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## **KIRKLEES COUNCIL**

### **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday 5th September 2023**

Present: Councillor Elizabeth Smaje (Chair)  
Councillor Bill Armer  
Councillor Andrew Cooper

Co-optees

In attendance:

Observers:

Apologies:

**24 Membership of Committee**

All Members of the Panel were in attendance.

The Chair explained that Councillors Hussain and Ramsay had ceased to be members of the Committee as a result of taking places within the Cabinet. Thanks were expressed to both Councillors for their contribution to the work of the Committee.

**25 Minutes of Previous Meeting  
Resolved –**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

**26 Declaration of Interests**

All Members of the Committee were in attendance.

**27 Admission of the Public**

All items were considered in public session.

**28 Deputations/Petitions**

No deputations or petitions were received.

**29 Public Question Time**

No questions were submitted.

**30 Corporate Financial Management - Quarter 1 Report**

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The Committee received a report in respect of the Corporate Financial Monitoring Report for Quarter 1, 2023/24 and a verbal update in respect of the Medium-Term Financial Statement.

Councillor Graham Turner, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Regeneration, introduced the report.....?. Rachel Spencer-Henshall, the Strategic Director for Corporate Strategy, Commissioning and Public Health and Isabel Brittain, the Interim Service Director, Finance attended the meeting and a presentation was given which highlighted the following:

Headlines from the Quarter 1 report and actions

Overview by Directorate

Service variances

Issues??

Recommendations approved by Cabinet – mitigations

....

The MTFS aimed to establish a framework to ensure delivery against savings

Subject of a debate at Council on 13<sup>th</sup> september

Ensure activity to resolve immediate issue of anticipated? forecast budget gap in 2024/25. And robust proposals were being .... To ensure a balanced budget by February 2024.

Current view that budget gap could be £ by 2028/29.

Questions and comments were invited from Committee Members, with the following issues being covered:

Exploring the potential of spend to save in respect of transport costs

investment to save was a potential and any scheme would look at if initial investment would pay dividend in the long-term, The Corporate Transformation Team -strategy- if can deliver early on some savings use??

Partnerships with other bodies such as the Woodlands Trust to assist with the projected overspend on tree planting??

The Council did work alongside partners on ...more detail could be provided to members further to the meeting.

Access bio-diversity net gain funding

Potential revenue generator?

Cost-benefit analysis in respect of challenges in relation to proposals to reduce care packages for high cost children with disabilities placements.

Agree and approach would be to work within framework so individual response made in each case – reassure move from one size fits all approach

Clarity in respect of the differences between the current figures and the figures considered?submitted to by Council in February. An undertaking was given to provide this detailed information after the meeting.

Whether the savings forecast?? Were achievable and when would the authority be in a position to have more certainty on this. The Service Director gave assurance that she would be undertaking a deep-dive into the ...savings and their impact and would have more clarity by the end of the week???

Opportunities to achieve more income; flexibility to address issues. It was important that the issue of capacity was considered within questions relating to recruitment to ensure that the Council would still be able to take advantage of opportunities.

Assurance that the panel responsible for assessing vacancies would take into account the importance of not having a negative impact on income. Capacity would

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also be considered to try and ensure that resources were utilised in the best possible way.

It was believed that there should be systematic approach to identifying opportunities for funding; including by/through partners and the community and voluntary sector who would have access to funding that was not available to the Council. This should be transparent and involve wider input, such as from Councillors. It was noted that this could be a challenge under the current system of bidding for pots of national funding as there had to be an appropriate level of payback balance between cost of submitting a bid which only some authorities would be successful ; it was considered a better use of resources to concentrate on those where there was a bigger chance of success...there were also issues associated with the challenging timescales both for the submission of bids or by which the funding must be used. robust due diligence... was communications with peers and other parties on this subject. The connectivity and working with the community and voluntary sector was strong.

It was noted the Committee had identified at the issue of procurement and external funding within its work programme for 2023/24.

In terms of the effectiveness of processes associated with reducing spend; it was believed that there was a strong financial team with a robust approach. Detail was being examined as the authority moved towards Quarter 2 and further information would be provided to the Committee at future meetings.

The regeneration proposals

Profile and demand for social care needs? Had been forecast to the best of the authority's ability but this was challenging due to the many factors that influenced it. The population of people with special educational needs and disabilities was/had increased and investment was being made into schools to increase capacity.

The Huddersfield Blueprint regeneration proposals had been calculated into the Capital Plan; this would be included in the review of overall spending.

The George Hotel project was being undertaken with partners and external funding and....

There was a wish/need to invest to save and to increase the Council's future income.

