

THE EXECUTIVE

A meeting of the Executive was held on 19 November 2019 at 1:00 p.m. in Mandela Room, Town Hall, Middlesbrough.

PRESENT: Mayor A Preston (Chair) and Councillors B Cooper, D Davison, A High, C Hobson, D McCabe, M L Smiles and A Waters

PRESENT AS OBSERVERS: J Cain and A Pain

INVITEES: Councillors J Platt and J Thompson

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor D Rooney

OFFICIALS: J Bromiley, A Humble, K Parkes, T Parkinson, S Reynolds, E Scollay and A Williams

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no Declarations of Interest made by Members at this point in the meeting.

19/45 **MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 8 OCTOBER 2019**

The minutes of the Executive meeting, held on 8 October 2019, were submitted and approved as a correct record.

19/46 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE**

The Mayor and the Chief Executive submitted a report for the Executive's consideration. The purpose of the report was to advise the Executive that a further corporate peer challenge, from the Local Government Association (LGA), had been commissioned - as part of the Council's commitment to seeking regular independent assessment of its corporate governance frameworks.

The Mayor and the Chief Executive had agreed with the LGA that the review would assess the Council against five core themes:

- understanding of the local place and priority setting;
- leadership of place;
- financial planning and viability;
- organisational leadership and governance; and
- capacity to deliver.

The review also planned to have a particular focus on consultation and community engagement.

In line with the Council's commitment to transparent and honest engagement, the report stated that the findings of the review would be published and brought back to Executive for consideration, along with an action plan to address any recommendations made by the review - taking into account what could be delivered within the resource constraints the Council was operating within.

OPTIONS

The Council could have chosen not to access LGA support and undertake an in-house review or commission external specialists to deliver the review at a cost. Those options were not recommended because it was healthy to seek external views of key governance issues on a periodic basis. Sourcing alternative specialists would have been at a cost, while the cost for the LGA peer challenge was included within the cost of annual membership to the LGA.

ORDERED

That the proposed corporate peer challenge, with a focus on the Council's approach to consultation and community engagement, be endorsed.

REASONS

Utilising the LGA resource provided an opportunity to gather views from a range of experts from across the local government sector.

19/47

SOUTH TEES SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP

The Executive Member for Children's Services and the Executive Director for Children's Services submitted a report for the Executive's consideration. The purpose of the report was to provide an update on the development and delivery of the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (STSCP).

The partnership arrangements had been developed in line with legislation, which was included in the Children and Social Work Act 2017. The Act removed the statutory functions of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) and introduced the requirement for 'Safeguarding Partners' to work together within a local area to protect and safeguard children. Those arrangements had to identify and respond to the needs of children in the area and also identify and review serious child safeguarding cases.

On 28 June 2019, the Safeguarding Partners published the new arrangements, which were referred to as the 'South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership' and which became operational on 29 September 2019. Those published arrangements were submitted to the Secretary of State and had been accepted as meeting the requirements as set out in 'Working Together' 2018.

The statutory safeguarding partners for the STSCP were:

- Middlesbrough Council;
- Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council;
- South Tees Clinical Commissioning Group; and
- Cleveland Police.

The partners shared equal responsibility for the execution and oversight of the partnership and had agreed the following vision: 'A partnership committed to keeping children safe and working together to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and families'.

The STSCP planned to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system, which placed the child at the heart of the process and aimed to ensure that:

- children were safeguarded and their welfare promoted;
- partner organisations and agencies collaborated, shared and co-owned the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children;
- organisations and agencies challenged appropriately and held one another to account effectively;
- there was early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats;
- learning was promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families could become more reflective and implement changes to practice; and
- information was shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families.

The arrangements aimed to ensure a continuous cycle of improving practice and enhancing outcomes.

In addition to the statutory partners, it was recognised that there were a number of organisations and agencies whose involvement was required to safeguard and promote the

welfare of children across the South Tees. Those were referred to as 'relevant agencies' and as such were included within the published arrangements. The agencies included educational establishments, local housing providers, public health, voluntary/community groups, faith groups and probation service.

A copy of the new safeguarding partnership arrangements, which had been developed and agreed by the statutory safeguarding partners across the South Tees area, was attached to the submitted report at Appendix 1.

ORDERED

That the content of the report be noted.

19/48

THE IMPROVEMENT IN SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN MIDDLESBROUGH

The Executive Member for Children's Services and the Executive Director for Children's Services submitted a report for the Executive's consideration. The purpose of the report was to explain the improvement in Special Educational Needs provision across Education, Social Care and Health for children and young people in the local area.

In March 2017, Middlesbrough was inspected by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) for the quality of its Special Educational Needs and Disabilities provision for children and young people. The inspection included scrutiny of the contribution of Education, Social Care and Health in ensuring that children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities made good progress and had their needs met in a timely manner. The outcome of the inspection resulted in a Written Statement of Action to address significant concerns, which were detailed at paragraph 1 of the submitted report.

In July 2019, the same Ofsted and CQC inspection team revisited the local area to inspect the sustained progress since March 2017 and to identify if sufficient progress had been made on each of the four areas for development. The revisit report was attached at Appendix A of the submitted report.

Strategic leaders in the local area were determined to make ongoing improvements and embed the recommendations, identified in the new report published by Ofsted and CQC, into development plans. Strategic leaders also planned to ensure further improvements in provision - focussing on how services were organised to support a highly inclusive education system for children and young people, particularly those with emotional and mental health issues.

ORDERED

That the recent Ofsted and CQC report, and the continued development in provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, be noted.

REASON

It was best practice for Members to review reports from Ofsted and the CQC on the performance of work within its statutory provision.

