

**EXECUTIVE  
 2 MARCH 2021**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR M J HILL OBE (LEADER OF THE COUNCIL)**

Councillors Mrs P A Bradwell OBE (Executive Councillor for Adult Care, Health and Children's Services) (Deputy Leader), C J Davie (Executive Councillor for Economy and Place), Mrs S Woolley (Executive Councillor for NHS Liaison and Community Engagement), C N Worth (Executive Councillor for Culture and Emergency Services) and B Young (Executive Councillor for Community Safety and People Management).

Councillor R B Parker (Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board) was also in attendance.

Officers in attendance:-

Debbie Barnes OBE (Chief Executive), Andrew Crookham (Executive Director Resources), James Drury (Executive Director Commercial), Cheryl Evans (Democratic Services Officer), Glen Garrod (Executive Director - Adult Care and Community Wellbeing), Michelle Grady (Assistant Director – Finance), Andy Gutherson (Executive Director Place), Heather Sandy (Executive Director of Children's Services), Jasmine Sodhi (Performance and Equalities Manager) and Nigel West (Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer).

**52 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R G Davies (Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT) and E J Poll (Executive Councillor for Commercial and Environmental Management).

**53 DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLORS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

**54 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS**

Councillor C J Davie, Executive Councillor for Economy and Place

It was reported by the Councillor C J Davie, Executive Councillor for Economy and Place, that as part of the County Council's Support for Businesses Programme, there had been 411 applications requesting just over £3 million. These applications were being processed with the aim of the first payments being made to businesses during the following two weeks. As a number of businesses had made a loss, but had not met the 30% criterion for losses, the scheme would re-open between 4 and 6 March,

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to allow small businesses which had made any loss to apply, provided that all other criteria could be met.

Three further funding schemes would be launched as part of Support for Businesses Programme: (1) to enable businesses to enhance their digital offer; (2) to enable businesses to expand and grow; and (3) to provide support specifically for businesses in rural areas, enabling them to purchase capital equipment to respond to the challenging trading environment caused by Covid-19. All the schemes were intended to give local businesses support so that they can thrive and grow.

Councillor C J Davie also reported that in December 2020 the Prime Minister had announced plans for the UK government to reduce carbon emissions by 68% by 2030, on a baseline of 1990. On 19 February 2021, Lincolnshire County Council had adopted the green masterplan, which contained a target of zero carbon by 2050. Following the Prime Minister's announcement, the County Council would be adopting a target of a 68% reduction in its emissions by 2025.

Councillor M J Hill, OBE, Leader of the Council and Executive Councillor for Resources

It was confirmed by the Councillor M J Hill, OBE, Leader of the Council and Executive Councillor for Resources, that the county council elections would proceed on 6 May 2021, with recent guidance having been issued by the Government.

The Leader of the Council also reported that the Covid-19 vaccination programme in Lincolnshire was progressing well, with the target of 15 April 2021 for the offer of a first vaccination to all people aged over 50 likely to be met. The testing arrangements for coronavirus locally were continuing, with the rates of infection falling.

55 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE HELD ON 2 FEBRUARY 2021

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2021 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

56 PERFORMANCE REPORTING AGAINST THE CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK - QUARTER 3

A report was submitted, which presented an overview of the Council's quarter 3 (October – December 2020) performance. The report indicated that based on the key activities and performance indicators the Council was on plan to achieve its four Corporate Plan ambitions. Of the 34 activities reported in quarter 3, 22 were either on or ahead of plan, with twelve activities behind plan. Seven of the twelve activities were behind plan owing to the impact of the pandemic. Details on all the exceptions had been set out in the report.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board had considered the report on 25 February 2021, and the Chairman of the Board presented the Board's comments to the Executive. The Board had accepted the rationale for the delayed implementation of *Business World On!* until 1 November 2021, and would be considering this further at its meeting in June 2021. Following the concerns raised by the Board that the *fixmystreet* app was recording incomplete service as complete, the Chief Executive had undertaken to review the operation of the app.

