

Agenda Item 5

EXECUTIVE

7 MARCH 2023

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED LIVING, RESIDENTIAL CARE AND RESIDENTIAL WITH NURSING CARE

On 22 February 2023 the Adults and Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee agreed to support the eight recommendations to the Executive. The Committee accepted the rationale used to calculate the proposed levels of fees to be paid to providers for these services.

The Committee also agreed to make the following comments to the Executive:

- (1) The Committee was reassured that the various data available to the Council were used to see which of its providers were becoming a high risk and were likely to need targeted support. An example of support could be the hardship fund, where providers could receive funds for assistance with increased energy and insurance costs. Lincolnshire County Council has been the only local authority operating a hardship fund during 2022-23 and has also been advising other local authorities on how to operate one. The Committee requested updates on the hardship fund as part of its budgetary monitoring reports during 2023-24.
- (2) Further to (1) above, the Committee welcomed the use of block contracts, as a means of supporting and providing stability to the residential care and community supported living market.
- (3) The Committee would like to see the programme of developing intermediate care accelerated, in partnership with the NHS. An example of this has been the establishment of sixty 'active recovery beds', which were already seeing high numbers of people returning to their home to live independently, as opposed to long term residential care. Funding for active recovery beds is being sought from the NHS, so that this initiative could continue beyond 31 March 2023.
- (4) Consideration might need to be given to how settings such as community supported living might be promoted to the public as alternatives to residential care. This and other parts of the transformation programme could also be promoted.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 6

EXECUTIVE

7 MARCH 2023

SUBSTANCE MISUSE GRANT MONIES

On 22 February 2023 the Adults and Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee agreed to support the four recommendations to the Executive.

The Committee also agreed to make the following additional statements to the Executive:

- (1) The Committee recognises that the four grants available are focused on services for the treatment of alcohol and drug misuse. These services support a wider drug and alcohol strategy, which includes an emphasis on prevention. The Committee supports this emphasis, as the use of drugs can have a severe impact on individuals, families and their communities, and successful prevention ultimately reduces the need for treatment services. The drug and alcohol strategy has been developed by the Lincolnshire Drug and Alcohol Partnership, which includes representation from the Police, the Probation Service, the NHS and district councils. The Committee would like to see all the services provided by these organisations, which would support the strategy, maintained.
- (2) The Committee would like to see outcome measures and benchmarking applied to the use of the additional funding. For example, increased funding from the Government during 2022-23 had led to the case load of each substance misuse support worker reducing from 70 to 55 clients, which would be expected to lead to improved outcomes. The emphasis on assertive outreach workers was also expected to improve outcomes.
- (3) The Committee recognises that it is usually the Government or national third sector organisations, which take the lead on campaigns highlighting the risk of drugs and alcohol misuse, and suggests that consideration might be given to a local campaign, as has taken place previously, to complement any national campaign.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 7

EXECUTIVE

07 MARCH 2023

LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY - A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

COMMENTS FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

On 28 February 2023, the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee considered a report in relation to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy - A Partnership Approach and unanimously supported the Recommendations to the Executive.

The following points were highlighted:

- Members enquired how nature recovery was being measured and how elements such as biodiversity net gain were benchmarked to allow for direct comparisons and establishment of performance; in addition, Members asked whether sanctions were being considered for not achieving targets. Officers explained that the Local Nature Recovery Strategy were used as a guide for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG); there was a metric in development, a calculator set on a national level, used to measure the biodiversity value at set intervals (at the start, and when the development is implemented) which needed to indicate a net gain of at least 10% on site -ideally- and off site. Officers acknowledged that gains may not be always achievable onsite and offsite BNG would be necessary. Officers were collaborating with the strategic network of Green Infrastructure, Greater Lincolnshire, and Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust towards setting up a registry of landowners who were keen on entering their land into the project as well as with developers who were interested in buying credits, within which they can negotiate prices for land (between landowners and developers). This was over a 30year period, therefore robust monitoring and enforcement was essential in line with further guidance anticipated.
- Further clarity was sought on whether this was a framework for administering the strategy and raised a concern on how the framework would fit into the ad hoc way in which biodiversity net gain was being developed and delivered through the planning system. Officers elaborated on how the framework was guiding the biodiversity net gain; the document was identifying the best habitats and places for wildlife and would also help ensure that the right habitat creation and enhancement fell within the right place.
- Further concerns were echoed in relation to the 10% score to be achieved in terms of this being a potentially unrealistic benchmark. Officers explained that 10% was the mandatory minimum score.
- Members commended the framework being put forward, acknowledged that there were clear benefits derived from that, however noted concerns on the long-term deliverability of the programme, on the value of taking agricultural land out of production in order to provide biodiversity, net gain and emphasised on the need for more information around the process and mechanisms that were being developed, which was anticipated when detailed statutory instruments were published.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 8

