting meeting held on 9 June 2014. The Committee also noted that an additional Joint Scrutiny Committee was scheduled for 4 September 2014, to allow councillors to address and challenge the draft housing number in the Local Plan.

The Committee,

RESOLVED: That the work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report submitted to the Committee, be approved.

Chairman
9 September 2014