

Draft Minute from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 16 June 2022

For consideration by Executive Members at Executive on 23 June 2022

Item 6 – Quarter 4 Performance Report 2021-22

The Committee received reports giving an overview of the Council's performance for Quarter 4 2021/22, including Key Performance Indicator (KPI) reporting, as well as revenue and capital budget monitoring. The reports were due to go to Executive on 23 June.

Cath Rose, Head of Corporate Policy, Projects and Business Assurance, and Pat Main, Head of Finance outlined the report to Members.

Points to note on KPIs included:

- Of the 11 KPIs that are reported on in Quarter 4, 10 were on target or within agreed tolerance.
- The sole red rated KPI 10 which related to recycling, is reported one quarter in arrears and against a target of 60%, 54% had been achieved. Despite not achieving the target in Q3 it was recognised that the target is a challenging one and the cumulative achievement for the year to date is the Council's strongest ever performance for recycling. Following comments from the Committee at the last meeting, additional contextual information had been added, including residual waste data which indicates a decrease in residual waste generated per household compared to the previous year.
- Council tax collection was reported at 97.9% and business rates collection was reported at 99.8% which were great improvements on earlier in the year and collection rates had since increased even further with Council tax collection at 99.14% and business rates collection at 99.91%.
- Performance against homelessness targets had been consistently above target, despite the challenges presented to the team through the pandemic. The vast majority of those in need of temporary accommodation within the borough had been accommodated.
- Both overall housing completions and affordable housing completions were above target.
- Neighbourhood Services indicators KPI 8 and KPI 9 show that the local environment continues to be kept clean, with a reliable waste collection service for residents.
- Several contextual indicators had been included; these are indicators where no target has been set but are useful for considering the council's performance.

Members commented that the appearance of the report had improved greatly and was very useful.

Members made comments and observations on the following areas:

Homelessness – Members asked whether the figures for homelessness could be compared to the previous year in order to predict a final figure for the end of this year. It was confirmed that the figures fluctuated throughout the year, and individual cases often spanned reporting quarters, however a comparison with the previous year could be sought. A written answer would be provided by the Head of Corporate Policy, Projects and Business Assurance after the meeting.

Affordable Housing and affordable housing completions – Members asked how many of the affordable housing completions are socially rented and how many are affordable rented. Members also asked whether the KPI was green rated based on over delivering on the number of homes in one particular year, which might cause other problems in the medium to long term. It was confirmed that the way in which the data is collected from planning applications does not allow for distinction between rent levels as affordable and social rent. However, the title of the tables in the document would be amended to reflect that it relates to affordable rent and social rented combined. The local plan sets a numerical target for affordable housing of 1,500 over the plan period and the Council was on target to achieve this. A written answer would be provided by the Head of Corporate Policy, Projects and Business Assurance after the meeting.

Staff Turnover and Staff Sickness Absence – Members asked whether numbers of staff working in the offices / working from home should be reported. It was confirmed that there was some tracking of numbers of staff working in the offices for track and trace purposes, as well as those members of staff required to physically attend work. It was suggested that this be reported to the Employment Committee.

Corporate Complaints – Members asked whether stage 2 complaints were investigated by a different officer / department to the stage 1 complaint. It was confirmed that the investigating officer at stage 2 would be from a different department to the investigating officer at stage 1.

Points to note on revenue and capital budget monitoring included:

- The final outturn position would be finalised when accounts for the year were complete, but no significant changes were expected.
- There was a £0.9 million underspend on the service budgets.
- There was a £0.4 million overspend in Central Budgets mainly due to a year-end payment to Surrey Pension Fund.
- Covid-19 income losses were just over £1.0 million (after Government grant contribution).
- The result of these three items was a net revenue budget overspend of £0.541 million which was funded through a call on the £2.0 million Reserve that was set aside for Covid-19 income losses, leaving a balance on the Reserve of just under £1.5million.
- Capital expenditure at £35.7 million was below the programme budget for the year.

- The variance was a combination of slippage (£101.7 million) and underspends (£3.7 million). £37 million was being carried forward to 2022/23 while the remainder, comprising sums previously allocated for commercial investment, would be added back to the programme when business cases were approved.
- Overall, it had been another challenging and complicated year from a financial perspective due to the continued impacts of the pandemic, but those impacts had been monitored closely and the year had ended with a net underspend on the underlying service and central budgets and healthy reserves.

Members made comments and observations on the following areas:

Capital Programme - Members asked, with regards to Marketfield Way and other developments, what is the financial impact of delayed completion on income forecasts and is that impact being borne by the Council, or by the contractors. It was confirmed that a more comprehensive response on the impact of both the revenue and capital income would be given at a future date when more information became available. Members agreed that this project would be considered at a future meeting.

Covid-19 Income Losses – Members asked whether there was an update on grants from Government regarding Covid losses. The Head of Finance confirmed that all expected Government support had been received by year-end and that this had matched the expenditure incurred.

Members referenced the £1.3million loss in car parking and other income and asked what the budget for 2022/23 would be. The Head of Finance confirmed that the budget for 2022/23 had been reduced by £1.1 million to reflect post-pandemic forecasts; actual receipts compared to this revised budget would be monitored and reported throughout the year.

Garden Waste – Members asked how significant additional income was generated by the service during the year and would this income go some way to offsetting the income losses from car parking. It was confirmed that the increased income was due to signing up additional new customers to the garden waste scheme, above the number predicted when the budget was set. This additional income had contributed to the net underspend on service budgets which in turn had helped mitigate COVID-19 income losses for the year.

Street Cleansing – Members enquired why street cleansing had incurred a £6k additional spend on postage. The Head of Finance agreed to provide a written answer following the meeting.

Service Budget Variances – Members asked whether the variances had been taken into account when setting the budget for 2022/23 or had they been “one-off” variances. The Head of Finance confirmed that historical budget outturn results were considered during budget setting.

Data Insight – Members asked what benefits are derived from the Data Insight expenditure of £172k. It was explained that this was a relatively new initiative for collating information from internal and external sources to present to management and Members to support decision-making and planning. The

expenditure had been incurred in building further capacity. The Leader commented that Data Insight had been of vital importance throughout the pandemic and there was a growing demand from partners, such as the NHS, to share data to benefit the development of resident-centred services, rather than just from the Council's perspective. It was suggested that the Chair and Vice-Chair undertake a piece of work to examine the work of the Data Insight team and its benefits and report back to the Committee.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- 1) Notes the Key Performance Indicator performance for Q4 2021/22 as detailed in the report and Annex 1 and makes observations to the Executive as set out in the minutes;
- 2) Notes the Revenue Budget outturn for 2021/22 and recommended budget carry-forwards as detailed in the report and at Annex 2 and makes observations to the Executive as set out in the minutes;
- 3) Notes the Capital Programme outturn for 2021/22 as detailed in the report and at Annex 3 and makes observations to the Executive as set out in the minutes;