

No.

HEALTHY LIVING AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 11th December, 2019.

Present: Councillor Mrs. R. Nugent-Finn (Chairman); Councillor N.C. Thomas (Vice-Chairman); Councillors Ms. J. Aviet, Mrs. J.E. Charles, S.J. Griffiths, T.H. Jarvie, K.P. Mahoney, R.A. Penrose and J.W. Thomas.

Also present: Councillor N. Moore (Leader).

522 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Councillors O. Griffiths, B.T. Gray (Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health) and K.F. McCaffer (Cabinet Member for Leisure, Arts and Culture).

523 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 12th November, 2019 be approved as a correct record.

524 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations were received.

525 CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING SUMMARY REPORT – NOVEMBER 2019 (REF) –

The Director of Social Services presented the reference to the Committee and began by advising that the mid-term summary provided an overview of the priorities of the Corporate Safeguarding Group work plan and work plan updates as well as the fact that there was corporate responsibility to ensure that there were effective arrangements in place for safeguarding children and adults who required specific Council services. The Director and was also pleased to report that both the Cardiff Regional Board and Vale of Glamorgan Council employees had led on procedures which had recently been formally adopted across the whole of Wales which was a significant milestone and achievement for the Council.

The Vice-Chairman then began discussion on the item by referring to paragraph 2.3 of the report presented to Cabinet and to the fifth key area of priority, 'training', and queried what arrangements were in place in relation to Leisure Centre staff and the frequency for refresher training. As a supplementary point, the Vice-Chairman also raised that Leisure Centre staff were in a unique position to spot physical signs of children at risk and therefore it was important that safeguarding procedures remained high on their agenda.

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In response, the Director of Social Services advised that the new Wales Safeguarding Procedures Application was now live and freely available to use by all and following the adoption of the Procedures, a subsequent training course would follow sometime in the first quarter of 2020 which would be followed by the development of an e-learning tool. The Operational Manager for Neighbourhood Services, Healthy Living and Performance then added that it was mandatory for all Leisure Centre staff to receive safeguarding training that was regularly monitored by the Council. The ongoing expectation of the Council was for safeguarding to be high on the Leisure Centre agenda.

The Chairman then wished to refer to the first key priority area of 'Corporate Leadership' and asked who the authority was for monitoring the attendance and participation of the Corporate Safeguarding Group, to which the Director of Social Services advised that he was the Chair for the Group and therefore had the responsibility to ensure the Group attendance was closely monitored.

The Chairman then referred to the statement that membership and areas of responsibility for those with 'Corporate Safeguarding' was available on the Corporate Safeguarding page and queried the frequency that the relevant page was updated. In response, the Director of Social Services advised that the relevant page was regularly updated and was routinely updated following both the annual and half yearly corporate safeguarding summary reports.

The Chairman then referred to the 'Corporate Policy' priority and the statement that "the role of corporate safeguarding was known and understood throughout the Local Authority with a shared understanding that safeguarding was everyone's responsibility", and asked how the Council was qualified to make such a statement and what arrangements were in place for the Council to identify unknown safeguarding matters. In response, the Officer advised that the Corporate Safeguarding Group monitored the levels of training as well as Council policies to identify any service approaches that did not align with Corporate policy and the ethos of safeguarding being "everybody's business" was very much endorsed throughout the Council.

On the matter of safeguarding policies, the Chairman wished to ask whether the Council was satisfied that the policies in place and therefore endorsed by its contractors were in line with the Council's own policies, to which the Officer advised that the policies in place depended on the role of the particular contractor, however the Council would verify safeguarding policies as part of the contract process and further consideration was scheduled regarding this matter later in 2020.

In conclusion, the Chairman endorsed the newly available Wales Safeguarding Procedures Application and encouraged all Members to download the application at their own convenience as the application covered every area of safeguarding and had been extremely useful in her experience to date.

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RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the work that had been undertaken to improve corporate arrangements for safeguarding and protecting children and adults since the Annual Corporate Safeguarding Summary Report being received be noted.
- (2) T H A T Committee continues to receive a six-monthly reference from Cabinet on work being carried out to improve Corporate Safeguarding arrangements and the effectiveness of relevant policies.

Reason for recommendations

(1&2) To ensure that Committee is aware of recent developments in corporate arrangements for safeguarding and has oversight of the key areas of corporate working.

