

**BUDGET AND
PERFORMANCE PANEL**

6.10 P.M.

10TH JULY 2018

PRESENT:- Councillors Dave Brookes (Chairman), Tracy Brown, Kevin Frea and John Reynolds

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillors David Whitaker and Peter Yates

Officers in attendance:-

Andrew Clarke	Financial Services Manager
Suzanne Lodge	Chief Officer (Health and Housing)
Mark Davies	Chief Officer (Environment)
Jez Bebbington	Executive Support Manager
Anne Marie Harrison	Economic Development Manager
Richard Hammond	Cultural Development Manager
Stephen Metcalfe	Principal Democratic Support Officer
Tessa Mott	Democratic Support Officer

Also in attendance:-

Councillor Tim Hamilton-Cox and Anne Whitehead

1 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

In accordance with Part 3, Section 11 of the Constitution, the holder of this appointment may not come from the largest political group on Cabinet. In view of there being no Member present from the other political groups it was decided that this item be deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the Panel.

Resolved:

(1) That the appointment of a Vice-Chairman be deferred to the next meeting of the Panel.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th February 2018 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There were no items of urgent business.

4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

5 PROVISIONAL REVENUE, CAPITAL AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN 2017/18

The Financial Services Manager introduced a report to provide Members of the Panel with the Provisional Revenue, Capital and Treasury Management Outturn 2017/18.

A summary of the revenue outturn position for the main service accounts: Housing Revenue Account and General Fund Council Tax were set out in the report.

Additionally, a precise summary of the Housing Revenue Account provisional outturn was included in Appendix A of the report, with the main areas of interest being as follows:

- A reduced revenue funding requirement for capital, mainly shown as a lower call on the Major Repairs Reserve (£282K net saving overall);
- An increased depreciation charge of £38K;
- Increased income from rents due to carrying fewer void properties - £78K;
- A number of other net overspendings amounting to £21K.

It was explained that with regard to the Housing Revenue Account, improvements had been made to Council House Voids turnaround times and additional income had been generated as a result. Further additional income had been generated in relation to: disabled facility charges; Salt Ayre Leisure Centre, legal fees and planning income.

The carry forward of any 'underspendings and overspendings' was explained particularly, two underspendings that related to the Community Governance Review and the Townscape Heritage Initiative. The report also outlined that a small number of revenue overspendings had occurred but given their nature, Officers had agreed that there was no case for carrying them forward to reduce the current year's budgets.

With regard to Business Rates, it was explained that on 1 April 2017 a new rateable value came into effect and this resulted in an increase in Rateable Value of 4% to Lancaster. It was clarified that there hadn't been any appeals of the new Rateable Value yet and it was not known how many (if any) may come forward. Given the lack of appeals data, it was deemed challenging to estimate any provisions for appeals and therefore an assumption based on historic averages had been suggested. Finally, it was explained that the overall Fund position had moved from an opening deficit of £1.8M to a final surplus of £9.3M at the end of 2017/18. It was reiterated that this demonstrated the fluctuation over the year and any figures are subject to changes arising from the current year onwards.

Resolved:

- (1) That the report be noted.

6 PERFORMANCE MONITORING: QUARTER 4 AND END OF YEAR 2017-18

The Executive Support Manager introduced a report to update the Panel on the performance of key indicators for January 2018-March 2018 (Quarter 4) and the full year between April 2017-March 2018.

It was explained that the performance indicators would be reviewed in due course following endorsement of the Council Plan. This would ensure that the performance indicators were directly aligned with the monitoring work within the Council's Plan and

priorities. The report highlighted the summary of performance for the year as well as areas where significant improvements had been made, as well as areas where a need for improvements had been identified.

The Chief Officer (Health and Housing) explained that there had been an increase in the Council House Voids turnaround times and this was partially as a result of the staff following strict criteria implemented and adopting a new lean thinking approach. The Chief Officer (Environment) also clarified that this new approach had also had a positive impact on staff and provided an improved work ethos.

Members asked several questions of the Officers present regarding the performance indicators outlined in the report including:

- Carbon emission data and its relation to the upcoming Council Plan;
- Planning enforcement data availability;
- Salt Ayre Visitor Numbers and the financial position;
- Anticipated income targets of Salt Ayre;
- Garden Waste Scheme take up;
- Affordable homes figures in relation to actual percentage figures;
- Clarification on the homelessness targets;
- Possible review of some indicators to make them more meaningful and outcome based.

There was further discussion regarding the financial position of Salt Ayre, in particular the performance of the Gravity Tower and suggestions that may increase its appeal in future. It was also highlighted that although the café hadn't performed to expectations in the first year, new staff and improved systems had resulted in the café now doing well and other areas such as the gym were achieving income targets and swimming had exceeded expectations.

The Executive Support Manager summarised the discussion and put forward a suggestion regarding future analysis of the key performance indicators by the Panel. The suggestion was that, once quarterly performance information had been collated and reviewed by Management Team, the 'scorecard' could be circulated to Budget and Performance Panel Members for comments and questions ahead of the next scheduled Panel meeting. This would allow responses to any questions to be provided in advance of the meeting where possible, or at the meeting itself. The Panel accepted this and were in agreement.

Resolved:

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) Once quarterly performance information has been collated and reviewed by Management Team, the 'scorecard' is to be circulated to Budget and Performance Panel Members for comments and questions ahead of the next scheduled Panel meeting.

7 MUSEUMS

The Economic Development Manager gave an oral report to update the Panel on recent developments and the progress in relation to the City Council's Museums Service.

It was confirmed that notice had been given to the County Council that the City Council would take its Museums back in house and the notice period was underway. Work was ongoing regarding the transfer including: computer networks, ICT hardware, telephony, cash handling systems, HR requirements and all arrangements that related to staff. Resources were being brought in to assist with management and development of the service moving forwards.

Additionally, it was also explained that there had been requests to look for a preferred site for the Museum's Collection Centre and the City Council were currently looking into a range of potential sites and options.

Members asked various questions of the Officers present regarding the presentation including:

- Transfer of ICT equipment/systems vs purchase of new;
- Museums being included in performance management;
- Costs of running the services;
- Educational resources;
- Marketing/social media influence;
- Possibility of The Storey Gallery being joined up with the Museums;
- Lancaster/Morecambe being seen as a holiday destination.

The Economic Development Manager summarised the discussion and explained further that integration of the Council's cultural assets and services was a key focus of the current work. This would contribute to the district's profile for culture and heritage, which were unique selling points for the area.

8 WORK PROGRAMME REPORT

The Principal Democratic Support Officer outlined to the Panel that as per the report, in order to avoid duplication, the Panel had been requested to re-consider the Work Programme after the Council Plan had been approved and items for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme had been considered and prioritised.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Panel re-considers the Work Programme after the Council Plan has been approved and items for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme have been considered and prioritised.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 7.25 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
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