

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY PANEL

held at

Harborough Innovation Centre, Wellington Way,
Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 7WB

on

12th October 2022 commencing at 6.30 p.m.

Present:

Councillor Rickman, Chairman

Councillors: Critchley, Graves, Nunn, Mrs Page (ex-Officio) and Mrs Wood

Officers present: C. Bland, R. Ellis, S. Hamilton, C. Mason and C. Pattinson

Remotely: K. Aitken

Guests: Councillor Hallam

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATIONS OF SUBSTITUTION

Apologies were received from Councillor Frenchman, Councillor Knowles and also Councillor Mahal who was substituted by Councillor Nunn.

DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were none.

MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL

RESOLVED that: The Minutes of the Meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Panel held on the 23rd June 2022 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

REPORT 1: 2021/22 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING – QUARTER 4/OUTTURN

The report¹ was presented by the Finance and Services Manager. The report set out the financial position (outturn) for the year ending 31 March 2022, for revenue and capital. Revenue is showing an overspend of £7k, a variance of 0.1% to the approved budget. Capital is showing an underspend of £251k, a variance of 11% to the approved budget.

Questions were asked in relation to reserves and the overspend of £7k, details of which were contained in the narrative to Appendix 3 to the report.

The Panel CONSIDERED the report.

REPORT 2 2022/23 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING – QUARTER 1

The report² was presented by the Finance and Services Manager. The report set out the financial position (outturn) for the first quarter ending 30 June 2022, for revenue and capital. Based on known income and expenditure commitments and working assumptions, revenue is forecasting an overspend of £1,041k, a variance of 8.7% to the approved budget; and capital is forecasting an on-budget position.

Of the revenue cost overspend, some are directly linked to inflationary (cost of living impacts), including the Pay Award and energy costs; whereas others are due to underachievement of savings or variances related to normal operational delivery. This includes the delay of the Senior Management review and also the decision not to pursue the shared service in relation to Development Management, which was anticipated to have generated a saving of £94k.

In response to a question relating to the delay of the Senior Management review contributing to the underachievement of savings, it was confirmed that the commencement of the consideration of the Strategic Partnership would not be appropriate without a full complement of the Senior Management team being in place, due to a number of Senior Officers leaving the authority fairly recently. Therefore new members of Senior staff have joined the Authority, and it is anticipated that the Senior Management review will take place at a later date.

1

<https://cmis.harborough.gov.uk/cm5/Meetings/tabid/73/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/410/Meeting/5726/Committee/831/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx>

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<https://cmis.harborough.gov.uk/cm5/Meetings/tabid/73/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/410/Meeting/5726/Committee/831/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx>

The Council completed on the sale of land at Naseby Square to Platform Housing Group, and after the setting off of known costs when the Council was looking to self-develop and the more recent costs of disposal, the net capital receipt is £59k.

The Panel CONSIDERED the report.

REPORT 3 PERFORMANCE: QUARTER 1, 2022/23 YEAR

The report³ was presented by the Corporate Services Manager. The report showed the status of all 32 Key Activities at the end of Quarter 1 of the 2022/23 year, with 27 Key Activities having a status of Green, 5 having a status of Amber and no Key Activities being classed as Red status.

Two Key Activities were added to the Corporate Plan during Quarter 1 of the 2022/23 year, these being KA.01.13 - External maintenance works to the Symington Building and KA.01.14 - Refurbishment of toilets in Welland Park, Market Harborough.

Three key performance indicators on the Strategic Performance Dashboard were Red status at the end of Quarter 1, these being the number of new affordable housing completions during the year; 60% of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks or other agreed time; and the number of interventions carried out to encourage owners of empty properties to bring them back into use/ number of properties brought back into use.

In response to a question relating to KA.01.08, asking for the timescales for the newly recruited Planning Officers to get up to speed, it was expected that this would occur reasonably quickly. The performance level in the Planning team was as expected by March 2022 following the five full time equivalent (FTE) redundancies, however the performance improvement was subsequently affected by an additional 2.5 FTE officers leaving in June 2022.

With regards to the narrative within Appendix A to the report relating to KA.01.04, it was confirmed by the interim Chief Executive that regular meetings are now taking place between the Finance Department and the Grants Officer.

It was confirmed that the 12 month project to understand the key issues faced by young people through Covid recovery, which was implemented by a Young Persons Officer, led to the development of a Young Person Opportunities Plan. This was reviewed by the Communities Scrutiny Panel in July 2022 and the accompanying action plan will be embedded by the relevant Service Areas within the Council. The Young Persons Officer has now left the Authority on conclusion of the 12 month project.

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<https://cmis.harborough.gov.uk/cm5/Meetings/tabid/73/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/410/Meeting/5726/Committee/831/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx>

In relation to KA.03.01, it was AGREED that details of the new campaigns for dog fouling and littering would be provided to the Committee.

The Panel CONSIDERED the report.

ANY URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

The Meeting ended at 7.23pm

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