526 INITIAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME PROPOSALS 2020/21 TO 2024/25 AND CAPITAL MONITORING 2019/20 (DSS) –

The Operational Manager for Accountancy presented the report to provide Committee with an update on the progress on the 2019/20 Capital Programme for the period 1st April 2019 to 30th September, 2019 and advised that the first part of the report set out changes to the 2019/20 Capital Programme such as:

- Flying Start Gibbonsdown Children’s Centre Soft Play – the Council had been awarded a grant from Welsh Government of £25k to replace the soft play matting covers in the playground at Gibbonsdown Children’s Centre. It had been requested that this scheme be included in the 2019/20 Capital Programme.
- Replacement Jenner Park Stadium Roof – this scheme was anticipated to overspend by £12k and this would be funded from a revenue contribution to capital.

The Officer then advised that Appendix 1 to the papers provided further details regarding capital monitoring for the period ending 30th September, 2019 and then referred to the second part of the report regarding capital bids 2020/21 to 2024/25 with the primary point for noting, as set out in Appendix 2 to the papers, being the £100k proposed for Social Services Asset Renewal and that details of specific schemes to be funded from this budget would be provided as part of the final capital budget proposals.

The value of capital bids received for the Council as a whole totalled £6.973m in 2020/21 and £20.473m over the five year period. The Officer advised that whilst the evaluation process had been carried out for the current financial year for all capital bids in the normal manner, the Welsh Government settlement for 2020/21 had not yet been confirmed and it was therefore proposed that at the current point in time, due to the uncertainty in the level of funding that would be provided, no schemes would be approved for inclusion in the Capital Programme and further assessment would be carried out by the Budget Working Group once the level of funding was

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known and consultation had taken place. The Officer then drew Members' attention to the list of all the capital bids received relating to the Committee at Appendix 3 to the papers.

In conclusion, the Chairman thanked the Officer for her presentation and noted that the lack of settlement confirmation from Welsh Government had made financial planning very difficult which was also exacerbated by the volatile nature of the Social Services budget.

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the Initial Capital Programme Proposals for 2020/21 to 2024/25 be noted.
- (2) T H A T the changes to the 2019/20 Capital Programme be noted.

Reason for recommendations

(1&2) To ensure that the Committee is aware of amendments to the 2019/20 Capital Programme prior to a formal decision being taken by Cabinet on the budget.

527 INITIAL REVENUE BUDGET PROPOSALS 2020/21 AND REVISED BUDGET 2019/20 (DSS) –

The Operational Manager for Accountancy presented the report to inform the Committee of the amended revenue budget for 2019/20 and to submit for consultation the Initial Revenue Budget Proposals for 2020/21.

The Officer began by advising that the 2019/20 budget had been amended for internal transfers and technical adjustments resulting in the overall total budget for the Committee now standing at £65.499m. The Council was required under statute to fix the level of Council Tax for 2020/21 by 11th March, 2020 and in order to do so, would have to agree a balanced revenue budget by that date. The Officer reiterated that the Council's provisional settlement had not yet been announced by Welsh Government and was expected in mid-December 2019 with the final settlement being received in February 2020. Therefore, even though the crucial information had not yet been received, the budget setting and consultation process had to commence in order to meet statutory deadlines.

The Officer then drew Members' attention to the table contained at paragraph 2.3 of the papers which set out the amended budget with the projected outturn for 2019/20, with services anticipating drawing down from reserves, as follows:

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	2019/20	2019/20	2019/20	Variance
	Original	Amended	Projected	(+)Favourable
Directorate/Service	Budget	Budget	Outturn	(-) Adverse
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Children and Young People	16,098	16,195	17,195	-1,000
Adult Services	47,957	47,903	48,603	-700
Resource Management & Safeguarding	272	281	281	0
Unplanned use of reserves to fund overspend	0	0	(1,700)	+1,700
Leisure Services	1,350	1,120	1,120	0
Total	65,677	65,499	65,499	0

Children and Young People Services – The major concern for the service was the continued pressure on the children’s placements budget given the complexities of the children currently being supported and the high cost placements some of the children required to meet their needs. Work continued to ensure that children were placed in the most appropriate and cost effective placements, however in the context of the complexity of need and the national challenges in identifying placements this was challenging, however, some progress had been made and it was now projected that the budget could overspend by around £1.0m in the current financial year. The Officer also added that it should be noted that due to the potential high cost of each placement, the outturn position could fluctuate with a change in the number of children looked after and/or the complexity of need. It should therefore be noted that the position included the utilisation of £500k grant funding from Welsh Government which had currently been provided on a one-off basis in 2019/20, however, this could not be guaranteed and relied upon for future years and it was anticipated that further information would be provided as part of the 2020/21 settlement. The service held a reserve that could be accessed at year end to fund high cost placements if required.

