

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Date and Time:** Tuesday 18 August 2020 at 7.00 pm

**Place:** Council Chamber

**Present:**

Axam, Davies, Dorn, Farmer, Harward, Lamb, Makepeace-Browne, Smith, Wildsmith, Worlock (Chairman) and Wright

**In attendance:** Crookes, Forster, Quarterman and Radley

**Officers:** Foy, Phillips and Vincent

### **19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of 14 July 2020 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

Councillor Farmer reminded the Chairman that in accordance with minute 18 there should have been two items; Car Park Charges and Waste Management Contract added to the work programme which he would bring up again during Item 30 of this agenda.

### **20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Councillor Drage, who was substituted by Councillor Harward.

### **21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations made.

### **22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)**

None.

### **23 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman recommended two events that may be of interest to members:

- a) The Centre for Public Scrutiny was holding its annual conference for Local Government Scrutineers on 9/12/2020 at Cavendish Square, London.
- b) There was an LGA webinar on the topic of the consultation on the new draft model Code of Conduct for Members on 26 August 2020.

## **24 OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER**

Members considered the Annual Review letter from the Ombudsman and noted that no complaints against the Council had been upheld. Members were encouraged to look at the Ombudsman website where previous national complaints cases can be reviewed for reference.

## **25 INTRODUCTION TO HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES**

Emma Foy introduced herself to members and explained her career background.

## **26 2019/20 REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN**

The Committee were advised that this report is not in the same format that the budget was agreed as there has been a restructure of the organisation since the budget had been agreed. The Committee were advised of the position on revenue and expenditure and a reconciliation will be provided to Members of the Committee in advance of the report being considered by Cabinet. Cabinet would consider this report at its meeting on 3 September 2020.

Members discussed the information and variances, raising questions around information behind the figures.

### **DECISION**

The 2019/2020 outturn position of an underspend of £847K after transfers and accounting adjustments for the General Fund Revenue Account be noted.

- a) It be recommended to Cabinet that the £847K be used to increase General Fund Reserve be agreed.
- b) The 2019/2020 outturn position for Capital expenditure be noted.
- c) It be recommended to Cabinet that the carry forward of the unspent revenue budgets as detailed in paragraph 6.1 be supported be agreed pending written responses from the S151 Officer to both the questions raised and reconciliation between the original budget and budget per the restructured organisation.

## **27 TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN 2019/20**

The Committee considered the Council's Treasury Management activities during the 2019/2020 financial year prior to consideration at Cabinet on 3 September 2020.

Members raised questions with regards to different investment vehicles and better ways increasing investment income whilst mitigating risk wherever possible.

Members discussed and welcomed the idea of creating working groups and working parties to provide constructive discussions about changing strategies.

## **DECISION**

The comments of the Committee be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 3 September 2020 be recommended.

### **28 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION - 2020/2021**

The Committee was updated on the Council's performance indicator results for the first quarter of 2020/21 (1 April 2020 – 30 June 2020)

Members in considering the information were concerned about the following:

- Fly tipping being under reported.
- The possibility of voluntary organisations being under resourced. They will be invited to come and present so that a discussion can be had in respect of the recovery phase of Covid-19.

### **29 THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CORPORATE VEHICLE FOR PROPERTY HOLDING PURPOSES**

Members were asked to consider a report by the Joint Chief Executive recommending in principle the creation of a local authority company to allow commercial trading in property.

Members discussed the report and welcomed the proposal and agreed that they had no objections in principle. Committee did feel however, that more detailed consideration should be given to weighing the various governance arrangements for the Company.

## **DECISION**

The recommendation to support the following proposed officer recommendation to Cabinet be supported:

- a) Cabinet agrees in principle to the establishment of a company which will be limited by shares and owned wholly by the Council.
- b) Cabinet agrees to a further report to be brought forward at the earliest opportunity outlining proposed governance and board membership arrangements, and articles of association for the company before any trading activity commences.

### **30 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was considered.

As per the minutes from July, the Waste Contract and Car Park Charges need to be added.

The meeting closed at 8.04 pm