

**BUDGET AND  
PERFORMANCE PANEL**

**6.10 P.M.**

**13TH DECEMBER 2017**

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Susan Sykes (Chairman), Tim Hamilton-Cox (Vice-Chairman), Nathan Burns, Kevin Frea, Jean Parr, John Reynolds and Peter Williamson

Also in attendance:-  
Councillor Jon Barry

Officers in attendance:-

Kieran Keane	Assistant Chief Executive
Nadine Muschamp	Chief Officer (Resources) and Section 151 Officer
Andrew Clarke	Financial Services Manager
Joanne Billington	Internal Audit & Assurance Manager
Christopher Riley	ICT Manager
Gary Watson	Senior Property Officer
Julie Smethurst	Revenues Manager
Alison McGurk	Council Tax Manager
Andrew Dobson	Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning)
David Lawson	Regeneration Manager
Mark Cassidy	Planning Manager
Anne Marie Harrison	Economic Development Manager
Dianne Heald	Support Services Manager
Stephen Metcalfe	Principal Democratic Support Officer
Tessa Mott	Democratic Support Officer

**30 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There were no items of urgent business.

**31 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

**32 PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE ACCOUNTS - RESOURCES SERVICE**

The Chairman welcomed the Chief Officer (Resources) and six officers from the Resources service to the meeting.

Members were given an in depth presentation regarding the Resources service and how it functioned and performed.

The purpose of the presentation was to provide:

- An overview of the Resources service.
- Address an opportunity for challenge.
- Generate further budget options.
- Inform Members of the Corporate Plan.

The Chief Officer (Resources) explained that the Key Drivers for the service were clear and cover a broad spectrum with a strong focus on stewardship and protecting the public purse. The Key Drivers of the service were outlined as:

- Stewardship.
- Providing value for money.
- Customer and stakeholder focus.
- Continuous improvement and innovation.

The Chief Officer (Resources) then introduced six officers who each presented in turn and explained their role as well as how their individual sections functioned and performed. The officers were representatives from: Financial Services; Audit; ICT; Property Services; Customer Services and Revenues.

Topics discussed included: accountancy; exchequer; insurance; procurement; insurance and external benchmarking; succession planning; statutory functions; corporate fraud; production of the annual governance statement; core management systems; key financial risks; protection of council assets and adding value; the impact of budget reductions on internal controls; street naming/numbering; keeping up with new technology; digital awareness; user experience of IT platforms; major restructure in property service; commercial properties; occupancy levels of properties; energy usage; condition surveys; cultural change and customer focus; key project support; breakdown of calls/visits in customer services; average customer transaction service costs; a need for 'seamless' customer services/platforms; introduction of the Customer Experience Platform; impact of Universal credit on services; shared services and the impact of Government changes on business rate collections.

On conclusion of the presentation the Chairman, on behalf of the Panel, thanked the officers for their attendance and presentations.

During the presentation, Members asked questions of the Resources officers present regarding various issues. Topics included: ICT services; customer services; state of council buildings; investment queries; shared services arrangements; access to financial information; carbon audit and the carbon reduction scheme.

The Chairman asked the Chief Officer (Resources) to highlight to the Panel how Members can be of assistance to Officers and put forward any further savings ideas. It was explained that corporate planning is essential in order to budget for essential resources and be financial sustainable. It was also emphasised that there was a need to streamline processes so that services can work collaboratively to the advantage of all involved. Ideas also put forwarded included: investing property to keep buildings in reasonable conditions; renegotiation of existing contracts and re-examination of resource allocation.

***Resolved:***

- (1) That the Officers be thanked for their attendance and presentations to the Panel.

***The meeting adjourned at 19:36 and reconvened at 19:41.***

The Chairman welcomed the Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning) and four officers from the Regeneration and Planning service to the meeting.

Members were given an in depth presentation regarding the Regeneration and Planning service and how it functioned and performed.

The purpose of the presentation was to explain the differences between the core statutory services: Development Management; Planning Policy and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the discretionary services: Economic Development; Regeneration; Corporate Communication and Marketing.

The Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning) informed of the strategic fit of the service and explained the difference between local and national practices. The Key Drivers of the service were outlined as:

- Anticipating future change.
- Providing strong and robust services.
- Delivering value for money.
- Intervening in the local economy where the Council can add value.
- Managing high quality natural and build environments which characterise the Lancaster District.

The Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning) then introduced four officers who each presented in turn and explained their role as well as how their individual sections functioned and performed. The officers were representatives from: Regeneration; Development Management; Economic Development and Support Services.

Topics discussed included: policy development; strategic housing; conservation; opportunities to look for external funding; partnerships with outside bodies; pre-application advice; introduction of the Member Engagement forum; planning appeals record; tree preservation; building regulations; economic strategy; profile of the District; sourcing of external funding; visitor economy; business growth; arts/culture/festivals; place marketing/narrative; museums; flood grants; financial monitoring; project management support; procurement; office systems; information management and security; income generation; volunteering partnerships and involvement of Parish Councils.

On conclusion of the presentation the Chairman, on behalf of the Panel, thanked the officers for their attendance and presentations.

During the presentation, Members asked questions of the Regeneration and Planning officers present regarding various issues. Topics included: staffing; responsibilities of regeneration; recruitment/staffing costs/funding; major planning applications; level of skills; a need for an IT hub and connectivity of premises.

The Chairman asked the Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning) to highlight to the Panel how Members can be of assistance to Officers and put forward any further savings ideas. It was emphasised that Members help to shape and support the service and this was crucial to create transformational change within the District. It was also explained that there is a need for Members and Officers to be brave when considering efficiencies in order to reduce wasting assets. Members were also advised to examine the continuing waste in terms of lost officer time, transport expenditure, duplication of facilities

management and loss of opportunities from cross service working which arise from operating from two key administrative centres.

***Resolved:***

(1) That the Officers be thanked for their attendance and presentations to the Panel.

**34 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2017 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**35 WORK PROGRAMME REPORT**

The Principal Democratic Support Officer requested Members to put forward any necessary items for the Panel's Work Programme. The Panel were reminded that the annual stakeholder meeting was scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2018 at 6:00pm at Morecambe Town Hall.

***Resolved:***

(1) That the Panel be reminded that the annual stakeholder meeting was scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2018 at 6:00pm at Morecambe Town Hall.

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Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.57 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
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