

Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 13th July, 2021, 6.00 pm

Shield Room, Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland, PR25 1DH

Supplementary Agenda

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the above meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, the following information:

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| 4 Minutes of meeting Monday, 14 June 2021 of Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel | (Pages 85 - 90) |
| To be noted. | |
| 8 Urgent Executive Decisions | (Pages 91 - 96) |
| Report of the Director of Governance attached. | |

Gary Hall
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Scrutiny Committee

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Minutes of	Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel
Meeting date	Monday, 14 June 2021
Members present:	Councillors Will Adams (Chair) and Colin Sharples
Cabinet members:	Councillor Foster, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform); Councillor M Tomlinson, Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets) and Councillor Titherington, Cabinet Member (Health and Wellbeing); Councillor Evans, Cabinet Member (Planning, Regeneration and Business Support)
Officers:	Gary Hall (Chief Executive), Louise Mattinson (Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer), James Thomson (Deputy Director of Finance), Victoria Willett (Service Lead - Transformation and Partnerships), Howard Anthony (South Ribble Partnership Manager), Darren Cranshaw (Shared Services Lead - Democratic, Scrutiny & Electoral Services), Clare Gornall (Democratic and Member Services Officer) and Ben Storey (Democratic Services Assistant)
Other members:	Councillors Bell, Hancock, and P Smith
Public:	0

35 Appointment of Chair

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, the Shared Services Lead - Democratic, Scrutiny & Electoral Services requested nominations for the Chair of this meeting.

RESOLVED:-

That Councillor Adams be appointed Chair of this meeting.

36 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Howarth, Coulton and Walton.

37 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

38 Minutes of meeting Monday, 22 March 2021 of Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel

RESOLVED:-

That the minutes of the Budget Scrutiny and Performance Panel held on Monday 22 March 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.

39 Matters Arising from Previous Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel Meetings

Members of the Panel received a report which provided updates on the progress of recommendations made at previous meetings of the Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel.

RESOLVED:-

1. That the matters arising from previous meetings of the Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel be noted;
2. That the completed actions be removed from the report.

40 Quarter 4 (January- March) Performance Monitoring Report 2020-21

The Panel considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive which outlined the Council's performance during quarter 4 (January – March 2021). The Leader and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform), attended the meeting and presented the report. He highlighted the Leisure Centres and the delay on some of works however this was so that they tied in to the Council's green agenda by ensuring energy efficiencies. He also stressed the Council's concern regarding the impact of the pandemic on young people. It was a key priority for the Council which it would be discussing with partners.

Members of the Panel asked a number of questions to which the following responses were provided by Councillor Foster supported by the Chief Executive:

- South Ribble Together Hubs – this project had been delayed due to the Council's inability to engage with the public due to the pandemic. The Chief Executive indicated that the Council would follow Government guidance and progress the project as soon as possible.
- Borough food bank network – Councillor Foster said there is still a high demand for foodbanks throughout the borough. We are looking at bringing foodbank providers together through partnership working so that the service can be delivered via shops and other service outlets. Further to this the Chief Executive indicated that long term solutions were needed to address issues such as unemployment, initially intended to be targeted by the Hubs. There now needs clarity on who is driving the issue e.g. Hubs, Council, Local Strategic Partnership.
- Community Wealth Building Action Plan – the Shared Service Lead – Transformation and Partnerships gave examples of progress on actions such as the South Ribble Credit Union to be launched this month and the Social

Value Portal. Further to this we will be looking at embedding the social value element into the Town Deal.

- 3 month delay of Leisure Centres decarbonisation work – The Chief Executive indicated that delay this was driven by funding opportunities – time was required to submit the bids.
- Long term strategy for leisure centre provision – Councillor Foster said that he looked forward to bringing this before Cabinet in due course.
- The creation of more affordable housing – Councillor Foster said that land and sustainability had been issues in regard to this. However, it was a top priority for the Cabinet. They were actively pursuing new sites and he hoped to make an announcement on Lostock Hall soon. There had been huge demand for Tom Hanson House, with 150 applications being received per property. He confirmed that management of the properties will be in-house. Current regulations state that the Council can only manage a maximum of 200 houses but we are looking at alternative options with our partners.
- Length of time to approve Disabled Facilities Grants – Councillor Foster explained that unfortunately one particular case had skewed the performance indicator; the Chief Executive indicated we were currently awaiting the occupational therapist's assessment. In terms of reducing the waiting time generally, partnership working would be required.
- Staff health and wellbeing – Vicky Willett, Shared Service Lead - Transformation and Partnerships reported on a number of ways the Council is being proactive to support staff health and wellbeing, particularly during the pandemic, including regular 121s with line managers, the staff wellbeing survey, and management development training for managers.