EXECUTIVE – 07 MARCH 2023

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2022/23 - QUARTER 3

STATEMENT FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

On 23 February 2023, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board unanimously supported the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23 - Quarter 3 as set out in the report to the Executive on 07 March 2023.

The following points were clarified for the Board in relation to questions raised by Members:

- In relation to the underspend in Children's Services and Adult Care and Community Wellbeing Members acknowledged that these were areas faced with high cost-pressures and requested a clarification on whether this was owed to inability to recruit health visitors in the first and domiciliary care staff in the other instance. Additionally, it was queried whether the underspend was retained for future potential recruitment costs or whether money was planned to be used towards other expenses. Officers explained that whereas health visitors were employed by Lincolnshire County Council, domiciliary staff were not. Recruitment of support workers was an alternative to ensure that families were visited and remained supported. Nevertheless, it was recognised that the funds derived from a Public Health Grant and where underspend occurred, funds were returned into The Public Health reserve where these remained available to be used until the end of the fiscal year.
- In line with the acknowledgement of the changing nature of economic context and financial mitigation of the anticipated higher levels of inflation, the Board sought assurance that the current picture and near future forecast were the most positive state that could be achieved. Officers reassured the Boards that the anticipation of pressures around inflation back in February 2022 was key towards increasing contingency to £6.5 million, which in turn resulted in forecasting underspend. Hence, Officers were confident that maintaining the contingency at the presented levels as well as carrying out detailed work to ensure that the service budgets reflected the current inflation expected were sufficient provision for maintaining a sustainable position in the next quarter and beyond, in the next year.
- With respect to home to school transport, Members queried what action was being planned to be undertaken in relation to the overspend forecasted. Officers explained that significant work was undertaken in this direction, which included the transformation programme, working with partners towards optimising both the procurement and achieving efficiencies in delivery of transport, as well as maximising of the routes and using passenger assistants more effectively. Officers reiterated that albeit cost pressures reflected still in the next year's budget, a robust plan was in place to deliver sustainable budget going forward, noting the concurrency of challenges facing this particular area.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 9

EXECUTIVE – 07 MARCH 2023

CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2022/23 - QUARTER 3

STATEMENT FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

On 23 February 2023, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board unanimously supported the Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23 - Quarter 3 as set out in the report to the Executive on 07 March 2023.

In relation to the report details, the following questions were raised by Members:

- With reference to annual recurrent allocations of funding, Members asked for a clarification as to why maintenance was accounted for as capital budget, as opposed to revenue. Officers explained that maintenance was pertinent to large schemes of work, Highways works and included some property upkeep and therefore was a capitalised cost as it was regarded as improving the life of assets. It was also further explained that borrowing was allowed to fund the capital programme and enabled the effective spread of costs, constituting the programme more affordable (i.e., cost being spread across a number of years). Officers emphasised that there were restrictions as to what was allowed to be capitalised and that a prudential code was followed in line with existing policy.
- Members acknowledged that the report was permeated by a degree of confidence in relation to risk associated with inflation and cost pressures for this year and beyond Quarter 3 into the next year. Officers offered assurance that despite the challenges reported, some issues, such as supply chain problems that emerged after the pandemic, had now been overcome. It was noted that extensive work had been undertaken to reflect on the impact of inflation (especially around major schemes – construction inflation), as was recognised that by updating the programme in “blocks”, these reflected more work completed on an annual basis and less new elements added except for specific projects. Hence, the overall degree of confidence remained good.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 10

EXECUTIVE

7 MARCH 2023

CORPORATE PLAN SUCCESS FRAMEWORK 2022/23 - QUARTER 3

STATEMENT FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

On 23 February 2023 the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board unanimously agreed to support the recommendation to the Executive.

