



**EXECUTIVE
6 SEPTEMBER 2022**

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

Councillors Mrs P A Bradwell OBE (Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement) (Deputy Leader), Mrs W Bowkett (Executive Councillor for Adult Care and Public Health), R D Butroid (Executive Councillor for People Management, Legal and Corporate Property), L A Cawrey (Executive Councillor for Fire & Rescue and Cultural Services), C J Davie (Executive Councillor for Economic Development, Environment and Planning), R G Davies (Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT), D McNally (Executive Councillor for Waste and Trading Standards) and Mrs S Woolley (Executive Councillor for NHS Liaison, Community Engagement, Registration and Coroners)

Councillors: P M Dilks (Leader of the Opposition), N H Pepper (Chairman of the Public Protections and Communities Scrutiny Committee) and T J N Smith (Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board) attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Debbie Barnes OBE (Chief Executive), Nicola Calver (Member Services Manager), Andrew Crookham (Executive Director Resources), Glen Garrod (Executive Director - Adult Care and Community Wellbeing), Michelle Grady (Assistant Director – Finance), Andy Gutherson (Executive Director Place), Alina Hackney (Senior Strategic Commercial and Procurement Manager - People Services), Caroline Jackson (Head of Corporate Performance), Andrew McLean (Assistant Director - Transformation), Martyn Parker (Assistant Director Public Protection), Heather Sandy (Executive Director of Children's Services), Nigel West (Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer), Rachel West (Contract Manager) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

18 DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLORS' INTERESTS

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

19 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

There were no announcements by the Leader, Executive Councillors or Executive Directors.

20 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE HELD ON 5 JULY 2022

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2022 be signed as a correct record.

21 DOMESTIC ABUSE SUPPORT SERVICES RE-COMMISSIONING

The Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Procurement and Community Safety introduced the report and highlighted that it related to an important support service that the Council provided. It also provided outreach support to children. It was noted that 30,000 adults in the county experienced domestic abuse each year. It was reported that whilst the authority did receive a grant for the refuge services, it did not cover the outreach services. The Police and Crime Commissioner and NHS have contributed funding to this Service.

The Executive was guided through the report and it was explained how this service would be funded and detailed the commercial approach taken as well as the service review which had been undertaken as part of the process. It was noted that there was the potential for further legislative change during the term of this contract. The model outlined in the report would strengthen the universal offer of support.

In terms of the commercial approach, it was highlighted that market engagement had been supportive of the approach and it was attractive to the market. The contract would be in place for a maximum of five years, with an initial period of three years, with a two-year extension. An agreement with the PCC and Health partners had been reached for them to contribute funding.

The Chairman of the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee presented the comments of the Committee following its consideration of this item at its meeting on 19 July 2022. The Executive was advised that the Committee unanimously supported the proposals in the report.

During discussion by the Executive, the following was noted:

- Clarification was sought regarding the budget and cost implications, and it was confirmed that the CCG (now the Integrated Care Board) had agreed to contribute £150,000 per annum rather than the £250,000 requested but would also be allocating dedicated staffing roles to domestic abuse victims within acute settings. It was noted that this would be monitored through performance,
- It was noted that the agreement also set out that if there was increased demand from health, the Council would be able to request an additional funding contribution.
- When people were asked how they accessed the service, it was found that the Police were referring 80% more people into the Service than Health services. Based on national figures, it was believed that there was a hidden demand from Health services.

- In terms of the higher numbers of referrals from the Police, it was noted that this was likely due to becoming more aware of the duty around domestic abuse, however, it was believed that demand would be plateauing, and that more demand would start to come through health services.
- The service had received some funding due to Covid-19 following a joint bid with the PCC which paid for the IDVA Service. However, this had been one-off funding and was not recurrent. It was suggested that a note could be circulated to the Executive which set out the additional funding throughout the year.
- It was acknowledged that this was an important service, and while a budget could be set, it was not possible to have control over the demand on that budget. Evidence suggested that during economic downturns, domestic abuse increased. Clarity was sought regarding how the Council would be able to manage the expected increase in demand for this service. Officers advised that demand would be monitored and tracked to identify where increases were coming from and when this was understood, discussions would take place with Partners around the expectation to contribute more funding from that area. This requirement would be written into the contract, so that funding could be increased or decreased as necessary.
- In terms of the emergency element for support, it was confirmed that that would always be available. It was likely that any demand increases would happen slowly so there would be the chance to have those discussions.
- It was noted that the work of a scrutiny panel set up by the PCC would feed into the Domestic Abuse Support Team.
- It was confirmed that those people who accessed the service but did not do so through health or police referrals, would either have self-referred, or come through third sector services.

RESOLVED

1. That the commissioning of a Domestic Abuse Support Service and the undertaking of a procurement to establish a contract, to be awarded to a single provider of a county-wide service effective from 1 April 2023, be approved.
2. That authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Adult Care & Community Wellbeing, in consultation with the relevant Executive Councillor, to determine the final form of the contract and to approve the award of the contract and the entering into of the contract and other legal documentation necessary to give effect to the above decision.

22 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2022/23 - QUARTER 1

A report by the Executive Director – Resources on Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 set out the Council's expenditure of the approved budget for Quarter 1 of 2022-23 with explanations for any significant variations.

