

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 14th March, 2019.

Present: Councillor G.D.D. Carroll (Chairman); Councillor V.P. Driscoll (Vice-Chairman); Councillors O. Griffiths, Dr. I.J. Johnson, P.G. King, N. Moore, L.O. Rowlands and E. Williams.

852 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE -

These were received from Councillors R. Crowley and S. Griffiths.

853 MINUTES -

RECOMMENDED - T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 14th February, 2019 be approved as a correct record.

854 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST -

Councillor N. Moore declared an interest in Agenda Item 5 in that his daughter worked for the Council and he had been granted a dispensation from the Standards Committee to speak and vote.

Councillor Dr. I.J. Johnson declared an interest in Agenda Items 5 and 7 in that he was a School Governor at Whitmore High School and Gladstone Primary School and having an exemption as a school governor could speak and vote on the matter.

855 STAFF ENGAGEMENT UPDATE (REF) -

The report which had been referred to the Scrutiny Committee by Cabinet for its consideration provided an overview of the staff engagement activity that had been undertaken by a series of work streams over the past year and provided a summary of the 2018 Staff Survey.

The Head of Performance and Development also informed the Committee that the 'Big Conversation 2' was to take place in February and March 2019 which was a means of meeting with all staff in order to provide an update on key Council issues and to provide an opportunity for all colleagues to become involved in engagement and innovation activities.

The report itself referred to the progress made in relation to the Council's Staff Charter in relation:

- Recognition and reward;
- Internal communications;
- Developing my skills;

- Innovation and creativity;
- Inclusivity.

In referring to the Staff Survey the Head of Service outlined that the Council measured the engagement of its staff through Staff Surveys which had been running for three years and which were structured around the four Values of 'Open, Together, Ambitious and Proud' and the survey sought to identify the overall engagement rate of the organisation by asking staff to indicate their level of positivity regarding a series of statements. The overall response rate to the 2018 survey had been 57% and the overall positivity rating was 69%.

The Engagement Index referred to in the report could be used to identify benchmarking with other organisations the details of which could be found in the Staff Survey report which provided information regarding the Civil Service 2018 survey where 62% engagement index had been scored. For the NHS Wales 2018 survey 75% engagement index score had been received and for Welsh Government a 62% engagement score had been received. For the Vale it had been 71%.

For 2019 onwards, the Head of Service stated that the support approach to Staff Engagement would be in relation to the Reshaping Services Programme, the Corporate Plan, CMT Staff Engagement Group, Council-wide Charter Engagement Group and Service Area Engagement and Innovation Groups.

A Member queried the figures referred into in the report which related to a decrease in electronic and hard copy staff survey returns with a request that the figures be double checked for accuracy.

Having regard to thoughts and insights from the survey and the reference to staff recording in the survey that they were unsure as to what senior management were doing and the overall aims of the Council. Although the reasons for these issues were not known, Heads of Service for each department area had been tasked to speak to their staff to ascertain their views and to report back.

A Member also made reference to responses to the question 'Do you trust your line manager' with a significant amount of the responses being yes for this question ' whereas for the question 'Do you trust your senior managers providing a clear vision for the Council' in the main the responses were 'I don't know'. Again, Committee was advised that Heads of Service were being requested to look into these issues. The Chairman raised his concern as to "if the staff are responding with I don't know answers this could more than likely be replicated by the public".

The Head of Service also advised that the Staff Survey for the current year had asked a number of different questions to previous years with the aim to receive more qualitative responses and with space being provided for comments.

Having considered the report it was subsequently

RECOMMENDED - T H A T the comments of the Scrutiny Committee be referred to Cabinet and the approach to progressing staff engagement activities through 2019 as detailed in the report be noted.

Reason for recommendation

To advise Cabinet of the views of the Scrutiny Committee.

856 WITHDRAWAL OF DISCRETIONARY FUNDING FOR FARE PAYING SCHOOL TRANSPORT SERVICES (REF) -

Cabinet had referred the report to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration which sought Cabinet approval to undertake a consultation on the withdrawal of Council funding for fare paying school transport services as the Local Authority had no absolute statutory duty to provide.