Adult Services – The pressure on the Community Care Packages budget had been reassessed and it may have a net overspend at year end of around £700k. The outturn position was difficult to predict as the budget was extremely volatile. The service also continued to be affected by the pressures of continued demographic growth, an increase in the cost of service provision and the Community Care Packages budget would have to achieve further savings this financial year. The service would strive to manage growing demand and would develop savings initiatives which may be funded via regional grants. Welsh Government had continued to provide Intermediate Care Fund (ICF) grant to Cardiff and Vale University Health Board to allow collaborative working between Health and Cardiff and the Vale Councils however the level of grant funding was not guaranteed on an ongoing basis. The service held a reserve that could be accessed at year end to fund any eventual overspend if required.

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With regards to savings for 2019/20, the Officer advised that the achievement of the Social Services – Older Persons’ Day Services savings was contingent on the outcome of the consultation on proposed future provision of day services for older people which was agreed by Cabinet on 29th July 2019. Given the timescales, it was unlikely that the full saving would now be achieved in 2019/20 and if the saving was not achieved in year, the Service’s reserves would be utilised at year end to fund any overspend if required.

In addition, Phase 1 of the Single Use Sports Pitches savings for bowling greens was implemented part way through 2019/20 and Phase 2 was expected to be implemented during 2020/21, the full year effect of the savings were expected to be realised in 2021/22.

The Officer then addressed the Budget Strategy 2020/21 and advised that due to the lack of settlement information received from Welsh Government to date, the Council was in a difficult position to establish a baseline that services should prepare Initial Revenue Budgets based on the costs of providing the current level of service and approved policy decisions. However, Appendix 3 to the report set out an analysis of revenue cost pressures for 2020/21 and Appendix 4 set out the proposed savings for 2020/21 and 2021/22. For the Committee’s benefit, the Officer then wished to provide additional context regarding the columns contained within Appendix 3 of the papers and advised that the figures contained in column 1 indicated that funding would be included in the base budget on a recurring basis, however if amounts were contained within columns 2 and 3 of the table then these were additional sums required for these specific financial years.

Based on the assumption that all cost pressures would be funded in full, the estimated funding shortfall for 2020/21 would be £8.968m assuming a cash neutral settlement from Welsh Government and a 4.9% increase in Council Tax. If Council Tax was further increased in line with the Welsh average, the shortfall for 2020/21 would be £4.896m.

If the settlement from Welsh Government reflected a 1% reduction in AEF, with all cost pressures being funded in full and the Council proceeded with a 4.9% increase in Council Tax, the estimated funding shortfall would be £10.489m. If Council Tax was further increased in line with the Welsh average the shortfall for 2020/21 would be £6.417m.

Welsh Government had not issued details regarding the level of funding post 2020/21, however, it was anticipated that there would be further reductions in funding for Local Government going forward. It was therefore important that Directors achieved approved savings and looked to mitigate further cost pressures through alternative means of service delivery and collaborative ventures.

Reserves were a way of setting aside funds from budgets in order to provide security against future levels of expenditure and to manage the burden across financial years. Funds no longer required may be transferred to the Council Fund and then set aside for other purposes or used to reduce Council Tax.

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A Member then referred to the approved savings for 2019/20 (Appendix 2) and the statement contained regarding the single use sports facilities under the Neighbourhood Services and Transport savings in that bowling clubs were due to transfer on 1st October, 2019 and asked if the transfer had been completed. In response, the Operational Manager for Neighbourhood Services, Healthy Living and Performance advised that the relevant bowling clubs had taken on responsibility for the maintenance of their facilities however the formal paperwork had not been finalised which was why the statement was still contained within the appendices document.

A Member then wished to address a point within the proposed savings 2020/21 and 2021/22 (Appendix 4) document and asked for further information regarding the services considered under the "Review of Complex Cases" statement. In response, the Director of Social Services advised that the particular service covered a wide range of items under the particular heading but in summary the points referred to high value care packages that may also qualify for funding from the Health Board.

