

PUBLIC

MINUTES of a meeting of **IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - RESOURCES** held on Thursday, 3 March 2022 in The Council Chamber, County Hall, Matlock, DE4 3AG.

PRESENT

Councillor S Swann (in the Chair)

Councillors R Ashton, M Foster, A Hayes, D Muller and D Murphy.

Also in attendance was Councillor G Hickton (substitute member)

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillor J Barron.

1/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

2/22 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Resources held on 3 December 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3/22 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

4/22 QUARTER 3 FINANCIAL MONITORING - PRESENTATION

Tina Adams Head of Financial Management and Strategy, attended the meeting and provided a presentation to the committee on Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring at Quarter 3.

The total portfolio outturn for Quarter 3 showed a £11.911m overspend compared to an overspend in Quarter 2 of £18.544, providing a favourable movement of £6.663m.

The Total Projected Outturn for Quarter 3 showed a £15.737m underspend compared to an underspend in Quarter 2 of £5.163m. This included the use of £16.536m un-ringfenced Covid-19 Grants. This provided a favourable movement of £10.474m.

Details were given of the significant variances at Quarter 3 across the budgets for Adult Care, Corporate Services, Highways and Transport, and

Childrens Services, which all showed overspends, with Health & Communities, Risk Management Budgets and Debt Charges showing underspends.

Details were also given of the Budget Saving targets and Departments would be required to identify alternate savings for any un-deliverable efficiencies.

The forecast balance for the General Reserve Position as at 31 March 2022 was £58.930m

Members were given the opportunity to make comments or ask questions which were duly answered or noted

Particular reference was made to the implications for the authority with the current situation with Russia.

Mr Handford, Interim Executive Director, commented that whilst there were a number of minor concerns that were being monitored and managed and appropriate actions taken the biggest area of concern was cyber security and the authority was in regular contact with the National Cyber Security Centre and was constantly looking to enhance security and remind employees to be vigilant.

The Chairman, on behalf of the committee thanked the officers for their most comprehensive and informative presentation.

RESOLVED to note the update on Quarter 3 Financial Monitoring.

5/22 MODERN WAYS OF WORKING - PHASE 1 UPDATE

Emma Crapper, Director of Organisation Development and Policy and Dave Massingham – Director of Property gave a presentation to the committee to compliment the detailed report that had been circulated in advance of the meeting, which provided members with an update on Phase 1 of the Modern Ways of Working Project and sought the views or of Members how they wish to be engaged in the programme moving forward.

Derbyshire County Council (DCC) wanted to base the work, and relationship with the people of Derbyshire on quality of service and process, rather than the desks being used or the buildings in which staff sit in.

The long-term strategic vision for the future model would define the way in which the Council and its staff worked. Work undertaken across the organisation and with staff involved had revealed that there was the potential to realise huge benefits for the organisation and the services it delivered to the public by enabling a more agile workforce and smarter

working practices.

MWoW commenced in September 2020 and started looking at ways in which to maximise the opportunities presented during the recent pandemic to the Council to the way staff worked. The MWoW approach today had been built on the significant shift in working practices, including the rapid implementation and use of new technology across the Council. Increased homeworking and more flexible and agile working practices had been evidenced in recent months.

The principal aspiration for MWoW Phase 1, was to reintroduce employees back into County Hall at speed and aligned with the cessation of Covid-19 measures at that time whilst taking advantage of using office spaces in a different way. The programme of activity for MWoW Phase 1 was approved at Cabinet on 17th June 2021, including the allocation of a budget of £400,646 to support implementation.

Members were provided with details of the Phase 1 Programme, which comprised of 5 Workstreams:

- 1) People
- 2) Communications & Engagement
- 3) Information Communication Technology (ICT)
- 4) Property
- 5) Information Governance

Having now undertaken phase 1, the Programme team intend to 'lock-in' the 'lessons learnt' and ensure they are benefited from during phase 2. This will include ensuring that a realistic timescale and plan is developed for the clearance of the wider estate based on the pilot at County Hall amongst other workstreams.

MWOW Programme Phase 2 was currently being developed and a report would be presented to Cabinet in due course with a clear Business Case to underpin delivery of Phase 2. I&S Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider how they would like to be involved in the programme moving forward.

Members were given the opportunity to make comments or ask questions which were duly answered or noted

The Chairman thanked the officers for their update.

RESOLVED (1) to note the progress and achievements on the MWoW Phase 1 Programme;

(2) to acknowledge the intention to develop and submit a MWoW

Phase 2 report to a future Cabinet meeting; and

(3) that a working Group be established to look at MWOW Phase 2 implementation

6/22 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY 2022 - 2025

Members had been provided with a detailed report and a copy of the Council's final Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022-2025 for consideration following consultation.

Members were also asked to explore additional opportunities to be further involved in the development of key priorities as set out in the Strategy and identify workstream activities over the forthcoming period.

Wes Downes, Policy Manager invited John Cowings, Senior Policy officer to give a verbal update to the committee to compliment the report on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022-2025, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

The final draft Strategy recognised that the Council had worked hard on equality and diversity issues and that this work has resulted in significant changes to services, employment practices and approach. However, there was a recognition that more work needs to take place, particularly in the context of key demographic and economic challenges and wider societal events and issues including the coronavirus pandemic, increased focus on race equality, the increasing violence against women and girls and social mobility amongst many other issues.

The final draft Strategy set out the Council's vision and values for equality, diversity and inclusion and five key priorities to direct activity over the forthcoming three-year period as follows: Create a diverse and confident workforce; Ensure fair access to employment; skills and business support; Engaged communities able to influence decisions; Healthy and supported people; and Safe and inclusive places for everyone.

The Strategy has been structured around 5 workstreams or main themes. One of these, "Engaged communities able to influence decisions" includes a focus on improving participation by under-represented groups and communities in consultation and participation in public life, and would seek to support Elected Members to champion equality, diversity and inclusion across Derbyshire, growing links with diverse groups and populations

By working with the Committee, it was hoped that the knowledge, existing experience and skills of Elected Members could be harnessed to help progress such work, and in the process, provide more support to those Members to reach and engage with communities that they may not have close links with at present.

Members made a number of comments around some of the narrative in the document and made observations and asked questions on the Strategy which were duly noted or answered by the officers and would be taken into account as part of the continued work process moving forward.

The Chairman thanked the officers for their update.

RESOLVED (1) to note the final draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022-2025 which would be considered for approval by Cabinet at its meeting on 10 March 2022; and

(2) that the Members Development Working Group be asked to explore how Elected Members can further support the development of key actions set out in the Strategy including work to improve community participation and participation in public life and report back to this committee

7/22 WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

Members were informed of the current work programme (2021/22) and were invited to put forward proposals for items to be included in the 2022/23 work programme.

RESOLVED (1) to note the 2021/22 work programme; and

(2) to note that work on the development of the 2022/23 work programme was about to commence and that Members are invited to propose items for consideration. This could be done by emailing the Chair or Roz Savage, Improvement and Scrutiny Officer.