RESOLVED:-

That the Panel:

1. Thanks the Leader, Chief Executive and Shared Service Lead for attending and their detailed report.
2. Welcomes the Council's performance and the progress made in quarter 4.
3. Commends the face to face community engagement planned for the Community Hubs when it is safe post-COVID.
4. Looks forward to the long-term future strategy for the leisure centres being considered by the Council.
5. Wishes the Council well in the partnership discussions to expedite disabled facilities grants and asks to be kept updated progress.
6. Thanks all employees for the essential services they provide to the community.

41 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 20-21 Outturn

The Panel considered a report of the Director of Finance which explained the Council's overall financial position at the end of the financial year 2020-21.

The Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets), attended the meeting and presented the report. He highlighted the staffing costs to be paid by Government COVID funding, the now completed Asset Review of Council buildings, the Extra Care Scheme and additional £168,000 to go in the COVID recovery fund.

Members of the Panel asked a number of questions to which the following responses were provided by Councillor Matthew Tomlinson supported by the Director of Finance:

- Staff vacancies (particularly 2 engineering posts) – the Chief Executive informed the Panel that the Capital Programme had expanded to a larger programme of work and therefore different skills needed to be bought in. Longer term the Council needed to consider what core skills it needed, e.g. a 'hybrid' approach strengthening the client side, with some skills being bought in.

Planning Enforcement – future plans to fill vacant post and develop the area further. The Chief Executive explained that it was difficult to source certain skills as the private sector is able to offer higher salaries. A hybrid model was being implemented, with local staff carrying out the more straightforward enforcement work and the Council buying in specialist skills for more complex cases.

Increase in provision for bad debt - Councillor Tomlinson indicated that the Council was being prudent and making provision in response to the uncertainties created by the pandemic.

The process of setting the level of reserves (which is planned for significant increase) – Councillor Tomlinson stressed this has been at the request of the Cabinet and that senior staff are robustly challenged and have to justify the figures. The Director of Finance indicated that a substantial element of the increase in reserves over the course of the year comes from Government funding for business rates.

Leisure Centre repair and maintenance budget – Councillor Tomlinson indicated that the budget had been planned, the work was required and would be followed through and delivered.

Capital Programme underspend of £2.5m – what is being to deliver the capital programme as planned. Councillor Tomlinson explained that the Capital Programme has been affected by the pandemic and some projects will need to be reprofiled. We will need to look at capacity, some supplies are difficult to resource e.g. there is a national shortage of hexagonal sheets needed for the Worden Overflow Car park should they need to be replaced.

That the Panel:

1. Thanks the Cabinet Member and Director for attending and their detailed report.

2. Notes the revenue and capital budget monitoring outturn.
3. Welcomes the reassurance that staff vacancies are not impacting on service delivery in key areas.
4. Asks the Cabinet Member to ensure the capital programme is deliverable in future years.

Chair

Date

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Agenda Item 8

Report to	On
Council	Wednesday 28 April 2021



Title	Portfolio Holder	Report of
Urgent Executive Decisions	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform)	Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer

Is this report confidential?	No
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Purpose of the Report

1. This report informs Council of a number of urgent decisions taken by the Executive (i.e. Cabinet or Individual Executive Members) over the last three months in accordance with urgency procedures outlined in the Council's Constitution.
2. These include 'key' decisions (as defined in the Cabinet Forward Plan), decisions which include confidential or exempt information (and therefore must be taken in private), and urgent decisions for which the Mayor agreed to waive scrutiny call-in in.

Recommendations

3. That the report be noted.

Reasons for recommendations

4. Paragraph 19.1 of Part 4C of the Council's Constitution states that "the Leader must submit a report to the next available Council meeting setting out the details of any executive decision taken as a matter of special urgency under the procedure set out in Rule 18 (Key Decision - Special Urgency)".

Other options considered and rejected

5. None, for the reasons given above.

Corporate outcomes

6. The report relates to the following corporate priorities: (tick all those applicable):

An exemplary council	X	Thriving communities	
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A fair local economy that works for everyone		Good homes, green spaces, healthy places	
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Background to the report

7. On 25 November 2020, Council agreed to amend its Constitution to allow Individual Cabinet Members to take decisions delegated to them within their respective portfolios. In January 2021, a new procedure was implemented to allow these decisions to be published on the modern.gov system.
8. During that period, a number of urgent decisions were required in order for the Council to act arising from decisions previously taken by Cabinet and Council, such as the decision to bring leisure centres in-house and the Leyland Town Deal.

