

Minutes of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 2 August 2022

Present: In the Chair, Gill Heath (Vice-Chairman (Scrutiny))

Attendance

Tina Clements	Jeremy Pert
Mike Davies	Bernard Peters
Kath Perry, MBE	Samantha Thompson (Vice-Chairman (Overview))
	Mike Worthington

Also in attendance: Councillors Alan White, and Ian Parry

Officers: Kerry Dove, Chris Ebberley, Katie Marshall and John Tradewell.

Apologies: Charlotte Atkins, John Francis, Colin Greatorex, Jeremy Oates and Bob Spencer

PART ONE

22. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

23. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2022

Resolved: – That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

24. Quarter 1 Integrated Performance Report

The Leader of the Council introduced the Integrated Performance Report for Quarter 1 2022/23 which summarised the Council's performance and financial position against the Strategic and Delivery Plans.

The Cabinet Member for Finance detailed the main challenges facing each of the four service areas, notably the situation with the global economy and the impact this had had on Council Budgets; the transformation of Children's services which had failed to achieve expected savings during the first quarter; the Social Care White Paper; and Inflation and the effect this was having on reserves. It was also reported that there was a forecast overspend of £14.693m (2.76%).

The main issues discussed by members were:

1. *Adult Social Care White Paper* – In its present form, it was felt that the proposals would be very challenging for the Authority with a projected pressure of between £70 and £100 m per annum. It was reported that there were five ‘trail blazers’ in England looking at new working methods. These were due to conclude at the end of the year and their findings would be available to all councils for consideration. Members were reminded that providing certain types and levels of care was a statutory duty which had to be provided regardless of funding. Non statutory care may need to be reviewed in the future dependent on financial pressures/guidance.
2. *Outstanding debt* – The Levels of outstanding debt of more than 6 months old currently stood at £18.5m, against a target of £14.7.
3. *Skill levels 5 and 6* – it was noted that there had been an improvement in attainment in these levels and it was confirmed that effort was being made to provide an environment where businesses could develop and expand so that there was opportunity to take advantage of the additional skills which would subsequently lead to demand for higher level skills.
4. *Children’s services* - Transformation continued but work still needed to be done to embed some of the changes. Numbers of Children in Care had stabilised but were not decreasing at the expected rate.
5. *SEND Transport* – A rise in inflation had led to increase in prices in excess of 50%. It was reported that the Portfolio holder was looking at in more depth.
6. *Growth hubs* – There was some uncertainty around the funding of the hub’s activity going forward. More information would be reported when known.
7. *Highways* - A question was asked on the anticipated impact of the £3.046m reduction in Carriageway/other maintenance and if this was a short-term saving which would lead to a longer-term cost? It was agreed that information on this reduction and any risks involved would be included in the next performance report.
8. It was requested that the Cabinet member for Health and Care look at the ‘Workforce Strategy’ and ensure that it included Health partners as it was felt that services were integrated, and training issues were the same for employees of all partnering services. In response, it was explained that Health and Care staff were employed by different organisations with very different terms and conditions.
9. *Maintained schools forecast spend* - the new developer contributions of £2.094m remained unallocated and members asked why this was? It was agreed that information on the underspend would be included in the next performance report.

Resolved: That the Quarter 1 2022/23 Integrated Performance Report be noted subject to the following:

1. Information on the anticipated impact of the £3.046m reduction in Carriageway/other maintenance, be included in the next performance report.
2. It was requested that the Cabinet member for Health and Care look at the ‘Workforce Strategy’ and ensure that, where possible, it included Health Partners.
3. Information on the ‘Maintained schools forecast spend’ and the new developer contributions of £2.094m which remained unallocated, be included in the next performance report.

25. Boundary Commission Review - update

Katie Marshall, the new Project Lead for the review was introduced.

The Committee was reminded of the stages of the review. Stage one was now nearing completion. A submission document was currently being compiled which would be considered by Council in October, prior to submission to the Boundary Commission by the 11 November 2022.

Members were informed that all the evidence collated so far, supported the retention of 62 members, this would be the basis of the Councils 'Size Submission' Document. There would also be a request for 'single member' wards as part of the Submission. It was reported that there was no guarantee that single member divisions would be achievable and this that had been requested as part of the last review in 2010, however two double divisions remained.

The draft submission would be considered at the next meeting of this Committee in September.

Stage two of the project would commence with the Boundary Commission publishing their in-principle view on Councillor numbers, by 10th January 2023. Consultation on future division arrangements would then run for 12 weeks until 20th March 2023. Briefing meetings would be offered to Parish and Town Councils, stakeholders and interested community groups in early January.

During the discussion, members were provided with the following information:

- All District and Borough Councils had now submitted the information requested and require to support the Councils proposals.
- The information was based on the Full electoral register not just the Postal Vote register.
- Proposed housing development figures were taken into account.
- More detail would be available at the next meeting.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

26. Work Programme

It was reported that the results of the Climate Change Working Group would be considered at the October meeting of this Committee and not the September meeting as originally planned. This was due to an issue with arranging dates for the next meeting which all contributors could attend.

Resolved: That the Work Programme for 2022/23 be noted.

Chairman