

**BUDGET AND  
PERFORMANCE PANEL**

**6.00 P.M.**

**26 MARCH 2013**

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Susan Sykes (Chairman), Alycia James (Vice-Chairman), Dave Brookes, Janet Hall, Richard Newman-Thompson, Elizabeth Scott and Keith Sowden

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillors Tony Anderson

Also in attendance:-

Councillors Eileen Blamire, Abbott Bryning and Tim Hamilton-Cox

Officers in attendance:-

Bob Bailey	The Corporate Planning & Performance Manager (part – minute no. 47 to 52)
Andrew Clarke	Financial Services Manager
Andrew Dobson	Head of Regeneration and Planning (part – minute no. 47 to 51)
Simon Kirby	Assistant Head of Community Engagement (Wellbeing) (part – minute no. 47 to 50)
Richard Tulej	Head of Community Engagement (part – minute no. 47 to 52)
Anne Marie Harrison	Assistant Head of Community Engagement (Partnerships) (part – minute no. 47 to 52)
Suzanne Lodge	Head of Health and Housing (part – minute no. 47 to 50)
Stephen Metcalfe	Principal Democratic Support Officer
Tom Silvani	Democratic Support Officer

**47 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2013 were signed by the chairman as a correct record.

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

There were no item of urgent business.

**49 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

**50 SALT AYRE SPORTS CENTRE**

The Assistant Head of Community Engagement (Wellbeing) presented a report to update members on the continuing work in relation to the performance of Salt Ayre Sports Centre.

Members were reminded that at the meeting of the panel held on 23 October 2012 a number of resolutions had been made in relation to Salt Ayre Sports Centre. A number of these resolutions had been addressed as part of a report presented to the panel on 12 December 2012. The outstanding resolutions covered in this report were as follows:

- (1) That the additional report include financial information regarding the amounts spent on leisure centres by other local authorities in the North West, in order that comparisons might be made with expenditure by Lancaster City Council on Salt Ayre Sports Centre.
- (2) That officers be requested to look at the various headings to consider a reduction of up to 5% (by way of example) with particular emphasis on the management and admin costs in such a way that it does not negatively impact on service provision.
- (3) That information regarding the marketing and advertising of Salt Ayre Sports Centre be included in the report scheduled to be considered by the Panel on 5 March 2013

The panel were advised that the sports centre was a member of the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) and as such submitted benchmarking data each year for comparison against similar sized facilities. The report set out some of the key indicators for the service and the current performance levels for similar sites. It was advised that although the performance indicators were useful in terms of analysing trends over a period of time, no two centres were exactly alike, and caution should be taken when using the figures as exact comparators. Members discussed the performance indicators in detail.

Members noted that there were a large number of performance indicators in which the sports centre was in the third or fourth quartile when compared to similar sites. The Assistant Head of Community Engagement (Wellbeing) advised that more recent data suggested that as the sports centre had achieved an increased level of income a number of the performance indicators would now put the sports centre in the top one or two quartiles when compared to similar sites.

The Assistant Head of Community Engagement (Wellbeing) informed members that the review of the sports centre was ongoing, and that a number of project groups had been established to look at various areas. The panel agreed that further reports should be requested in order to update members on progress made. The Head of Community Engagement advised that the review of the sports centre was expected to be completed by September 2013, and that interim reports regarding progress could be provided to the panel if necessary.

Members were advised that the Active Health programme, which had been discussed at the meeting of the panel held on 11 December 2012, had been awarded a further £90,000 of funding to continue with the scheme for the coming financial year.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That a further report be presented to the panel once the review is completed, which it is noted is anticipated to be September 2013.

***The Assistant Head of Community Engagement (Wellbeing) and the Head of Health and Housing left the meeting at this point.***

***The chairman advised that with the agreement of the panel the agenda had been reordered in order to consider agenda item no. 8 first.***

**51 THE EFFECT OF THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CLIMATE AND CHANGES TO PLANNING LEGISLATION ON RELATED REVENUE COMING INTO THE COUNCIL**

The Head of Regeneration and Planning presented a report to brief the panel on the most significant impacts of the current economic climate and changes in planning legislation on income received by the council relating to its Regeneration and Planning function.

The Head of Regeneration and Planning provided a summary of the most significant impacts targeted at revenue streams, these were:

- External funding programmes.
- Section 106 contributions.
- Reductions in planning fee income.
- The building control trading account.
- Civil engineering projects.

The panel was advised that the council was currently in discussions with a neighbouring authority regarding the possibility of establishing a shared service in regards to the Building Control Trading Account. It was advised that the panel would be kept informed of any developments in this area.