19/49

STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-22 - PROGRESS AT QUARTER TWO 2019/20

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance and the Strategic Director of Finance, Governance and Support submitted a report for the Executive's consideration. The purpose of the report was to advise the Executive of progress against the 2019-22 Strategic Plan, and the Council's projected year-end financial position at Quarter Two 2019/20. The report recommended a number of mitigating actions to address financial issues identified during the Quarter Two review.

In overall performance terms, the 2019/20 Quarter Two Results report attached at Appendix 1

of the submitted report, sets out the same positive position as Quarter One:

- 23 of the 30 priorities (77%), set out within the 2019-22 Strategic Plan, were assessed as on target to be achieved; and
- 9 of 28 associated measures of success showed improvement, with 14 static remaining static, and 5 deteriorating.

During Quarter Two, positive progress had been made in delivering future economic prosperity, improving community safety and support for vulnerable people, and implementing the Council's digital strategy.

Performance issues outlined in the report were also in line with those reported at Quarter One, and mainly sat with the Council's Social Regeneration aim, including the local crime rate, public health and the continued rise in children looked after by the Council. The publication of the 2019 English Indices of Deprivation, during Quarter Two, ranked Middlesbrough as the fifth most deprived local authority area, up one position from 2015.

The key issue outlined in the report was that the Council was reporting a projected overspend of £4,406,000 (103.94%) on its 2019/20 revenue budget at the end of the Quarter Two, due principally to continued pressures in Children's Care.

Actions put in place to respond to the pressures identified at Quarter One had not impacted as expected during Quarter Two. The following additional actions had therefore been agreed by the Leadership Team and the Executive Members for implementation during Quarter Three:

- child-by-child review of 68 external residential placements, moving young people in year (an initial sift had been completed and more detailed work was now being carried out);
- resources and early help services were being redeployed to support children with the highest level of need in new ways (options identified and practicalities were now being worked through); and
- robust professional panels in place to challenge care planning on all placements and new Looked After Children (external resource had been sought from North Yorkshire County Council, as an OFSTED Outstanding Authority, for their expertise in cost saving measures).

In addition, the Children's Services planned to present a report to Executive (in December 2019) setting out the transformation plan for Children's Care.

The submitted report stipulated that progress against delivery of savings, and mitigation of the projected overspend in Children's Services, would be monitored between quarters by:

- weekly placement updates at Directorate Management Team to monitor numbers, costs and trends; and
- monthly full budget monitoring for Children's Care, with results fed back into Corporate Management Team and the Executive.

ORDERED

1. **That the Council's Quarter Two 2019/20 Results report (Appendix 1), and the actions to be taken to address the issues set out within it, be noted.**
2. **That the proposed revenue budget virements of over £150,000 (Appendix 2) be approved.**
3. **That the proposed revised Investment Strategy to 2021/22 (Appendix 3) be approved.**

REASON

To enable the effective management of finances, performance and risk in line with the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance, the Scheme of Delegation and agreed corporate financial regulations.

19/50 2020/21 REVENUE BUDGET TIMELINE

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance and the Strategic Director of Finance, Governance and Support submitted a report for the Executive's consideration. The purpose of the report was to seek the approval of the Executive to change the planned timetable for agreeing the 2020/21 Revenue Budget, in view of the forthcoming General Election on 12 December 2019. The report outlined steps to be taken to minimise risks associated with the reduced timetable, and the further risk of delays in setting the budget due to the changed composition of the Council following the May 2019 local government elections.

Typically the Council's budget setting process commenced in early November each year, with the Executive proposing savings that were then agreed by full Council for public consultation running between mid-December and mid-January. The Mayor and the Executive then considered the outcome of the consultation, in developing a proposed budget for full Council approval in early March.

Invariably budget setting was politically sensitive, involving questions of taxation, expenditure and savings. It was determined, therefore, that it would not be prudent to proceed with the typical timetable during the Purdah period, which required the Council to avoid political sensitive issues, including major consultations, in the run up to elections. The General Election was planned for 12 December 2019, with Purdah commencing on 8 November and ending when the polls closed.

It was therefore proposed that full Council approved provisional budget proposals for consultation on 23 December 2019, rather than the planned date of 4 December (bearing in mind the deadline of 11 March, which reduced the time available to the Council for budget setting). The proposed new timetable was set out at Appendix 1, of the submitted report, for approval.

OPTIONS

The alternative option was to proceed with budget setting during the Purdah period. That option was not recommended due to the political sensitivity of the budget setting process and the level of public consultation that would be involved.

ORDERED

That the proposed amendments to the timetable, for setting the Mayor's budget for 2020/21, be approved.

REASON

To enable the Council to comply with Purdah, while meeting its obligations to set a lawful budget for 2020/21 by 11 March 2020.

19/51 ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL'S FINAL REPORT - SOCIAL CARE SUPPORT FOR OLDER CARERS - SERVICE RESPONSE

The Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel had undertaken a review of Social Care Support for Older Carers. A copy of the full report was attached.

The scrutiny panel made seven recommendations upon which a response was sought from the relevant service area. The Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health and the Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration submitted a service response to the recommendations of the Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel. A copy of the Action Plan was attached.

The Chair of the Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel presented the final report to the Executive. The Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health presented the service response.

ORDERED

That the content of the Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel's Final Report, on Social Care Support for Older Carers, be noted.

That the Action Plan, developed in response to the scrutiny panel's recommendations, be approved.

REASON

It was a requirement that Executive formally considered the Scrutiny Panel's report and confirmed the Service Area's response to the Panel's accompanying plan.

The decision(s) will come into force after five working days following the day the decision(s) was published unless the decision becomes subject to the call in procedures.