



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD 29 JUNE 2017

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR R B PARKER (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors L A Cawrey (Vice-Chairman), Mrs J Brockway, M Brookes, R L Foulkes, C S Macey, Mrs A M Newton, N H Pepper and E W Strengiel

Added Members

Church Representatives: Mr S C Rudman

Parent Governor Representatives: Mrs P J Barnett

Councillors: M J Hill OBE and M A Whittington attended the meeting as observers.

Officers in attendance:-

David Forbes (County Finance Officer), Justin Hackney (Assistant Director Specialist Adult Services), Steve Houchin (Head of Finance (Adult Care)), Tracy Johnson (Senior Scrutiny Officer), Claire Machej (Head of Finance (Corporate)), Andrew McLean (Service Manager Commissioning), Pete Moore (Executive Director, Finance and Public Protection), Mark Popplewell (Head of Finance (Children's Services)), Jasmine Sodhi (Performance and Equalities Manager), Fiona Thompson (Service Manager - People Management), Karen Tonge (Treasury Manager) Nigel West (Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer) and Richard Wills (Executive Director, Environment and Economy), Catherine Wilman (Democratic Services Officer)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT COUNCILLORS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Bridges, C E H Marfleet and Added Members Mr P Thompson and Dr E van der Zee.

2 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests.

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR RESOURCES AND COMMUNICATIONS AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICERS

It was noted that this would be a standing item on the agenda, however there were no announcements to be made on this occasion.

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No call-ins had been received.

5 CONSIDERATION OF COUNCILLOR CALLS FOR ACTION

There were no Councillor Calls for Action.

6 INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE AREAS

Presentations were received which included introductory information for Members relating to the Children's Services; Adult Care and Community Wellbeing; Finance and Public Protection; People Management; and Environment and Economy (and Monitoring Officer) service areas of the Council.

The presentations covered issues such as resources, priorities for the areas, and budgets.

RESOLVED

That the presentations on service areas be noted.

7 REVIEW OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2016/17

Consideration was given to a report on the review of financial Performance which would be presented to the Executive at its meeting on 4 July 2017. The views of the Board would be reported to the Executive to assist with its consideration of the item.

Officers took the Board through the report and the following comments were made by the Board in relation to the under and over spends:

- Readiness for Adult Life - it was questioned what the options were for meeting the growing demands of Care Leavers and homeless 16-17 year olds and it was suggested that a report should be presented to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee outlining these options.
- Children are Safe and Healthy – concerns were raised about the staffing vacancies in the early help teams and it was questioned what the current staffing situation was and if it was critical.
- Adult Care – it was suggested that in future it would be useful to have a link between expenditure and activity to see what the impact of activity was on spending. The Board was informed that Mosaic had just been implemented and care records were in the process of being transferred to the new system. The next stage of the Mosaic implementation was to bring in the financial information which would mean that a direct correlation between activity and spend would become visible. Planning for this would need to take into consideration the work to upgrade Agresso from its current configuration to version 6.2. Work to implement Mosaic finance functionality would not start

until this work was complete and an assessment of the links between the two systems had taken place. Therefore work was unlikely to start until the end of this financial year or the start of the next financial year.

- Environment and Economy – support was given to the winter maintenance underspend being put into the general reserves as there was £0.5M still in the contingency budget for winter maintenance.
- Schools – concerns were raised that there was £12.683M underspend in schools budgets and it was questioned how this compared to schools budgets nationally. The Board was informed that the Council had a policy in place where there was a cap of 8% carry forward of schools budgets, and if the carry forward was higher the policy would be triggered. Schools were advised to hold some reserves to provide some flexibility as their budget was driven by pupil numbers. The Lincolnshire Schools Forum regularly received reports on the budgetary position of maintained schools. However, with regards to academies, it was reported that their level of reserves were likely to start decreasing due to the cessation of the LACSEG (Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant), especially once the transition protection ended.

The following comments were made by the Board in relation to the carry forwards:

- The Board accepted the proposed allocations of carry forwards as set out in paragraph 1.84.
- It was suggested that more narrative about the business case for each of the carry forward proposals would be useful in future reports to justify the reasons for creating new reserve accounts. However, it was recognised that there was a need for flexibility to withdraw from some proposals if new financial pressures arose in future.
- Highways Advanced Design Reserve – support was provided for this reserve as it was recognised that it was essential to have schemes ready to go when funding became available.
- Horncastle Salt Barn Reserve – support was provided for this proposal especially in light of the savings from the winter maintenance budget.
- It was suggested that it would be useful for some staff to have two screens for working to improve their productivity.