As part of the Board's consideration of this item, the following additional information was confirmed:

- **Waste and Recycling**

Section 4.5 - Waste PIs

PI 37 - Recycling Rate (new national formula) ✖

PI 38 - Recycling at County Council owned Household Waste Recycling Centres ✖

The Board received a presentation from the Head of Waste in relation to the reasons for the key performance indicators for recycling rates not achieving their targets. The recycling rates were essentially the amount of recyclable material as a proportion of the overall material that was presented by the public to the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) or into their wheelie bins. The Council could not control the recycling rates as ultimately it was about what the Council received, but could influence them by trying to educate residents about recycling. In addition, the recycling rates did not necessarily demonstrate good or bad performance in terms of a higher recycling rate being better than a lower recycling rate. In terms of the waste hierarchy, which was introduced in 1975, less material being presented for collection was better as there would be lower environmental and financial costs from disposing of the material.

The Government was mandating a number of changes to waste collection and disposal through the new Environment Act, including a mandate for a separate collection and disposal of food waste from 2025. This would have an impact on recycling rates which were anticipated to increase by 7% once the County Council and its partners had introduced a separate collection and disposal of food waste. The Government was also introducing enhanced producer responsibility to reduce packaging waste and a deposit return scheme where drinking vessels were returned to the vendor to be recycled more effectively.

At the 11 HWRCs, there were 25 different waste streams which could be collected and disposed of, which meant there was a 70% recycling rate at HWRCs. In relation to kerbside collections, district councils usually provided three or four wheelie bins for residents but the recycling rate was lower than 40%. This was because residents did not have the same opportunity to segregate material and recycle it better. The challenge was how to enable

residents to recycle better and there were imminent changes which were being worked on through the Lincolnshire Waste Partnership. This meant that it was difficult to put any timescales in place for when performance would improve as it was outside of the Council's control.

Contamination rates for mixed dry recycled material were still being monitored and there had been a slight improvement in this. Contaminated material which had been collected would be disposed of through the Energy from Waste facility. If a kerbside collection was contaminated, then this would be rejected and a warning would be provided to the resident to give them the ability to address the issue. However, the number of kerbside collections rejected due to contamination was miniscule and therefore was not reported on. Contaminated material was deducted from the recycled tonnage figures and when disposed of through the Energy from Waste facility, it was classed as recovery in the waste hierarchy. The education and engagement of residents during the rollout of separate card and paper collections by some of the district councils had also had an impact on the quality and cleanliness of the mixed dry recycled material. More engagement with schools would be undertaken to help promote waste prevention and minimise contamination.

- **Sickness Absence**

PI 44 - Days lost to sickness absence per FTE ✕

With regards to mental health absences, this was the highest reason for sickness absences but had decreased in Quarter 3. The stigma around mental health was reducing and people were being more open about their mental health status, which could be a factor as to why the figures for mental health absences were higher. The reasons for mental health absences were a mixture of work related and personal issues outside of work. There were several interventions in place to support employees who were struggling with their mental health.

- **School Performance**

PI 1 - Percentage of schools that are judged good or outstanding ✕

PI 2 - Percentage of pupils in outstanding or good schools ✕

The Council only had an influencing role in relation to achieving the targets for these key performance indicators. Ambitious targets had been set as all children should be able to attend a good or outstanding school. Given that a significant number of Lincolnshire schools were academies, the Council worked with the Regional Schools Commissioner to look at how the Council or the Regional School Commissioner could work with academy schools to improve standards.

- **Complaints**

PI 43 - Percentage of contacts resolved through early resolution ✘

Due to the volume of complaints received, the complaints team had been unable to cope with the demand and resolve as many as the Council wanted to through early resolution within three to five days. Additional resources had now been put into the complaints team and work had been undertaken with managers, as the complaints team had to go through the manager to carry out the investigation and provide an answer to respond to the complaint within the early resolution timeframe. An annual report on complaints was presented to the Audit Committee, and consideration could be given to more frequent reporting of complaints to the Audit Committee.

- **Air Pollution**

PI 28 - Percentage of deaths of those aged 30+ associated with air pollution ✓

The figures used were from a national data set and therefore this measure was dependent on when the data was released. An update would be provided in the Quarter 4 report as to when the next data set would be available.

This page is intentionally left blank