Within the analysis of reserves (Appendix 6) document, a Member referred to the points labelled "Social Services Pressures" which stated to cover short term children's placements which had a high cost and queried if the Council was in a position to cover as stated. The Director of Social Services then advised that the Council was under huge pressures regarding children's placements as a result of higher demand and limited funding, however the Council had made significant efforts to manage its budgets which was evidenced throughout the report content. The Director also then took the opportunity to express sympathy for care providers, given the current service climate.

In conclusion, the Chairman thanked all Members for their comments and the Officers for the detailed report considering the uncertain financial future.

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the amended Revenue Budget for 2019/20 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be noted.
- (2) T H A T the Initial Revenue Budget Proposals for 2020/21, including matters relating to cost pressures and savings, be noted.

Reason for recommendations

(1&2) To note changes to the 2019/20 budget.

528 QUARTER 2 2019/20 PERFORMANCE REPORT: AN ACTIVE AND HEALTHY VALE (DSS) –

The Director of Social Services was pleased to present the Quarter 2 performance results for the period 1st April to 30th September, 2019 which demonstrated a positive performance outcome against the Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes for "An Active and Healthy Vale".

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The Council continued to make progress in delivering its Corporate Plan in relation to the Well-being Outcome 4 Objectives of “Encouraging and promoting active and healthy lifestyles” and “Safeguarding those who are vulnerable and promoting independent living”. This had contributed to an overall Amber status for the Outcome at Quarter 2 (Q2).

87% (60) of planned activities aligned to an “Active and Healthy Vale” had been attributed a Green performance status reflecting the good progress made during the quarter. 1% of actions were allocated an Amber status and 12% (8) of planned actions had been attributed a Red status. These performance exceptions related to reviewing the Information, Advice and Assistance Service, undertaking actions to support the provisions of the Public Health Wales Act 2018, further strengthening and extending shared working between the Contact Centre and the Health Board to integrate services, implementing a Team around an individual approach to Dementia services, working with partners to develop a Vale Locality Model, exploring the development of an integrated model for Long Term Care Service, undertaking interventions in accordance with the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan and continuing a programme of training and awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation, slavery and trafficking.

Of the 24 performance measures aligned to this Well-being outcome, data was reported for 8 measures where a performance status was applicable. 37.5% (3) measures were attributed a Green performance Status, 12% (1) an Amber status and 50% (4) a Red status. A performance status was not applicable for 16 measures including a number of annual indicators and those establishing baseline performance for the year.

In relation to the Council's measures, there was a need to improve performance in relation to the Percentage of care and support plans for adults that were reviewed within agreed timescales (CPM/207), the Percentage of care and support plans for children that were reviewed within agreed timescales' (CPM/208) and the Numbers of new Telecare users (CPM/209) and the Rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 or over (CPM/057).

A Member then referred to page 22 of Appendix A and service plan action HS/A092: Work with partners on the Area Programme Board to develop a new Cardiff and Vale Substance Misuse Commissioning Strategy and noted that the progress and outcomes description advised that the Vale had contributed to the regional bid with Cardiff for funding and would be notified in Q3 if successful, and asked if notification had yet been received. The Member then raised a secondary question with regards to Service Plan action NS/A040: Work in partnership to deliver a comprehensive play programme that improves the wellbeing of children and their families, and queried what works were scheduled given that the item was only labelled as 50% complete despite a RAG status of Green.

In response, the Operational Manager for Neighbourhood Services, Healthy Living and Performance advised that with regards to the Member's first question, notification had not been received at the time of the meeting but was still expected within the next Q3 report and thanked the Member for raising his question. With

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regards to the Member's secondary question, the Officer referred to the progress and outcome description commentary as contained on pages 22 through to 23 of the report.

In conclusion, the Chairman requested that the Committee's gratitude be passed on to all staff members, via the Officers present, who had contributed to the obvious progress throughout the report.

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the performance results and progress towards achieving key outcomes in line with the Council's Year 4 priorities for Corporate Plan Well-being Outcome 4 – "Residents of the Vale of Glamorgan lead healthy lives and vulnerable people are protected and supported" 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.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) To ensure the Council clearly demonstrates the progress being made towards achieving its Corporate Plan Well-being Outcomes aimed at making a positive difference to the lives of Vale of Glamorgan residents.

(2) To ensure the Council is effectively assessing its performance in line with the requirement to secure continuous improvement outlined in the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2009 and reflecting the requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that it maximises its contribution to achieving the well-being goals for Wales.