After comments from the Executive, the following points were noted:

- Although the interface between *fixmystreet*, a national app, and the Council's own systems had improved, work was continuing on aligning the coding used by the Council's system to the coding used by *fixmystreet*, to improve the quality of information available to the public. A new app would be made available to councillors over the coming months with specific information on highway repairs and similar activities in their local division. There was a request for information on neighbouring divisions also to be made available to each councillor.
- The revised start of 1 November 2021 for *Business World On!* was on course to be met. Testing would be commencing to verify background data; and training of staff, particularly in finance and human resources, would be undertaken prior to the revised implementation date.

#### RESOLVED

That the quarter 3 performance for 2020/21 be noted.

#### 57 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2020/21 - QUARTER 3 TO 31 DECEMBER 2020

A report was submitted to the Executive on Revenue Budget Monitoring for quarter 3 of 2020/21. An underspend of £15.4 million (excluding schools and Covid-19) had been forecasted for 2020/21, with the key variants detailed in the report. A forecast underspend on capital financing charges of £7.9 million had not been included in the £15.4 million forecast, as it was proposed to earmark this sum to manage fluctuations in the capital financing budget.

The report assumed that the Council's forecasted Covid-19 position might not be contained within the Government emergency grant, forecasting a deficit of £2.2 million. Included in this forecast was an estimated additional grant of around £4.2 million to cover losses of income. It was anticipated that general reserves at the end of the year would remain within the target range of 2.5% to 3.5%.

The Leader of the Council referred to the overall strength of the Council's financial position, owing to the prudent management of the Council's budgets over several years. The County Council had responded effectively to the Covid-19 pandemic through its financial management.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board had considered the report on 25 February 2021, and the Chairman of the Board presented the Board's statement to the Executive on two points of clarification and referred to the volatility and uncertainty of the budgetary position in the future.

Following discussion by the Executive, the following points were noted:

- Because of the impact of the pandemic certain procurement activity did not take place during 2020/21 and the anticipated savings from procurement had not been realised, so as part of the budget monitoring process this had been recorded as an increased cost.
- Some impacts from the pandemic, for example a potential for increased demand for certain services, were not yet known, so there was a need for continued vigilant monitoring of the demand for services and increased costs, and their overall budgetary impact, to be prepared for any volatility in the future.
- The report authors were thanked for the clarity of the written report and their presentation.

#### RESOLVED

That position on the revenue budget be noted.

#### 58 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2020/21 - QUARTER 3 TO 31 DECEMBER 2020

Consideration was given to the Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2020/21 - Quarter 3 to 31 December 2021. The current forecasted position was an underspend of £18.6 million, which comprised block schemes at £5.2 million and specific schemes at £13.4 million. The main variants from plan had been detailed in the report and were highlighted to the Executive.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board had considered the report on 25 February 2021, and the Chairman of the Board presented the Board's statement to the Executive, which welcomed the establishment of the capital review group and stressed the role of overview and scrutiny committees in monitoring substantial capital schemes, with the financial training of councillors in the new council term suggested as a priority.

Following discussion by the Executive, the following points were noted:

- The Leader of the Council looked forward to the involvement of overview and scrutiny committees in monitoring large capital schemes in the new council term. Future reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and Executive would identify where and when schemes had been reported to the relevant overview and scrutiny committee.
- Financial training for newly elected councillors would be included in the councillor induction programme, with the aim of giving new councillors the confidence to challenge both the financial and delivery elements of capital schemes.

- It was confirmed that the scheme for the delivery superfast broadband across Lincolnshire was on target at 95% coverage. The contract had included a provision requiring the contractor to rebate an element of its profit, which would arise from the installation of superfast broadband, to the Council. It was considered that this contractual provision had been unique to Lincolnshire and in turn had provided funding for further investment in broadband.

**RESOLVED**

That the position on the capital programme be noted.

The meeting closed at 11.25 am.