RESOLVED

1. That the Board support the recommendations to the Executive as set out in the report;
2. That the comments made in relation to this item be passed to the Executive.

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD
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QUARTER FOUR**

The Board considered a report which was to be presented to the Executive at its meeting on 4 July 2017. The views of the Board would be reported to the Executive to assist its consideration on this item.

Officers provided a summary of the report which included use of performance information held on the Lincolnshire Research Observatory website.

In addition, the following comments were made:

- In relation to the Learn and Achieve Commissioning Strategy, concerns were raised about the high number of permanent exclusions in the academic year 2014-15. The Chairman of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee confirmed that the Committee had an item on the Inclusive Lincolnshire Strategy programmed in for its meeting on 21 July 2017 and he expected to see some progress as a result of this strategy and the new Behaviour Outreach Support Service (BOSS).
- In relation to the measure "pupils aged 16-18 participating in learning" the Chairman of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee noted that the issue of data collection from independent learning providers needed to be looked into.
- In relation to the measure "reported incidents of domestic abuse", the Chairman of the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee confirmed that the Committee would be looking at this issue in future.

RESOLVED

1. That the Board support the recommendations to the Executive as listed in the report;
2. That comments be agreed and passed to the Executive.

9 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

Consideration was given to a report which had been prepared in accordance with the reporting recommendations of the CIPFA Code of Practice 2011 and detailed the result of the Council's treasury management activities for the financial year 2016/17.

It was noted that the Treasury Management Annual Report 2016/17 would be considered by the Executive Councillor for Resources and Communications in due course.

A representative of CAPITA was present and reported that borrowing activity had mirrored the drop in interest rates.

In response to questions it was confirmed that:

- The County Council and District Councils had a policy of lending to each other as well as lending within the County Council. Neither of these methods incurred interest;
- Long term borrowing was on fixed rates, however, the rates for short term borrowing were not expected to move substantially in the near future.

RESOLVED

That the content of the report be supported and commended to the Executive Councillor for Resources and Communications.

10 PROPOSALS FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS

Consideration was given to a report which enabled the Board to identify and agree potential topics for in-depth scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by the two Scrutiny Panels.

It was explained that the position of Chairman and Vice Chairman on the Scrutiny Panels were standing positions. The membership of both panels (non-Executive Councillors only) would be formed once the topics had been decided.

A Brexit Working Group had been established in the previous Council term, but had not held a meeting for some time.

Following discussion, it was agreed that background research on potential topics needed to be completed before a final decision could be made, to ensure that the review process could be maximised to its full potential. The Board agreed to delegate this to the two Scrutiny Panel Chairmen, Councillors Mrs J Brockway and Mrs A M Newton, along with the Board's Chairman and Vice Chairman, Councillors R B Parker and L A Cawrey.

Mr Rudman questioned how far his involvement as an education representative would go, given that many topics touched on education. It was agreed that education matters and the role of education added members could be interpreted broadly, when considering the involvement of the education added members.

RESOLVED

That the Board delegate the selection of topics for scrutiny review to the Chairman and Vice Chairman and the Chairmen of the Scrutiny Panels and receive a report back on the proposed topics for scrutiny review at the next meeting.

11 REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS FOR SCRUTINY COMMITTEES' WORK PROGRAMMES FOR 2017/18

Consideration was given to a report which enabled the Board to agree the reporting arrangements for the scrutiny committees' work programmes in 2017/18.

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It had become apparent that there was a need to change the way scrutiny work programmes were reported. It was suggested that committee programmes be staggered with each Board meeting focussing on two or three different committees.

It was required that either the Chairman or Vice Chairman from the Committees in question, attend the Board meeting to present their work programme.

RESOLVED

That the reporting arrangements for scrutiny committees' work programmes for 2017/18 be approved.

12 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD WORK
PROGRAMME

The Board considered a report which presented its own work programme for the coming months. No additional items were identified at this time.

The Board was informed that the report on the Housing Company Business Case had been deferred from the meeting on 27 July 2017 to the meeting on 28 September 2017 to allow for further work to be undertaken.

RESOLVED

That the report and changes to the work programme be agreed.

The meeting closed at 1.35 pm