

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was held on 6 January 2015.

PRESENT: Councillors N Walker (Chair); E Dryden, C Hobson, P Sharrocks, M Thompson, J A Walker and M B Williams

OFFICERS: C Breheny, G Brown, B Carr, L Henman and M Padfield

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor J G Cole, Councillor T Mawston, Councillor P Purvis, Councillor P Sanderson.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Name of Member	Type of Interest	Item/Nature of Interest
Councillor N Walker	Non-Pecuniary	Agenda Item 9 - Chair of West Middlesbrough Children's Advisory Group

1 **MINUTES - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - 9 DECEMBER 2014**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 9 December 2014 were taken as read and approved as a correct record.

The Chair referred to matters to be actioned in respect of previous minutes. It was confirmed that the position would be checked to ensure that all outstanding issues had been actioned.

Reference was made to the Local Government Association National Procurement Strategy. It was confirmed that a report in respect of the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was in the process of being drafted.

The Scrutiny Support Officer advised that a response to the query raised at the previous meeting with regard to finance in respect of the velodrome had been circulated to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

NOTED

2 **ATTENDANCE OF COUNCILLOR J SHARROCKS - EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE**

The Scrutiny Support Officer submitted a report which included the schedule previously agreed detailing proposed attendance by individual Members of the Executive to meetings of the Board. The process was part of the scrutiny arrangements of holding the Executive and Executive Members to account and for them to provide updates on their respective work, priorities and emerging issues and also to provide the opportunity for the Board to identify any issues of concern.

The Executive Member for Children's Social Care had been invited to attend the meeting but unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances, Members were informed that the Executive Member was unable to attend the meeting.

ORDERED that the Scrutiny Support Officer arrange for the Executive Member for Children's Social Care to attend a future meeting.

3 **2014/2015 REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN UPDATE - SECOND REVIEW REPORT**

The Executive Director - Commercial and Corporate Services submitted a report, the purpose of which was to present the second review of the estimated revenue outturn position for 2014/2015.

On 3 March 2014 the Council had set its revenue budget for 2014/2015 at £130.6 million and

a Council Tax increase of 1.82% had been approved. In setting the 2014/2015 budget, reductions of approximately £14.8 million had been identified and £1.8 million of demand mitigation for Wellbeing Care & Learning.

The Council had approved additional gross investment in key areas of £7 million (before any budget reductions) including the following:-

£3.400 million for care for children and young people;
£2.400 million for care for older people and vulnerable adults
£1.165 million for income shortfalls.

A net revenue saving of £1,737,200 was projected for 2014/15. This represented a 1.3% pressure against the 2014/15 revenue budget.

The report provided explanations for the major variations from budget for each service area and a full analysis was given in Appendices A and B of the submitted report.

Overall savings of (-£4,080,200) were forecast across the Council on key service area budgets. This was however offset by a predicted net pressure of (+£2,343,000) on budgeted savings targets resulting in a net projected saving of (-£1,737,200).

The savings generated in 2014/15 would be used to help mitigate future budget reduction requirements over the medium term.

Reference was made to the projected pressure of (+£244,000) as a result of legislative changes following on from the Cheshire West Supreme Court judgement regarding Deprivation of Liberty safeguards. Members requested further clarification in respect of this figure. The Board was advised that the Assistant Director of Social Care had produced a briefing paper in respect of this issue and a copy would be circulated to all Members of the Board.

Reference was made to the £1million estimated surplus of Public Health funding that was to be ring fenced and carried forward for future Public Health expenditure over the Medium Term. Members sought further clarification with regard to why the funding had not been utilised. The Board was advised that the Assistant Director Improving Public Health and Director of Public Health would be requested to provide a report in respect of this issue.

A Member sought clarification with regard to the total amount of the Troubled Families Grant. The Accounting Services Manager advised that he would email the figure to the Member concerned.

Reference was made to the predicted pressure of (+£1,008,000) in respect of the savings targets for Legal, Performance & Policy and Marketing and Communications. Clarification was sought in respect of the reasons for the predicted pressure.

ORDERED as follows:

1. That the information provided be noted.
2. That a copy of the briefing paper produced by the Assistant Director of Social Care in respect of the projected budget pressure of (+£244,000) as a result of legislative changes, following on from the Cheshire West Supreme Court judgement regarding Deprivation of Liberty safeguards, be circulated to all Members of the Board.
3. That the Assistant Director Improving Public Health and Director of Public Health be requested to provide a report in respect of the £1million estimated surplus of Public Health funding and the reasons for the surplus.
4. That the Accounting Services Manager provides the figure for the total amount of the Troubled Families Grant to the Member of the Board that requested the information.

5. That a breakdown of the reasons in respect of the predicted pressure of (+£1,008,000) with regard to the savings targets for Legal, Performance & Policy and Marketing and Communications be provided for Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

4 **INTERIM REPORT OF ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL - ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY MODEL - ENVIRONMENT, PROPERTY AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES**

In the absence of the Chair of the Environment Scrutiny Panel, the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board outlined the Environment Scrutiny Panel's interim views/concerns following a scrutiny investigation into the topic of the future service delivery model for Environment, Property and Commercial Services (EPCS).

The Board sought clarification with regard to the recommended option (Option 2) and whether the intention was to form a Joint Venture with another local authority. Reference was made to recommendation a) and it was requested that clarification be sought with regard to whether there was any reason why Executive Members could not be represented on the Assessment Panel.

The Board considered the recommendations of the Panel based on the evidence submitted to date and conclusions reached.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board suggested the following additional recommendation:

That irrespective of the alternative delivery model adopted by the Council for EPCS there be sufficient flexibility to respond to:

- The changing requirements of the Council;
- Political input by the appropriate Executive Member;
- Scope for scrutiny;
- The facility for responding to Member queries such as those currently provided by the Members One Stop Shop system.