It was noted that the withdrawing of the funding would assist in the savings that the Neighbourhood Services and Transport Section were expected to make in 2019/20 and would assist the Council in funding statutory free school transport for pupils who qualified by virtue of distance from school and availability of walking routes.

The report identified that the public consultation would inform a further report that would present public views on the proposal and list any potential alternative solutions that could achieve the desired income.

In considering the report a Member noted that the report referred to an Equalities Impact Assessment but that this had not been attached to the report. The Group Manager for Transport Services advised the Committee that an initial Impact Assessment had been undertaken and that following the consultation a follow up EIA would be undertaken. The Member considered that in any event the EIA should have been attached to the report for the consultation.

Following a query from a Member with regard to the format of the consultation, the officer stated that an online consultation would be undertaken, this would target schools and operators seeking comments and a highlight report detailing the conversations undertaken with operators would subsequently be produced. Initial conversations had also been undertaken with all operators being advised of the need to be part of the consultation. The officer commented that it was a genuine consultation with all options, feedback and comments having been requested.

The Chairman asked if a ward by ward breakdown of routes could be provided and in response the officer stated that this was feasible.

Having fully considered the report it was subsequently

RECOMMENDED - T H A T the comments of the Scrutiny Committee be referred to Cabinet for their consideration during the consultation process.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the comments made at the Committee.

857 REVENUE MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL 2018 TO 31ST JANUARY 2019 (MD) –

The report provided an update on progress relating to revenue expenditure for the period 1st April, 2018 to 31st January, 2019, advising that the forecast for the 2018/189 Revenue and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budgets were for an outturn within target. However, there would be some unplanned drawdown from reserves in order to cover elements of overspending in addition to the planned use of reserves. The Head of Service further informed the Committee that a savings target of £6.298m was set for the year, however it was possible that some services would not achieve their savings target in full and that there therefore could be a shortfall of £724k.

The forecast for Learning and Skills Directorate was for an outturn within budget after an anticipated use of reserves.

The Social Services budget was also forecast with a balanced budget, however it was noted that one of the major issues concerning the service for Children and Young People was the pressure on the children's placement budget given the complexities of the children currently being supported and the high cost placements some of the children required to meet their needs.

With regard to Adult Services, the budget was extremely volatile and was influenced by legislative changes such as the National Living Wage.

For the Environment and Housing Services Directorate, there were some areas of concern to highlight and there would also be a drawdown from reserves.

Within the Waste Collection Service there was still pressure on employee and transport budgets due to downtime involved in travelling to Cardiff to dispose of waste. Additional resource had also been required during the recent service change which introduced the two black bag limit for residual waste. There had recently been an operational change to use a site within Cowbridge as a transfer station for some elements of recycling. It was anticipated that this would decrease the level of downtime currently experienced. £200k had been set aside for 2018/19 within the Neighbourhood Services Reserve with an aim to offset this budget pressure. Due to an increase in treatment charges within the recycling market, primarily as a result of China's decision to reject elements of mixed recycling, there was also a pressure within the recycling treatment budget. Again, funding of £430k had been set aside in reserves to cover this pressure in 2018/19 however this was only a one-off funding stream and a cost pressure had been submitted for the 2019/20 budget. Preparations were ongoing to enable the rollout of a kerbside sort method of recycling. It was anticipated that this would reduce the costs currently being incurred on treating recycling.

The Reshaping Services savings target for Neighbourhood and Transport Services for 2018/19 was £951k. £375k of this saving related to the remaining balance to be found from the recent restructure within Neighbourhood Services. The restructure had been effective from 1st April, 2018 however due to the timescales and notice

periods required, some staff had remained in post longer than anticipated. This may have some effect on the level of savings achievable. It was envisaged that the full £951k saving would not be made in this financial year and a shortfall of £315k was being reported. Plans for the remainder of the savings were currently being developed alongside additional savings for 2019/20 and would be reported to Cabinet in due course, however the Neighbourhood Services Reserve would be required to meet any remaining shortfall in savings at year end.

The Managing Director and Resources Directorate budget was programmed to outturn on target at the year end.

Committee having considered the report, subsequently

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the position with regard to the Authority's 2018/19 Revenue Budget be noted.

Reason for recommendation

Having considered the report and the contents contained therein.

