

**BUDGET AND
PERFORMANCE PANEL**

6.00 P.M.

24TH APRIL 2025

PRESENT:- Councillors Ross Hunter (Chair), Chris Hanna (Vice-Chair), Keith Budden, Isabella Metcalf-Riener, Hamish Mills, Sue Penney and Jackson Stubbs

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor James Sommerville

Also in Attendance:

Councillor Tim Hamilton-Cox, Cabinet Member for Finance and Property

Officers in attendance:

Paul Thompson
Claire Dubelbeis
Stephen Metcalfe

Chief Officer - Resources and Section 151 Officer
Projects and Performance Manager
Principal Democratic Support Officer

40 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th February 2025 were approved as a correct record.

41 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR

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

42 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations were made at this point.

43 PROJECTS AND PERFORMANCE - Q3 2024/25

The Panel received a report from the Chief Executive that provided an update on corporate performance and strategic projects during quarter three of 2024 - 25 (October - December 2024). The Projects and Performance Manager reported at the meeting.

Councillor Tim Hamilton-Cox, Cabinet Member for Finance and Property, was in attendance at the meeting and, together with the officers present at the meeting, answered questions from Members of the Panel.

Members of the Panel asked a number of questions at the meeting. With regard to Appendix A to the report these included how the target for housing compares with other local authorities and for the bench marking data to be considered in the future, the rationale for the narrative for the sustainable district data not being available, the rationale for the cost of energy for corporate buildings being high in Quarter 1, DFGs and how these are promoted, food hygiene inspections, admissions to and financial expectations for SALC and the change in terms of VAT. A request was made to include numbers of

staff off sick in the sickness measure, to aid reading and interpretation of the data. Questions were asked regarding the occupancy of commercial properties in Carnforth, the possible drop in occupancy and the Gateway building that had been damaged due to a fire and the subsequent impact on the overall number, and it was queried why there was no KPI for the housing benefit targets.

The Panel then considered Appendix B to the report. It was noted that, as reported at Council, some of the data included was now out of date and some Members of the Panel raised concerns that they were now looking retrospectively at this data. It was suggested that updated live data/ a dashboard of the latest information be provided. The Panel was informed of the process of compiling and considering the latest data and that currently there was no live data, or dashboard, available. Members of the Panel then asked a number of questions including Mainway and the Centenary House Building regarding the latest position.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

44 STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT

The Panel received a report from the Chief Executive that provided an update on the authority's progress in updating the Strategic Risk Register. The Projects and Performance Manager reported at the meeting.

Councillor Tim Hamilton-Cox, Cabinet Member for Finance and Property, was in attendance at the meeting and, together with the officers present at the meeting, answered questions from Members of the Panel.

Members of the Panel asked a number of questions including the current use of the 4 x 4 rather than the 5 x 5 risk management system. It was noted that in future the 5 x 5 system would be used. Questions were also raised regarding SR01 Central Government funding and the risk score, SR29 Local Government reorganisation and the risk of staff leaving the Council causing problems in the delivery of services, and SR28 Delivery of the Mainway Project and funding from Homes England.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

45 WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel was provided with a report that contained updates for consideration. The Work Programme had been updated to include the outstanding items to be considered at an additional meeting of the Panel on 4th June 2025, commencing at 6.00pm in Lancaster Town Hall.

The Panel was asked to consider its Work Programme in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

At the meeting the Panel was asked to elaborate on the areas that Members wished to consider at the additional meeting with regard to risk management. The issue of the risk

of carrying so many vacancies was raised and whether this was a policy or budget decision.

With regard to the Guidance on Risk Management that the Guidance was to be amended and that the Guidance was refreshed every 2 years.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

46 CHAIR'S REMARKS

It was noted that this was the last meeting of the current Municipal Year. The Chair thanked all Members of the Panel and Officers for their support throughout the Municipal Year.

Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.00 p.m.)

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