

Minutes of: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 11 September 2018

Present: Councillor M D'Albert (in the Chair)
Councillors N Bayley, R Caserta, T Cummings, J Harris,
M James, N Jones, R Skillen and S Smith

Also in attendance: Councillors R Shori and E O' Brien

Public Attendance: No members of the public were present at the meeting.

Apologies for Absence: Councillor M Hankey and Councillor K Leach

OSC.145 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

OSC.146 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public present at the meeting.

OSC.147 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was agreed:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10th July 2018 be approved as a correct record.

The Chair agreed that the agenda would be re-arranged and the Corporate Performance and Devolution Update items will be considered first.

OSC.148 CORPORATE FINANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing submitted a report setting out details of the Council's financial position for the period April 2018 to June 2018 as well as the projected estimated outturn at the end of 2018-19. The report also includes Prudential Indicators in accordance with the CIPFA's Prudential Code.

Those present were invited to ask questions and the following issues were raised:

In response to a Member's question the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing reported that the project overspend for this financial year is £3.176 million, this is lower than the same period last year.

Responding to a member's question with regards to the overspend within Children Young People and Culture; the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing reported that the forecasted overspend is based on an assumption that the number of exclusions will reduce and there will be a significant reduction in out of borough placements.

The Interim Executive Director Resource and Regulation reported that the forecasted overspend within the Children Young People and Culture Department would only include predicted spend in relation to Looked after Children that are already known to children's services.

With regards to concerns raised in respect of Senior Officer recruitment, the use of consultants and the loss of front line staff; the Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing reported that there has been significant cuts to the senior leadership team in the last five years. The £100 million cuts and reduction in senior leaders within the organisation has resulted in a loss of executive capacity and expertise to enable and deliver the required transformational and growth agenda. The recruitment of additional senior leadership posts will allow for additional capacity and help to deliver on the transformation agenda.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Housing reported that the Council will need to be self-financing and solely reliant on Council Tax and business rates for its income by 2020. Work streams have been developed to assess and understand what this will mean for the Council post 2020.

Members discussed joint working arrangements between the CCG and the Council, economies of scale and joint commissioning. The Interim Executive Director, Resource and Regulation reported that by April 2019 the Council and the CCG will be one single commissioning entity, representatives from the CCG now attend the Council's Senior Leadership team and jointly share building space.

It was agreed:

1. Geoff Little, Chief Executive will be invited to attend the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to discuss the recruitment to senior positions within the Council and the use of consultants/external advisors and other related matters.
2. The Interim Executive Director, Resource and Regulation will provide members with further information with regards to the shortfalls in income relating to off-street parking.

OSC.149 LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN AND SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS AND OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER 2017/2018

Jayne Hammond, Assistant Director - Legal and Democratic Services presented a report setting out the findings and recommendations of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

The Council receives an Annual Report summarising all complaints dealt with by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Of the complaints received, 20 were referred back for local resolution, 11 were closed after initial enquires and 5 were upheld. The highest number of complaints were for children's services 15, 7 for Adult care services and 8 for environmental services.

It was agreed:

The Assistant Director for Legal and Democratic Services be thanked for her attendance.

OSC.150 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Leader submitted a report providing details of the Council's performance across a range of indicators. The report compliments the regular finance and risk monitoring reports that Members receive. The performance update includes indicators from the GM framework and the Team Bury single outcomes framework.

The report shows that there are some areas of strength in performance, whilst there are also performance metrics which identify opportunities for closer consideration. The Leader reported that areas of declining performance will be reviewed with an outcomes based approach and consideration will be given as to what steps can be taken to improve performance.

Those present were invited to ask questions and the following issues were raised:

Responding to a Member's question the Leader confirmed that the monies distributed to community groups via the Township pitch events would be monitored; checks and balances will be proportionate to the amounts of money distributed.

In response to a Member's question the Leader confirmed that performance indicators contained within the report provide information from a variety of sources, some information is comparable nationally, some across Greater Manchester others against the CIPFA comparator Group. The leader reported that in areas where the performance is the best in Greater Manchester, the Council would want to stretch itself to be the best nationally or the best amongst its statistical neighbours.

Responding to a question from the Chair, the Leader confirmed that performance information is under constant review, dependent on the indicator some information is monitored weekly or monthly, other more complex information is gathered quarterly.

The Leader responding to a Member's question reported, that the slight reduction in recycling rates could be attributed to the extreme weather conditions experienced at the start of 2018.

It was agreed:

Follow a request from a member of the committee the Leader confirmed that progress 8 data, once available will be shared with members of the Committee.

OSC.151 DEVOLUTION/COMBINED AUTHORITY UPDATE

The Leader submitted a report providing a Greater Manchester devolution update. The report included information in respect of Health and Social Care and the

development of the Locality Plan; the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework; the Local Full Fibre Network; the local Industrial Strategy and the Housing First Pilot.

The Leader reported that discussions have continued between representatives from Greater Manchester and central government with regards to the devolution of the adult education budget, it has been agreed that the devolution of these functions will coincide with the start of the 2019/20 academic year.

Those present were invited to ask questions and the following issues were raised:

The Leader reported that the bus franchising proposals developed by Transport for Greater Manchester's have been delayed.

Members discussed the imminent GMSF consultation. The Leader reported that discussions are still ongoing with regards to the number of houses required across Greater Manchester. The government have indicated that 300,000 houses will be required across Greater Manchester, this contradicts local data which has suggested that 227,000 homes will be required.

A recently agreed Greater Manchester Housing deal will include funding to support development and remediate brownfield land. Bury's Local Plan is currently being developed and the Leader reported that he would want brownfield sites to be considered first for any new housing development in the Borough.

In response to a Member's question, the Leader reported that work is underway in respect of the development of the full fibre network, work will include how the investment is used, identifying sites and mapping the public estates.

It was agreed:

The report be noted and the Leader, Councillor Shori be thanked for his attendance.

OSC.152 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was agreed:

That in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as detailed in the conditions of category 3.

OSC.153 COUNCIL ASSETS REVIEW

Alex Holland, Head of Property and Asset Management attended the meeting to provide members with an overview of the Council's land and property assets.

It was agreed:

Further updates in respect of the Council Assets review will be provided at future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

COUNCILLOR M D'ALBERT
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.50 pm)