858 CAPITAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL 2018 TO 31ST JANUARY 2019 (MD) –

The purpose of the report was to advise the Scrutiny Committee on the progress of the 2018/19 Capital Programme for the period 1st April, 2018 to 31st January, 2019 and to advise of changes to the Capital Programme. The Head of Finance, in presenting the report, stated that the largest change to the Programme was the inclusion of the Childcare Grant which had been approved by Welsh Government and would provide funding of £1.840m for the period 2019/20 to 2020/21. The purpose of the funding was to enable support to provide sufficient childcare places to meet demand.

Appendix 1 to the report detailed the financial progress on the Capital Programme as at 31st January, 2019, with it being noted that for those schemes where it was evident that the full year's budget would not be spent during the year, the relevant officers were required to provide an explanation for the shortfall. The report covered the following Directorates: Learning and Skills, Social Services, Environment and Housing, Managing Director and Resources. Paragraphs 4.3 to 4.31 provided details of various schemes for each of the Directorates detailing the current position.

Having regard to the changes to the Capital Programme, reference was made to the Murch Play Area with the Head of Finance confirm that she would forward the details to Members for their information. Following a further query regarding Disabled Facility Grants (DFGs) and its relationship to the revenue budget, it was noted that in most cases the money was received at the start of the scheme which benefitted the revenue account.

Having considered the report, it was subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the progress made on the 2018/19 Capital Programme be noted.

(2) T H A T the use of Delegated Authority in relation to the following schemes be noted:

- Barry Island Primary WC – Virement of £6k to St. Richard Gwyn Boilers scheme in the 2018/19;
- Glyndwr Hall – Include a new £22k scheme into the 2018/19 Capital Programme funded by Section 106.

(3) T H A T the use of Emergency Powers in relation to the following schemes be noted:

- ICF Trysor O Le – Include a new £12k scheme into the 2018/19 Capital Programme funded by ICF grant;
- ICF Social Enterprise Pilot – Include a new £16k scheme into the 2018/19 Capital Programme funded by ICF grant;
- ICF Transition Smart House – Include a new £30k scheme into the 2018/19 Capital programme funded by ICF grant;
- Local Transport Fund M4 J34 – Increase the 2018/19 Capital Programme by £118k to be funded by WG grant;
- Community Centre Works – Request to reduce the 2018/19 Capital Programme by £25k as works reclassified as revenue;
- Carbon Management Fund – Request to increase the 2018/19 Capital Programme by £23k for works at Romilly Nursery initially funded from Carbon Management Fund with reimbursement back into the fund by the school.

(4) T H A T the following changes to the 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21 Capital Programme be noted:

- Jenner Park Primary Water Boiler – Include a new £14k scheme in the 2018/19 Capital Programme funded by a revenue contribution from Catering;
- St. Joseph's Primary Windows – Include a new £25k scheme in the 2018/19 Capital Programme funded by a revenue contribution for the school;
- Disabled Access Improvement – Carry forward £16k from 2018/19 into the 2019/20 Capital Programme;
- Childcare Offer Capital Grant (COCG) – To include a new scheme in the Capital Programme with £1.380m being allocated in 2019/20 and £460k in 2020/21, funded by a Welsh Government Grant;
- Social Services Asset Renewal – Carry forward £20k from 2018/19 into the 2019/20 Capital Programme;
- External Ground Works, Youth Offending and Cartref Porthceri Buildings – Carry forward £33k from 2018/19 into the 2019/20 Capital Programme;

