

Report of Cabinet

1. Any Cabinet recommendations on the reports that require a decision by full Council appear as separate items on the agenda.
2. Please note that the report may not reflect the wording used in the minutes, as they have yet to be formally agreed.
3. All decisions taken by Cabinet on 13 September 2023 can be found on the published Decision Notice.

Meeting held on 13 September 2023

South Ribble Quarter One Performance Monitoring Report 2023-24

4. I presented a report that provided an update on the performance of the projects within the Corporate Strategy for Quarter One 2023-24.
5. Overall performance is good with 86% projects rated green or amber. Of the 22 indicators, 12 could be reported at the end of quarter one with eight indicators performing better than target and one indicator performing worse.
6. I explained that progress was being made with Leyland Town Deal and we were confident we could meet the delivery of the project within the set Government time frames.

Capital and Balance Sheet Monitoring Report Q1

7. The Cabinet Member (Finance and Public Protection), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, presented a report that outlined the outturn financial position of the Council in respect of the capital programme at 31 July 2023. He also highlighted key issues and explained key variances whilst providing an overview of various elements of the Council's balance sheet as at 31 July 2023.
8. We noted that the Council had taken a couple big decisions including providing funding for the new Tardy Gate play area. However, Councillor Tomlinson advised that as the authority was cash rich and interest rates high there had been a boost to the council's income through interest received and there was still no borrowing.

Revenue Budget Monitoring Report Q1

9. The Cabinet Member (Finance and Public Protection) Councillor Matthew Tomlinson presented a report that set out the revenue and reserves forecast for 2023/24 for the Council, based on the position as at 31 July 2023.

10. Councillor Tomlinson explained the report considered day to day spending and that if business carried on as it is now throughout the year there was an anticipated overspend by £320,000. Councillor Tomlinson emphasised the report was a forecast and the quarterly monitoring reports would give opportunity for issues to be flagged early.
11. As the current reserve balance was currently standing at £4.5 million, should the overspend occur this year it would bring the general reserves down to £4.2 million.
12. We noted an issue with spending in waste services and were advised the Cabinet Member (Neighbourhoods and Waste) was looking into the service with the Director of Customer and Digital.
13. Another overspend was occurring in the Housing service due to a larger increase in presentations of homelessness. Housing benefit had not kept up with the recent rent increases and would no longer cover private renting in South Ribble. This was acknowledged to be a national problem. Councillor Tomlinson also provided that the social housing providers within the borough were not currently planning on building any new social housing.
14. We agreed that the rising presentations in homelessness was a big problem across the country and discussed what more could be done to help those individuals within South Ribble.
15. The Cabinet Member (Planning, Business Support and Economic Development) expressed concern that no new social housing was being built by the housing providers and agreed to investigate it further.

Credit Union – Progress Update

16. The Cabinet Member (Wealth Building, Social Justice, Equality and Diversity) Councillor Jacky Alty, presented a report that sought to update us on the progress made by Unify Credit Union, following the provision of a grant to provide credit union facilities to those living and working within South Ribble.
17. Councillor Alty explained that the grant had been agreed to be paid back over a three-year period with Unify establishing a sustainable credit union branch within the borough. It was an alternative to high street lending and brought employment and development opportunities.
18. Unify were confident that when the contract ends in March 2024, they would be sustainable, with 613 loans issued in the first year of running. They had also employed an apprentice at national living wage with the apprenticeship now concluded, the individual had secured a full-time position with Unify.

19. We congratulated the Cabinet Member (Wealth Building, Social Justice, Equality and Diversity) on the successes of the credit union and commended the work of the union in providing a valuable service to residents.

I would like to recommend that Council note the report.

Councillor Paul Foster
Leader of the Council