

# **BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE PANEL**

## **Work Programme Report**

**12 June 2012**

### **Report of the Head of Governance**

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update Members regarding the Panel's Work Programme.

**This report is public.**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) That members note the items to be carried forward for consideration at future meetings, as detailed in Appendix A to the report.**
- (2) That members consider whether they would like to include any further items in the work programme.**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report provides members with recommendations for inclusion in the panel's Work Programme and advises of possible upcoming items for consideration and work in progress.
- 1.2 The Budget and Performance Panel is responsible for setting its own annual work programme within the terms of reference, as set out in Part 3, Section 13 of the constitution.

#### **2.0 Report**

##### **2.1 Building Control**

Members are reminded that at its meeting on 7 June 2011 the panel had been asked to consider whether it wished for the items that were not considered in the 2010/11 municipal year to remain on the panel's work programme for 2011/12. One of these items was 'Building Control', and it was agreed that the outstanding item be approved for inclusion in the panel's work programme for 2011/12.

At the next meeting of the panel on 12 July 2011, members agreed to include the item on the work programme for the meeting of the panel scheduled for 27 March 2012.

Prior to the meeting on 27 March 2012 the head of regeneration and planning advised that it would not be possible to provide a full report regarding the matter, as the service was in the process of considering alternative options for

delivering a much smaller building control operation in partnership with other parties.

It was suggested that the panel would be better placed to consider this issue once it has been considered by Cabinet; the chairman of the panel was in agreement.

A briefing note was produced on the issue by the head of regeneration and planning and circulated to members. This briefing note is attached to the report at Appendix B.

## 2.2 Affordable Housing Task Group

At its meeting on 13 March 2012, Cabinet received a joint report from the head of health and housing and head of regeneration and planning to consider the establishment and terms of reference of a Housing Regeneration Cabinet Liaison Group. Cabinet had approved the establishment of the group with the following terms of reference:

The purpose of the group is to assist the Cabinet Members in overseeing implementation of options for housing regeneration priorities.

Since this decision the committee has decided, in order to avoid duplication, to remove the Affordable Housing Task Group be removed from its work programme.

The panel is reminded that the Affordable Housing Task Group is also included on its own work programme, and is asked to note the decision of Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the item be withdrawn from the Budget and Performance Panel's work programme.

## 2.3 Request from Panel Member

Members of the Budget and Performance Panel are entitled to give notice to the chief executive that they wish an item relevant to the terms of reference of the meeting to be included on the agenda for the first available meeting. The meeting will determine whether the issue should be included in its work programme based on its relevance, as compared to the priorities as set out in the scrutiny work programme (Part 4, Section 5 of the constitution).

Following a discussion at the previous meeting of the panel Councillor Scott has raised an issue with Democratic Services which she would like the panel to consider including on its work programme. The issue relates to damage caused to council houses by tenants, and the cost and time taken to repair such damage. Councillor Scott has queried as to whether there is anyway to mitigate the possibility of damage being caused to council houses, including the possibility of taking tenancy deposits.

Councillor Scott has requested that damage to council housing and the possibility of taking tenancy deposits be an item for consideration on the panel's work programme. The chief executive has been consulted regarding the request and a briefing note has been arranged at his request.

Members are requested to determine whether consideration of damage to council housing should be added to the panel's work programme.

## 2.4 Upcoming Items

- Details of upcoming items are detailed in Appendix A to the report.

## 2.5 Briefing Notes

As referred to at 2.1 in this report, a cabinet report has been circulated to members to provide background information relating to Building Control.

A briefing note relating to housing benefit debt has also been produced by the accountancy manager, and is attached to this report at Appendix C.

As referred to at 2.3 in this report, a briefing note has been produced relating to damage caused to council houses, and issues regarding tenancy deposits, and is attached to this report at Appendix D.

## 3.0 **Items Recommended for Inclusion in the 2012/13 Work Programme**

### 3.1 Invitations to Cabinet Members

Members may wish to consider extending invitations to cabinet members to coincide with consideration of issues relevant to their respective portfolios. It is suggested that the leader and the holder of the financial portfolio be invited to an early meeting of the committee to discuss budget issues and financial matters, together with performance management issues.

### 3.2 Forward Plan

It is suggested that members could put forward financial or performance related items for pre-decision scrutiny, or which they wish to be considered by the pre-decision scrutiny champion of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, once appointed, to investigate.

### 3.3 Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

Members may wish to continue to monitor SLAs, requesting reports as appropriate. At its meeting on 21 February 2012 the panel considered a Cabinet report of the assistant head of community engagement (partnerships) regarding the corporate review of SLAs. The panel made comments in line with its terms of reference relating to the monitoring of the delivery and effectiveness of SLAs. Members were advised that a new commissioning process was currently being developed, and that the panel would be provided with more information regarding this process as soon as it was available.

### 3.4 Partnerships

In the past the panel has received reports to update members throughout the year on progress against the planned work programme, outcomes from completed evaluations and any issues arising from the ongoing development of the framework for partnership performance management and governance.

If members wish for this issue to be considered by the panel it can be included in the work programme, and the chief executive be requested to make the necessary arrangements for officers to report to the panel.

### 3.5 Budget Overspends/Variances

In the past the panel has considered budget variances which had been identified when considering the annual outturn reports. With the agreement of the chief executive officers have previously been required to attend meetings to present the additional information requested, explain why the variances had occurred, provide an explanation of lessons learnt and whether any variances were ongoing and would impact on the year's budget's.

If there are significant variances in the current year members may wish to undertake this exercise again.

### 3.6 Finance Issues

The panel receives regular updates regarding the budget, treasury management and other financial issues throughout the year – these have been timetabled into the work programme at Appendix A.

### 3.7 Corporate Performance

The work programme at Appendix A includes dates for the scrutiny of corporate performance, as agreed by the panel at its meeting on held on 21 February 2012 (minute no. 35 refers and can be found [here](#)).

#### **SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The S151 officer has been consulted and has no comments.

#### **MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The monitoring officer has been consulted and has no comments.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

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