- 91 Salisbury Road – Carry forward £2k from 2018/19 into the 2019/20 Capital Programme;
- Fire Precaution Works – Carry forward £16k from 2018/19 into the 2019/20 Capital Programme;
- Residential Home Refurbishment – Carry forward £16k from 2018/19 into the 2019/20 Capital Programme;
- Glyndwr Hall – Increase the capital scheme by an £8k contribution from the Hall Association and vire £15k from the Community Centres Works scheme;
- Electrical Renewal Barry and Penarth Leisure Centre – Carry forward £800k from 2018/19 into the 2019/20 Capital Programme;
- Barry and Penarth Leisure Centre Upgrade of Changing Rooms – Carry forward £665k from 2018/19 into the 2019/20 Capital Programme;
- Cowbridge Leisure Centre Roofing – Carry forward £372k from 2018/19 into the 2019/20 Capital Programme;
- Asset Renewal Highway Structures – Carry forward £40k from 2018/19 into the 2019/20 Capital Programme;
- Dimming of Street Lighting / Fitting of LED lights – Carry forward £365k from 2018/19 into the 2019/20 Capital Programme;
- Carbon Management Fund – Increase the 2018/19 Capital Programme by £5k for works at Wick Primary and by £14k for works at Ysgol Pen Y Garth, initially funded from the Carbon Management Fund with reimbursement into the fund from the schools;
- Stronger Communities Fund – Increase the 2018/19 Capital Programme by £15k funded by a revenue contribution from the Stronger Communities budget;
- Disabled Facility Grants – Carry forward £200k from 2018/19 into the 2019/20 Capital Programme;
- Murch Play Area – Include a new scheme totalling £120k in the Capital Programme, £3k in 2018/19 and £117k in 2019/20 to be funded by Section 106 monies;
- Grange Play Area – Include a new scheme totalling £85k in the Capital Programme, £4k in 2018/19 and £81k in 2019/20 to be funded by Section 106 monies;
- Twyn Yr Odyn Play Area – Include a new scheme of £20k in the 2019/20 Capital Programme funded by Section 106 monies;
- Asset Collaboration Programme – Include a new scheme of £30k funded by Welsh Government grant.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To advise Committee of the progress on the Capital Programme.
- (2) To advise Committee of the use of Delegated Authority.
- (3) To advise Committee of the use of Emergency Powers.
- (4) To allow schemes to proceed in the current and future financial year.

859 QUARTER 3 (2018-19) PERFORMANCE REPORT: CORPORATE HEALTH (MD) –

The Head of Performance and Development presented the report which provided progress at Quarter 3 towards achieving the Council's Corporate Health priorities as outlined in Year 3 of the Corporate Plan 2016-20. Overall the Council had made good progress in delivering its Corporate Health priorities contributing to achieving improved outcomes for residents and its customers. This had therefore contributed to an overall Green status for Corporate Health at Quarter 3.

92% of planned activities aligned to the Council's Corporate Health priorities had been attributed a Green performance status reflecting the exceptional progress made during the quarter. However, there was a need to progress a number of actions to: further enhance performance reporting by procuring and implementing new performance management software; seek and maximise business opportunities in a number of service areas as part of the reshaping services strategy; review and enhance the Council's Succession Planning and Talent Management Scheme, key employment policies and strengthen links between the staff appraisal scheme and learning and development; establish a central contracts register for the Council and work towards Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliance.

Of the 30 performance measures aligned to the Council's Corporate Health priorities, data was reported for 20 performance indicators at Quarter 3 with the remaining annual measures to be reported at end of year. Of the 20 measures reported, a performance status was applicable for 15. A Green performance status was attributed to 7 (44%), an Amber status to 4 (25%) and 5 (31%) a Red performance status. There was a need to improve performance in relation to the following areas: spend against approved Capital Programme; spend against savings targets; performance against agreed Reshaping Services targets; complaints dealt with within target timescales and speed of answer for incoming calls to the Customer Contact Centre.

The report also sought Elected Members' consideration of Quarter 3 performance results in relation to the Council's Corporate Health priorities and the proposed remedial actions to address areas of identified underperformance and to tackle the key challenges identified and after due consideration, the Committee's views and recommendations be referred to Cabinet for their consideration and approval.

Members welcomed reporting by exception advising that in their view this format was most helpful. However following a query regarding the response rate to calls at the contact centre, the Head of Service advised that in his view, the 60 second target was demanding, with the aim being over the next few years to achieve further progress having regard to the use of artificial intelligence etc and for the public to undertake most of their enquiries online.

A Member queried the current position with regard to payment cards being informed by the Head of Finance that Capita had been procured to support the Council in this endeavour with the aim to be online by September 2019 and to include the Library Service.

In referring to HR/WO46 to review key employment policies to help deal more effectively with issues of grievance, underperformance and capability, a Member queried the instigation of such a review and was advised that this had arisen following discussions in respect of the Staff Charter. It was also scheduled to be presented to the GLAM Group and would subsequently be reported to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) in Quarter 4.