It was highlighted that an increase in inflation was anticipated. The Executive was reassured that by increasing the contingency budget, the Council would manage this year, however the

following years would depend on the Government and how it planned to support local government.

It was reported that the current revenue position was that an overspend of £0.705m (excluding schools) was forecasted as at 30 June 2022, which was 0.13% of the net revenue budget. It was noted that the overspend mainly related to Children's Services but would be off set by one-off grants and savings from staff vacancies.

It was noted that the effects of inflation on budgets was starting to be seen. The pay settlement for staff had not yet been agreed, however the offer was around 4% higher than what had been budgeted. It was also highlighted that most of the gas and electricity was procured through an ESPO framework, and those contracts would come to an end in October 2022. The new contracts were already showing increases of 200% and 100% in prices.

It was expected that most of the cost pressures would be seen more in quarter 2, and officers would look at what could be done to manage some of those pressures.

It was commented that there was a lot of concern for small businesses in the county, as energy costs were not capped for businesses, and so it was likely that hospitality, leisure and tourism businesses would be most affected by business closures, and any measures the government could introduce for these businesses would be helpful.

The Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board presented the comments from the Board's consideration of the report on 25 August 2022. Comments included the recognition of several issues which would impact on the Council's revenue budget in the coming years, including construction costs where the rate of inflation was around 27%, and would have an impact on large projects such as roads and schools. The impacts of the Local Government Pay Award and gas and electricity costs were also highlighted.

The Executive was advised that the Corporate Leadership Team were working with senior leaders to review all the budgets, including efficiencies, and these would be presented to the Executive for consideration in due course.

RESOLVED

That the current position on the revenue budget be noted.

23 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2022/23 - QUARTER 1 TO 30 JUNE 2022

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Assistant Director – Finance on Capital Budget Monitoring, which provided an update on capital spending for quarter 1 of 2022/23, with explanations for any significant variations.

The current forecasted position for 2022/23 was an underspend of £1.001m (Block schemes £0.75m, project schemes £0.245m). This represented less than 1% of the net capital programme budget for 2022/23. It was highlighted that this was mainly due to timing slippage in Children's Services. It was noted that there was not much variance reported on the rest of the budget. There would be an impact from inflation on most of the budget.

The Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board presented the comments from the Board's consideration of the report on 25 August 2022. The Board raised concerns that current projects may be delayed, but the Board was reassured that all 'in flight' schemes in the capital programme would be delivered. There would be a need to be mindful of external factors which were beyond the control of the authority, such as the war in Ukraine.

It was confirmed that all projects which were in progress would be delivered, however there would need to be further consideration of any future projects.

RESOLVED

That the position on the capital programme be noted.

24 CORPORATE PLAN SUCCESS FRAMEWORK 2022/23 - QUARTER 1

Consideration was given to a report introduced by the Head of Corporate Performance which presented an overview of performance against the Corporate Plan as at 30 June 2022. Detailed information on performance could be viewed in the Council's website. It was noted that of the 39 activities due to be reported in quarter 1, they were all rated either as Progress is within agreed limits or Progressing as Planned. Page 133 of the agenda pack provided full details on all the activities.

It was highlighted that there were no activities which were red rated, and this included one which had been reported as red in quarter 4, this had now moved to green.

Of the key performance indicators (KPI's) where an ambition had been set, 20 could be compared with an updated position for quarter 1 reporting. Of these, 70% of KPI's were either exceeding or achieving the ambition which had been set.

Officers highlighted that the report included an explanation of the new national formula for recycling rates. This was impacting three of the seven districts with the twin stream roll out. A full explanation of all the waste measures was included at page 127 of the agenda pack.

In terms of the contextual measures, two of the measures were impacted by a delay in the release of ONS data, but an update based on local intelligence had been provided.

The Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board presented the comments of the Board following its consideration of this item at its meeting on 25 August 2022. It was reported that there had been a thorough debate of the performance

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information, with the Board particularly focused on indicators around Staff Absence, Adult Safeguarding and Waste performance.

During discussion by the Executive, the following was noted:

- It was commented that the number of days lost to sickness absence per FTE, currently at 8.8 days, was not acceptable, and it was queried how this was going to be addressed. The Executive was advised that management of sickness was important for all managers, and the monitoring of sickness had been difficult over the past two years due to the pandemic. However, there was no longer an expectation on people to self-isolate if they tested positive for Covid-19 and staff were expected to be in work if they were well and able, unless they worked with vulnerable people.
- It was noted that the 8.8 days was the average across the organisation, but higher levels of sickness absence were being seen across the Adults and Children's Services workforce. The Executive was reassured that managers continued to manage sickness absence.
- It was commented that days lost to sickness absence had been below target for a number of quarters, and it was agreed that this was something that needed to be addressed by managers. Back to work interviews were an important part of managing this, as well as returning staff members workloads being managed appropriately.
- The number of communities without good access to fast broadband was also highlighted, and it was noted that isolated properties were a challenge. However, most villages now had access to, or would shortly have access to, fast broadband.
- In terms of waste performance, only 4% of the county's waste went to landfill, and the Executive was comfortable with this figure. It was also reported that the roll out of separate paper and card collections was going well. In terms of the Household Waste Recycling Centre figures, it was noted that these figures tended to be seasonal.

RESOLVED

That performance for 2022/23 as at 30 June 2022 be considered and noted.

The meeting closed at 11.43 am