Details of Urgent Executive Decisions taken

9. Please see below a list of decisions taken in accordance with the urgency procedures outlined in the Council Constitution.
10. Key decisions *which must be taken with less than 5 days' notice on the Cabinet Forward Plan* fall under Council Procedure Rule 18 – Key Decision – Special Urgency in Part 4C of the Council's Constitution, which requires agreement from the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee regarding the reasons for the urgency (the same applies to decisions which contain exempt or confidential information).
11. If Cabinet wishes to take a decision in private meeting with less than 5 days' notice, it must obtain agreement of the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, under paragraph 14.4. of the Access to Information Procedure Rules.
12. Any urgent report to be considered with less than 3 days' notice must be agreed by Mayor in accordance with paragraph 5.5 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules which states "In the circumstances set out in paras 5.3 and 5.4 the Council will always endeavour to publish reports at least three working days before the meeting. Lesser notice than this may only be given if the Mayor decides that there are highly exceptional circumstances".
13. Any urgent decision to waive scrutiny call-in must be agreed by the Mayor in accordance with paragraph 11.14 of Part 4F of the Constitution.

Decision	Date and Decision Maker	Reasons for urgency
Fire Safety Compartmentation Works	25.2.2021 Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets)	To address compliance issues following a Fire Risk Assessment
Confirmation of South Ribble's Annual Housing Requirement Figure	8.3.2021 Cabinet Member (Planning, Business Support and Regeneration)	A Planning Inquiry was taking place on 16 th March and the Council needed an up to date policy regarding the Annual Housing Requirement Figure in place

		from at least 15 th March for this purpose.
Acquisition of Land	9.3.2021 Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform)	The timescale linked to an upfront Town Deal grant of £750,000 received by the Council from the MCHLG. In line with the terms of the grant there was a need to demonstrate that the proposals linked to the spending of the grant received are underway before 31 March 2021. This represented a very short-term scale to deliver a large-scale land acquisition and hence an urgent decision was required in order that the Council is in a position to deliver the overall Town Investment Plan (TIP) in partnership with the Leyland Town Board.
ICT Service Review	11.3.2021 Cabinet Member (Communities, Social Justice and Wealth Building)	The Council needed to commence its formal 28-day consultation with staff immediately with a view to implementing the new staff structure on 1 June.
Leisure Facilities Contracts for new In-house Leisure Facilities Service	16.3.2021 Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets)	Due to the timescales involved in transferring the Leisure Facilities management service back in-house it was necessary to take an urgent decision to join the purchasing framework to identify future utility providers for the Council's Leisure Centres going forward.
Leyland Town Deal - Heads of Terms	23.3.2021 Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform)	The Leyland Town Deal Advisory Board met 19 March 2021 and the document subsequently needed to be signed and sent by 24 March 2021. The Mayor agreed to waive call-in of this decision by reason of the need for the Heads of Terms to be signed by 24 March 2021.

Expanded Retail & Nursery Discount 2021/22	24.3.2021 Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets)	The policy was to take effect from the beginning of the financial year. It was as a result of the budget announcements and the delay in giving notice was that the details were still being finalised.
Leisure Centres Booking System	24.3.2021 Cabinet – urgent report to be considered in the private part of the meeting	<p>In accordance with Part 4C of the Council's Constitution, the Mayor agreed under paragraph 5.5 that the following be considered as a matter of urgency, and the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee also agreed the urgent matter could be considered by the Cabinet in private session in accordance with paragraph 14.4.</p> <p>In accordance with paragraph 11.14 of Part 4F of the Council's Constitution, the Mayor agreed to waive the Scrutiny call-in procedure in respect of this decision for the reasons given below:</p> <p>The contract needed to be awarded in line with timescale for bringing the Leisure Centres back in house on 1 April 2021.</p>
Government Restart Grant Scheme	19.4.2021	To enable the Council to launch this scheme as soon as possible and get help to those who need it. The Government has asked the Council to deliver these grants and so it must comply – this decision is to formally confirm this and to seek delegations for officers to assess and make payments in line with the guidance and our own processes.

Risk

14. There are no risk implications arising from this report.

Equality and diversity

15. There are no Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and Equality Act implications arising from this report.

Air quality implications

16. There are no Air Quality implications arising from this report.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

17. The relevant comments from the S151 Officer were included on the individual urgent decisions.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

18. There are no issues of concern to report from a Monitoring officer perspective.

Background documents (or There are no background papers to this report)

Council Constitution

[Modern.gov link to decisions page](#)

Appendices

None

Darren Cranshaw, Shared Services Lead – Lead - Democratic, Scrutiny & Electoral Services

Chris Moister, Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer

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