The panel discussed Community Benefit Packages in relation to proposals for Britain's Energy Coast. Members asked questions regarding the nature of the packages. It was advised that the council was currently part of a group of local authorities which were in discussions with the Government regarding Community Benefit Packages for new nuclear nominated authorities.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That a further report be provided to the panel regarding the Building Control Trading Account when further information on developments in this area were known.

***The Head of Regeneration and Planning left the meeting at this point.***

**52 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING - QUARTER 3 2012/13**

The panel received a report from the Leader of the Council, in respect of the corporate performance and financial monitoring reports for Quarter 3 of the 2012/13 Performance Review Team cycle and progress as at December 2013 towards delivery of the Corporate Plan 2012 – 15.

Members were advised that the Quarter 3 Performance Summary report, which set out progress towards the delivery of Corporate Plan outcomes and success measures for each Cabinet Member's Portfolio Area, had been published as scheduled on 21 January 2013, together with the Financial Reports for the same period. As well as an update on quarterly measures as at Quarter 3 the report had also provided commentary on progress towards the delivery of annual measures due to be formally reported on in Quarter 4 when performance for the whole of the Corporate Plan would be reported.

The Leader of the Council advised that there were currently no corporate plan priorities with a 'Red' status. There were three priorities which had been awarded an 'Amber' rating, these were as follows:

- Increase percentage of household waste reused, recycled or composted.
- NDR collection as a percentage of NDR due.
- Council Tax collections as a percentage of Council Tax due.

Members discussed each of these areas in detail and asked questions accordingly. As part of discussions about the collection of Council Tax, members asked questions regarding the introduction of universal benefit payments, and the expected impact on council collection rates.

***The Head of Community Engagement, the Assistant Head of Community Engagement (Partnerships) and the Corporate Planning & Performance Manager left the meeting at this point.***

The Financial Services Manager introduced the Corporate Financial Monitoring report for Quarter 3. The monitoring report of expenditure and income for 2012/13 set out an indicative corporate picture of the council's financial performance relating to the period ending 31 December 2012.

The report summarised the variances reported through services quarterly PRT meetings, and also identified any omissions, updates and/or actions required. In addition there were specific sections for salary monitoring, capital expenditure and financing, Housing Revenue Account (HRA), revenue collection performance and Insurance and Risk Management.

Members discussed the report in detail, including the summary of general fund major variances. Areas discussed included the following:

- Savings on the cost of fuel due to Government cancellation of expected 3% rise in fuel duty.
- Ongoing claim for dilapidations relating to Kellet Road Industrial Estate, Carnforth.

- Income from off-street car-parking.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**53 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2013/14**

The Financial Services Manager presented a report to seek the panel's views regarding the approved treasury management framework for 2013/14.

The panel were advised that the Treasury Management Strategy 2013/14 had been approved by Council on 27 February 2013. Members were reminded that in line with the updated (2011) CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice, Budget and Performance Panel had been explicitly named as responsible for scrutiny of the Treasury Management function, including review of the Annual Strategy.

Given the timing of Budget and Performance panel meetings, unfortunately it had not been possible to provide for scrutiny of the treasury proposals prior to them being approved by Council.

The panel noted the update on Icelandic investments contained within the report. During quarter 1 2012/13 repayments had been received from KSF (10%) and Landsbanki (12%), in quarter 3 further payments had been received from Landsbanki (5.8%) and KSF (3%). The total repayment in cash terms was expected to be £5.9M, meaning that the majority of the £6M principal invested would be returned.

**Resolved:**

That the report be noted.

**54 WORK PROGRAMME REPORT**

The Democratic Support Officer submitted a report to update members on the panel's work programme. Members were asked to consider whether they would like to include any further items in the work programme.

Members were advised that reports regarding Customer Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy and Guidance would now be provided to the panel on a six monthly basis, and that the first report was expected to be presented in October 2013. Members queried the reason for the delay and it was advised that clarification would be sort and added to the work programme at the next meeting of the panel.

The panel considered the update regarding empty houses, voids, and why properties are in need of repair, and agreed that a report be requested to cover the issues as previously submitted by Councillor Scott and subsequently requested by the panel.

The panel was advised that two briefing notes had been circulated to members prior to the meeting, these were:

- Performance of Commercial Buildings
- Property Collaboration

The chairman requested that should members wish to discuss the briefing notes further they could be included as an agenda item for consideration at a future meeting of the panel.

***Resolved:***

- (1) That the report be noted and that the work programme be updated accordingly.
- (2) That clarification be sought regarding the reason for the delay to the Customer Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy and Guidance report, and that this be added to the work programme for the next meeting of the panel.
- (3) That the Head of Environmental Services be requested to report on the issues relating to empty houses, voids, and why properties are in need of repair, as previously submitted by Councillor Scott and subsequently requested by the panel.

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Chairman

(The meeting ended at 7.22 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
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