The Department for Education had agreed and supported the Council's approach in respect of the 'safety valve' for children and families budgets???

Deliver against agreement and the auditors were also happy... although it was not possible to predict levels of demand.

The Council had a robust SEND transformation programme in place??

Queried whether land that was/would not being used for a period of time could be used to increase the amount of parking in Huddersfield town centre, this would also generate additional income.

The Medium Term Financial Statement (MTFS) provided the principles and framework for the budget for next year and part of the engagement with Councillors and residents on the detail was an integral part of the approach. The underlying detail on delivery going forward was being...worked upon??

There was a clear approach in terms of achieving efficiencies to ensure that the needs of each service was ..... to ensure that valuable corporate memory was not lost. There was also a focus upon the development of graduate opportunities and University placements so that the next generation of staff in areas where recruitment could be a challenge could be established/built.

**Resolved –**

(1) That further information on the position at Quarter 2, the achievability of savings and detail of the re-profiling of the Capital Plan be provided to Members of the Committee at the earliest possible opportunity.

(2) That it be noted that the following issues were included within the Committee's Work Programme for 2023/24:

- (i) Procurement and external funding. The report should include visibility and understanding of the work to identify and decide upon appropriate.....
- (ii) The approach to Asset Management.
- (iii) IT strategy were on the Committee's work programme for 2023/24.

**31**

**Corporate Performance and Impact Report - End of Year 2022/23**

The end of year, 2022/23, Corporate Performance and Impact Report was be submitted.

Rachel Spencer-Henshall – Strategic Director of Corporate Strategy, Commissioning and Public Health and? Andy Simcox – Service Director for Strategy and Innovation outlined the background to the current approach to performance monitoring ~~which focussed upon impact and outcomes~~

Report on outcomes for the priorities contained within the Council Plan.

Detailed performance management was collated for each service and was presented to the Council's Executive Team.

The Demand and capacity Indicators were provided to the Members of this Committee on a regular basis.

The new Council plan was expected to be approved in January 2024, and consideration would be given to the revision of performance indicators as part of the process??

Members were invited to identify any issues that they considered would benefit from scrutiny.

Questions and comments were invited from Committee Members, with the following issues being covered:

It was anticipated that the format of performance information would include measurement of outcomes against targets. And consideration was being given to how financial data and activity could be integrated.

Further detail on the issues and the context affecting the outcomes would be useful....in assessing performance???

In terms of the provision of 'real-time' data, in order to assist Cabinet in decision-making, it was explained that the demand and capacity graphs were shared with cabinet on a monthly basis.

The importance of the transparency of information was recognised and this point would be taken on board.

Queries in respect of the potential of using land in the Council's ownership for wind...

The retention of the Ward partnership budget allocations; as these were considered to be very beneficial at local level. How keep Councillors involved and residents engaged

The role of the Council within the care market

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Importance and... of the place standard action plans.../community ward- based budgets was recognised but there was significant financial pressure, particularly looking forward to 2024/25 and it was not possible to give a firm decision at this point in time. Although this was being progressed as quickly as possible to inform the budget in February 2024.

The aim was to move towards resilience within communities and using funding to foster and build independence and sustainability. Discussions were being undertaken with partners??

The area of care was being reviewed the aim being to create efficiencies and retain capacity but it was difficult to ....role...at this stage. But this was an area of concern for the administration. Take back + opps for on-shore wind generation... Assurance had been provided from central government in respect of the funding necessary to deal with any problems with concrete structures. Limited numbers had been identified to date in the district. The Asset Management team already had a rigorous review process in place.

That the issue of transparency of performance management information be taken into account ????

Noted that further response/information to be provided to members of the Committee in respect of:

Potential use of Council land for off-shore wind generation

Care market???

The Council's participation in 'Vision Zero' project/initiative

### 32 **Establishment of Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Approval was sought to the process to be followed in relation to the appointment of Kirklees representatives to a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC), with Calderdale and Wakefield Councils, in respect of the Older People's Inpatient Mental Health Services Transformation Programme.

It was noted that the draft Terms of Reference contained within the report would be submitted to the JHOSC for approval.

#### **Resolved -**

That it be agreed that the nominations for Kirklees representation on the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with Calderdale and Wakefield Councils, should be sought from the main political groups (Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrat, Green) on the basis of 1:1:1:1.

### 33 **Lead Members' Updates**

The Lead Members for the Children's Scrutiny Panel and the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel updated the Committee on the work being undertaken by their Panels.

### 34 **Work Programme 2023/24**

The latest version of the Committee's Work Programme for 2023/24 was submitted for consideration.