

**BUDGET AND
PERFORMANCE PANEL**

6.10 P.M.

7TH DECEMBER 2023

PRESENT:- Councillors Ross Hunter (Chair), Paul Tynan (Vice-Chair), Dave Brookes (substitute for James Somerville), Keith Budden, Chris Hanna, Sophie Maddocks, Hamish Mills and Sue Penney

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillor James Somerville

Also in Attendance:-

Councillor Tim Hamilton-Cox, Cabinet Member with particular responsibility for Finance and Resources

Officers in attendance:-

Paul Thompson	Chief Officer – Resources and Section 151 Officer
Claire Dubelbeis	Projects and Performance Manager
Stephen Metcalfe	Principal Democratic Support Officer

9 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th September 2023 were approved as a correct record.

10 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR

The Chair advised that there were no items of urgent business.

11 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations were made at this point.

12 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

The Panel received a report from the Chief Executive that provided an update on the authority's progress in updating the Strategic Risk Register. It was reported that appendix A and appendix B to the report had been considered by the Audit Committee on 22 November 2023. The Committee had resolved that the Strategic Risk Register be reported to Cabinet and Budget and Performance Panel on a quarterly basis.

The Panel was asked to consider if it wished to view all risks on the Strategic Risk Register going forward, or if it only wished to certain risk categories, such as Financial Risk.

The main areas discussed and questions raised were in relation to seeing previous actions and completion dates, the possibility of providing in a different format with more detail, action plan dates, cyber security, risks associated with purchase of commercial

properties and having sight of the Register on a regular basis. It was also suggested that a meeting with the Chairs of other committees (Audit and Overview and Scrutiny) be arranged to review what risk information that they wanted to see. It was also noted that the alignment of the meeting dates was not perfect for the information to flow from one committee to the next in a timely way.

Resolved:

That the observations made at the meeting and the report be noted.

13 DELIVERING OUR PRIORITIES Q2 2023/24

The Panel received a report from the Chief Executive and S151 Officer that provided members with an update on performance, projects, and resources during the first two quarters of 2023/24 (April – September 2023). No options had been provided for Cabinet as the report was for commenting and noting.

The main areas discussed and questions raised by the Panel were in relation to property assets, the disposal of property and stock condition surveys and collection of Council Tax/benchmarking of collection rates,

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

14 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW 2023/24

The Panel received a report from the Chief Officer Resources. A report had been submitted to Cabinet on 24th October 2023 that had sought Cabinet's consideration of various matters in connection with the amendments to the Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24 and the Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2023/24. As the Cabinet report was for consideration and progressing to this Panel and Full Council, no alternative options were put forward.

The Chief Officer Resources responded to several questions with regard to what would not be delivered, Burrow Beck Solar Farm and vehicle purchases.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

15 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Panel received a report from the Chief Finance Officer to provide an update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy forecasts for 2023/24 to 2028/29 and outline the approach to balancing the budget. As the report had been for consideration by Cabinet no alternative options were put forward and it was noted that the Cabinet could make supplementary recommendations regarding any matters. The report reiterated that the current forecasts do not include any interventions by Cabinet, Senior Leadership Team or the outcomes of the Local Government Settlement. Whilst some savings had been delivered, the forecasts showed that potential annual and cumulative budget deficits remain over the next 5 years and continue to need to be addressed. In light of this,

balancing the budget both in the short and the medium term remains a tough task and all Members must work together and recognise that they will face a number of difficult but key decisions as part of the forthcoming budget and over the coming financial years which will affect the manner in which it delivers its services.

The Chief Officer Resources responded to several questions with regard to deficits and reserves.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

16 WORK PROGRAMME REPORT

The Panel considered its Work Programme. It was reported that the Panel was responsible for setting its own annual Work Programme within the terms of reference, set out in the Council's Constitution. Members were requested to consider the Work Programme attached at Appendix A and also submitted at Appendix B were the Terms of Reference of the Panel.

The Panel was asked to agree to an additional meeting in January and was reminded of other meetings and briefings:

Wednesday 20 December – 5.00pm. Service Presentation. Teams
Thursday 18 January – Panel Meeting (additional meeting)
Wednesday 31 January – Panel Meeting (Stakeholder meeting) Morecambe Town Hall

Resolved:

(1) That the Work Programme, with the updates set out above, be noted.

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Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.55 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Stephen Metcalfe, Democratic Support - email sjmetcalfe@lancaster.gov.uk**