

**BUDGET AND  
PERFORMANCE PANEL**

**6.00 P.M.**

**6TH JULY 2021**

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Adrian Duggan (Chair), Phillip Black, Tim Dant, Roger Dennison, Joan Jackson, Debbie Jenkins, Oliver Robinson and Joanna Young

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor Jack O'Dwyer-Henry

Officers in attendance:

Paul Thompson

Chief Financial Officer (Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer)

Jez Bebbington

Executive Support Manager

Stephen Metcalfe

Principal Democratic Support Officer

**1 CHAIR'S REMARKS**

The Chair welcomed new and previously serving Members of the Panel to the meeting.

**2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

With the agreement of the Panel this item was deferred to the next meeting.

**3 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**4 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR**

The Chair advised there were no items of Urgent Business.

**5 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

**6 DELIVERING OUR PRIORITIES**

The Panel received a report from the Director of Corporate Services which provided an update on the progress of key corporate projects and performance measures for the period January-March 2021 (Q4 2020- 21), and for some annual indicators, the full year April 2020-March 2021. During this time, much of the council's activity had been re-focused to support residents and communities during the Covid-19 pandemic; the report provided some information on the impact of this re-alignment on projects and services. The Executive Support Manager provided a brief overview at the meeting.

The Chair suggested that in future he would invite Cabinet Portfolio Holders to attend meetings to report, answer questions and advise the Panel if they needed any help. It was requested that the monitoring report provide a link or identifies by initials the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holder. The Chair also advised that he wished to invite the Director of Corporate Services to discuss her corporate vision for the Council regarding budgets and performance. The use of Microsoft Project Manager was also discussed.

The Chair requested that Councillor Anne Whitehead be invited to attend a meeting of the Panel to discuss Outturn, Capital Investment Strategy and how the Council measures performance. He also requested that in future all budget reports regarding spending or savings and outturn reports presented to the Panel had a 2 year % variance column contained within them to demonstrate trend.

It was also suggested that a meeting of the Panel be scheduled in the weeks following Budget Council to discuss the budget in more detail with the Leader of the Council.

It was noted that Cabinet Briefings were currently held on Tuesday evenings and it was suggested that meetings of the Panel be re-arranged on Wednesday evenings. This would allow for Cabinet Members to attend meetings of the Panel when invited to do so. This issue to be considered as part of the Work Programme report.

The Panel also discussed or asked questions regarding:

- Performance of the Planning Service including the performance in determining planning applications and the strategy to address this;
- Following COVID 19 the strategy to move resources back to services and the lessons learnt;
- How KPIs are being set and measured.

***Resolved:***

- (1) That the report be noted.

## **7 WORK PROGRAMME REPORT**

The Principal Democratic Support Officer requested the Panel to consider it's Work Programme. The Work Programme was appended to the report and included regular quarterly monitoring items.

Members were informed that suggestions for the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme had been requested from all Councillors as well as the public. A number of suggestions had been received. It was reported that the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Budget and Performance Panel would meet with the Council's Executive Team to preliminary prioritise the items that had been submitted. Any items within the Panel's Terms of Reference would be reported back for consideration by the Panel.

The Committee went on to discuss the following:-

- The road to recovery. Invite the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive to attend the next meeting to discuss budget and performance issues;
- How the Council will prioritise its projects, use of resources and how these are monitored;

- Performance, costs and benchmarking of Council services;
- Social value.

It was agreed that Members of the Panel would be emailed to ask if they wanted to include any of the items set out above, or any other items for consideration at the meeting between the Chairs and Executive Team.

Also discussed was the Chair's earlier suggestion that in future he would invite Cabinet Portfolio Holders to attend meetings to report, answer questions and advise the Panel.

As referred to earlier in the meeting it was reported that Cabinet Briefings were currently held on Tuesday evenings and that, if the Panel wanted to invite Cabinet Members to meetings of the Panel, currently they would not be able to accept the invitation. It was agreed that Council Business Committee be requested to consider the current and future Committee Timetables and re-schedule meetings of the Panel on Wednesday evenings, wherever possible, or an alternative evening if there would be a clash of meetings. Members of the Panel also requested that a Panel meeting be scheduled on a date shortly after the Budget Council meeting each year to enable the Leader of the Council to advise in detail on the agreed budget.

***Resolved:-***

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That Members of the Panel be emailed to ask if they want to include any of the items set out above, or any other items for consideration at the meeting between the Chairs and Executive Team.
- (3) That Council Business Committee be requested to consider the current and future Committee Timetables and re-schedule meetings of the Panel on Wednesday evenings, wherever possible, or alternative evenings if there is a clash of meetings.
- (4) That Council Business Committee also be requested to schedule a Panel meeting on a date shortly after the Budget Council meeting each year to enable the Leader of the Council to advise the Panel in detail on the agreed budget.

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Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.20 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Stephen Metcalfe, Democratic Services - email [sjmetcalfe@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:sjmetcalfe@lancaster.gov.uk)**