ORDERED that subject to the inclusion of the additional recommendation as above, the findings and recommendations of the Environment Scrutiny Panel be endorsed and the Panel's interim report be referred to the Executive.

5 **FINAL REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL - MAINTENANCE OF OPEN SPACES**

In the absence of the Chair of the Environment Scrutiny Panel, the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board outlined the Environment Scrutiny Panel's findings, conclusions and recommendations following a scrutiny investigation into the topic of the Maintenance of Open Spaces.

The Board considered the recommendations of the Panel based on the evidence submitted and conclusions reached.

The Board suggested that recommendation g) be amended as follows:-

g) That a targeted enforcement campaign be undertaken at the recycling bring sites to send a clear message to perpetrators that **fly tipping** is not acceptable.

The Board also suggested that the information contained at paragraph 13 of the Final report in respect of details of the effect on annual service frequencies be circulated to all Members of the Council to assist Councillors with any queries regarding reduction in annual services.

ORDERED that subject to the amendment of recommendation g) as above, the findings and recommendations of the Environment Scrutiny Panel be endorsed and the Panel's report be referred to the Executive.

6 **FINAL REPORT OF SOCIAL CARE AND ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL - ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY - HOW NEW TECHNOLOGY CAN TRANSFORM CARE**

The Chair of the Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel outlined the Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel's findings, conclusions and recommendations following a scrutiny investigation into the topic of Assistive Technology - How New Technology Can Transform Care.

The Board considered the recommendations of the Panel based on the evidence submitted and conclusions reached.

ORDERED that the findings and recommendations of the Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel be endorsed and the Panel's report be referred to the Executive.

7 **FINAL REPORT OF THE CHILDREN AND LEARNING SCRUTINY PANEL - EARLY HELP - IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES**

The Chair of the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel outlined the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel's findings, conclusions and recommendations following a scrutiny investigation into the topic of Early Help - Improving Outcomes for Children, Young People and Families.

The Board considered the recommendations of the Panel based on the evidence submitted and conclusions reached.

The Board suggested the following amendments to the Panel's recommendations:

c) That the **excellent work and approach** taken by the Stronger Families Programme is commended and embedded within the service area, to ensure it is not wholly dependent upon fixed-term funding.

e) With commissioning responsibility of children's 0-5 public health services transferring to local authorities, that the Local Authority holds joint planning meetings with the health service to:

- **Fully reinstate and review** the process whereby children's centres receive earlier notification of all local pregnancies i.e. midwives completing a form with the mother, at the booking appointment, which gives the children's centre permission to contact the mother.
- Establish a breastfeeding initiative, like Blackpool's, to increase breastfeeding rates and promote the benefits to the baby - which go on into later life. The initiative should reach out to young mothers from disadvantaged areas, who are less likely to breastfeed.

f) That **all** children's centres develop an effective outreach strategy, including measureable targets and outcomes that reflect OFSTED's framework for inspection, to draw in isolated and 'hard to reach' families.

ORDERED that subject to the amendment of recommendations c), e) and f) as above, the findings and recommendations of the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel be endorsed and the Panel's report be referred to the Executive.

8 **SCRUTINY PROCESSES - UPDATE**

The Scrutiny Support Officer submitted a report to inform the Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) of actions being taken to strengthen and improve Middlesbrough Council's scrutiny process.

Following discussions involving the Chair of OSB, Corporate Management Team (CMT), Leadership Management Team (LMT) and Scrutiny Panel Chairs/Vice-Chairs, a number of measures included at a) - i) of the report had been suggested/introduced to assist in strengthening and improving Middlesbrough Council's scrutiny process.

In respect of recommendation a), the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board advised that it was at the discretion of individual Chairs of Scrutiny Panels whether they wished to take the opportunity of meeting with Assistant Directors prior to commencing an investigation into a new scrutiny topic. It was highlighted that the meeting could be beneficial to both parties in identifying suitable areas for possible investigation and would ensure that officers were aware of the Scrutiny Panel's requirements for each particular topic.

It was suggested that in respect of recommendation b) the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board be invited to attend ad hoc Chair's and Scrutiny Support Officer briefing meetings, held prior to or after a Scrutiny Panel meeting.

It was recommended that where an Executive report and a Scrutiny report relating to the same topic were considered at the Executive, that they be considered in conjunction with each other.

The requirement to provide executive summaries included at recommendation h), in the case of lengthy scrutiny final reports was highlighted.

A discussion ensued with regard to ensuring that Council partners and stakeholders were informed of Scrutiny Panel work programmes and received invitations to contribute to any topic of interest to a particular organisation. The Scrutiny Support Officer advised that work was ongoing with regard to developing and agreeing a process for consulting and engaging partners and stakeholders in the scrutiny process.

NOTED

9 **EXECUTIVE FEEDBACK**

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report with regard to the decisions of the Executive in relation to the Final reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Board's on Parking Enforcement on Private Land, the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel's Final report in respect of School Improvement and Support and the Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel's Final report in respect of Future Delivery Model for Sports and Leisure Services.

NOTED

10 **EXECUTIVE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report which identified the forthcoming issues to be considered by the Executive as outlined in Appendix A to the report.

The report provided the Overview and Scrutiny Board with the opportunity to consider whether any item contained within the Executive Forward Work Programme should be considered by the Board or referred to a Scrutiny Panel.

NOTED

11 **SCRUTINY PANELS PROGRESS REPORTS**

A report of the Chair of each Scrutiny Panel was submitted which outlined progress on the current activities of each Panel.

NOTED

12 **CALL-IN**

It was confirmed that no requests had been received to call-in a decision.