

**BUDGET AND  
PERFORMANCE PANEL**

**6.10 P.M.**

**8TH SEPTEMBER 2015**

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Dave Brookes (Chairman), Brett Cooper, Andrew Gardiner, Janet Hall, Tim Hamilton-Cox and Roger Sherlock (substitute for Anne Whitehead)

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillors Philippa Williamson (Vice-Chairman), Claire Cozler, Colin Hartley, Anne Whitehead and Eileen Blamire

Also in attendance:-

Councillor Abbott Bryning, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Property Services and Car Parking (Invited for minute 11).

Officers in attendance:-

Mark Davies	Chief Officer (Environment)
Andrew Clarke	Financial Services Manager
Stuart Hampson	HR & OD Manager
Robert Bailey	Corporate Planning and Performance Manager
Stephen Metcalfe	Principal Democratic Support Officer
Sarah Moorghen	Democratic Support Officer

**7 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2015 were signed as a correct record.

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

There were no items of urgent business.

**9 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

**10 DISCUSSIONS WITH COUNCILLOR EILEEN BLAMIRE - LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

Councillor Eileen Blamire, Leader of the Council, had sent her apologies prior to the meeting.

***Resolved:-***

That the item be deferred and that Councillor Blamire be invited to attend the next meeting of the Panel on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

**11 DISCUSSIONS WITH COUNCILLOR ABBOTT BRYNING - CABINET MEMBER**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Abbott Bryning, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Property Services and Car Parking, to the meeting.

Councillor Bryning gave the Panel an overview of his portfolio including an update on the St Leonards House development and elements of the Peer Review relevant to his portfolio.

Members asked Councillor Bryning a number of questions relating to the development of the Canal Corridor, the likely impact of the M6 junction J34 Park and Ride, the mobile phone parking top-up system and tenancies at Moor Lane Mills.

***Resolved:-***

That Councillor Bryning be thanked for his attendance at the meeting.

**12 BUDGET AND PLANNING PROCESS 2016/17 ONWARDS**

The Financial Services Manager introduced a report on the Budget and Planning Process 2016/17 Onwards.

The report set out a range of indicative scenarios for the General Fund Budget deficits or savings requirements between 2016/17 and 2019/20. In addition, there was a need for Cabinet to review the Council's Corporate Priorities at an early stage, alongside the consideration of savings options. A detailed timetable for the forthcoming budget process was attached to the report.

The options, options analysis, including risk assessment and officer preferred options considered by Cabinet were set out in the report.

Members asked a number of questions relating to such issues as power station outages, Government proposed social housing rent reductions, restructuring, cost sharing on waste recycling, the "innovative ideas" for income generation, the residents survey and the merits of an additional meeting of the Panel in December to scrutinise draft budget proposals.

It was then proposed by Councillor Gardiner and seconded by Councillor Hall:-

"(1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the Briefing Note on Council Housing due to go to Housing Regeneration Cabinet Liaison Group be circulated to the Members of the Panel.

(3) That a Briefing Note on Waste Cost Sharing Agreement be circulated to the Panel Members.

(4) That a copy of the results of the resident's survey be circulated to the Panel when available.

(5) That an additional meeting of the Panel be scheduled for December 2015 to scrutinise the draft budget proposals."

Upon being put to the vote Members voted unanimously in favour of the proposition, whereupon the Chairman declared the proposal clearly carried.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the Briefing Note on Council Housing due to go to Housing Regeneration Cabinet Liaison Group be circulated to the Members of the Panel.
- (3) That a Briefing Note on Waste Cost Sharing Agreement be circulated to the Panel Members.
- (4) That a copy of the results of the resident's survey be circulated to the Panel when available.
- (5) That an additional meeting of the Panel be scheduled for December 2015 to scrutinise the draft budget proposals.

**13 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING 2015/16 - QUARTER 1**

The Financial Services Manager introduced a report to present the Corporate Financial and Performance Monitoring 2015/16 Quarter 1. A summary of the financial monitoring for quarter 1 of the 2015/16 performance monitoring cycle was attached for Members' consideration.

The report also gave an update on improvements being made in the corporate performance management, monitoring and reporting arrangements and actions being planned to make more effective use of business intelligence to inform decision-making.

The Financial Services Manager advised Members that the headline variances and projections were as follows:-

- General Fund revenue budget underspend of £201K, projected to become £553K by the year end.
- Housing Revenue Account underspend of £13K, projected to become an overspend of £39K by the end of the year.
- Council Tax surplus of £314K.
- Sundry Debt level at £3.4M of which £1.9M relates to Housing Benefit Overpayments recoveries. Overall a 14% reduction on previous quarter.
- Council Housing Rent Arrears circa £291K. A 5% increase on the previous quarter.

Members then asked a number of questions on financial monitoring regarding business rates, electric pool cars and use of bikes by Council employee's, salary savings and the impact of the living wage on the budget.

The Performance Manager then introduced the Performance Management Framework (PMF) and the Council's Corporate Complaints Analysis 2014/15 for Members' consideration. The Performance Manager outlined the purpose of the framework and the

work being done to realise the benefits of the effective performance management and business improvement.

The HR & OD Manager suggested that the additional December meeting of the Panel could be used to present the Panel with a live demonstration of the CorVu system and Members agreed that this should be added to the Work Programme.

Members asked a number of questions regarding Audit, employment density and rates and travel to work distances.

***Resolved:-***

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That a live demonstration of the CorVu system be provided at the December 2015 meeting of the Panel.

**14 WORK PROGRAMME REPORT**

The Principal Democratic Services Officer submitted a report to update Members of the Panel's Work Programme. Members were asked to consider whether they would like to include any further items in the Work Programme.

Two Briefing Notes, requested by the Panel, had been circulated since the last meeting. The first was a briefing note on Empty Homes the second was a Briefing Note on E-Billing.

Members had previously requested a briefing note on expenditure on venues and facilities in Lancaster and Morecambe. Members were advised that a brief exercise had been undertaken but that Officers felt it was necessary to look in more detail at the expenditure in order to provide a more accurate and fair analysis of the issue. The Panel was advised that this would take more time than originally thought and that the briefing note could be expected to be circulated by the November or December meeting of the Panel.

***Resolved:-***

- (1) That the Work Programme, detailed in Appendix A to the report, be noted.
- (2) That Councillor Eileen Blamire, Leader of the Council, be invited to the next meeting of the Panel.
- (3) That an additional meeting of the Panel be scheduled for December 2015 to consider the draft Budget Proposals and a live demonstration of the CorVu system.

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Chairman

(The meeting ended at 7.40 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
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