Following a query from a Member regarding the current progress in relation to the Central Contract Register, the Head of Finance stated that this was being developed in-house and was currently being tested with the intention to be in place by 31st March 2019.

Having regard to the contents contained within the report and the comments made at the meeting, it was subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the performance results and progress towards achieving key outcomes in line with the Council's Year 3 priorities for Corporate Health be noted.

(2) T H A T the remedial actions to be taken to address areas of underperformance and to tackle the key challenges identified be noted.

Reason for recommendations

(1&2) Having regard to the contents contained within the report.

860 VALE OF GLAMORGAN WELL-BEING / IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVES AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN PART 1 2019/20 (MD) –

The report presented the Council's eight Well-being (Improvement) Objectives for 2019/20 and its commitments in relation to delivering those objectives which were reflected in Service Plans to show how individual areas would contribute, including service specific contributions associated with Service Plan delivery. It also proposed challenging service improvement targets associated with the Council's Well-being Objectives that would enable it to effectively demonstrate progress towards achieving its Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes and the national Well-being Goals.

Publishing the Council's Well-being Objectives at the start of the financial year would enable it to meet its statutory requirements in the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFG), both of which placed specific duties on the Council in relation to objective setting and reporting. Under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, the Council was required to publish its Well-being Objectives by 31st March each year and to keep those under review. Under the Measure, the Council also had to set annual Improvement Objectives and publish these as soon as possible at the start of the financial year.

In line with the Council's duties under the WCFG Act, the Council continually reviewed the relevance of its eight Well-being Objectives in the Corporate Plan through its integrated planning processes in order to ensure it continued to reflect the priorities for the Vale of Glamorgan and focus its improvement activity on the areas in need of the most improvement. Ensuring the relevance of the Council's objectives had been further reinforced via its annual reporting process in 2018, the Public Opinion Survey 2018/19, its budget consultation for 2019/20, emerging findings from recent discussions via the Insight Board and the ongoing 'Big Conversation' workshops. As a result, going forward into 2019/20, the Council was assured that its Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives and associated priorities continued to be relevant in delivering improved outcomes for Vale residents and contribute to the national Well-being Goals.

In line with the Council's Performance Management Framework, the Corporate Plan priorities for 2019/20 were reflected in the Service Plans for 2019-20 which Members were being asked to endorse. Progress against these priorities and the Council's proposed service improvement targets would be monitored via quarterly performance reports to the relevant Scrutiny Committees as aligned with the Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes, supplemented with an overall summary report to Cabinet.

Members were asked to consider and endorse via recommendation to Cabinet, the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Well-being Objectives, associated Services Plans and improvement targets for 2019/20.

Following approval by Cabinet, publication of the Improvement Plan Part 1 would take place via a variety of media (including social media) which would ensure the Council was complying with its statutory duties.

Having regard to the report, a Member queried why reference to the Dinas Powys by-pass had not been made within the document, it being noted that the Dinas Powys by-pass project was within the remit of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee and in the officer's view would more than likely be part of that plan. However, he agreed to refer the matter to the Head of Service for the service area for a response to Members.

Having fully considered the report, it was subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the Vale of Glamorgan Well-being (Improvement) Objectives and associated priority actions for 2019/20 as aligned to the Council's Corporate Health priorities as detailed in the report be noted.

(2) T H A T the Human Resources, Legal Services, Finance and ICT, Performance and Development and Democratic Services Service Plans for 2019/20 be endorsed.

(3) T H A T the proposed service improvement targets for 2019/20 aligned to the Council's Corporate Health priorities be endorsed.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) To ensure the Council fully discharges its statutory duties to set and publish its Improvement Plan Part 1, outlining how it proposed to meet its Well-being (Improvement) Objectives for 2019/20.

(2) To confirm the Service Plans as the primary documents against which performance for the Corporate Plan Corporate Health priorities will be monitored and measured.

(3) To ensure the Council reports a relevant set of performance indicators against which it can demonstrate achievement of its Corporate Health priorities and consistently sets challenging yet realistic performance improvement targets for those priorities in line with requirements under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.