

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was held on 5 March 2019.

PRESENT: Councillors Sharrocks (Chair); Storey (Vice Chair); Councillors Coupe, Hellaoui, L Lewis, McGee and McGloin and J A Walker.

OFFICERS: S Bonner, A Humble, P Stephens.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Councillor E Dryden, Councillor T Higgins, Councillor M Saunders, Councillor T Mawston.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were declared at this point in the meeting.

1 MINUTES - OSB - 5 FEBRUARY 2019

The Chair of the Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel commented that, regarding Agenda Item 3, the term "School Holiday provision" should be changed to "School Holiday period" when discussing the extension of the Summer Holidays from six to seven weeks.

The above notwithstanding the Minutes were submitted and approved as a record.

2 BUDGET AND BALANCED SCORECARDS - POSITION AT QUARTER 3 2018/19

The Head of Strategy, Information and Governance and the Head of Financial Planning presented the Council's progress against its Strategic Plan at Quarter 3.

During the presentation the following points were made:

- At Q3 26 out of 30 priorities were on target
- 17 of the 28 key measures of success identified wereshowing improvement
- The performance issues identified in the Q3 were the same as identified at Q2 as they were quite long term issues. For example an increase in recorded crime which was reflective of national trends.
- Financially, at Q3 the Council was forecast to be overspent by £577, 000 or 0.52% which was small compared to the net budget. This was due to continued pressures in Children's Care. This was a slight decrease on Q2 forecasts.
- There was a substantial increase in overspend in Children's Services between Q2 and Q3 of 88%, or £939k. The over-spend stood at £2.8m.
- Overspending in Children's Care was a national issue with 133 out of 152 Councils spending more than they had planned to.
- Children's Services had appointed a new Director of Business, Performance and Change whose focus was to reduce such overspend and plan future financial activity in Children's Services. A plan to address overspending had been drafted was being considered.
- Adult Social Care overspend also increased between Q2 and Q3 from £57k to £295k, which was also a national trend.
- There had been several underspends in other parts of the Council that had helped to mitigate overspends. For example, between Q2 and Q3 Growth and Place had experienced an increased underspend from £70k to £236k. Similarly, underspend in Public Health from £336k to £408k with Finance Governance and Support underspend increasing to over £1 million.
- Underspending in other areas had helped to reduce the impact of overspending, however these were one-off savings and Children's and Adult Services overspending was continuing to rise.

A Member raised concern that under-spend in some services, particularly in Public Health could lead to a lack of service for the public. It was clarified that the underspend was due to

Public Protection savings not Public Health activities. While there were savings made in the Public Health these were savings made in-year.

A discussion took place relating to areas of over-spend in Children's Services and how this could be reduced. It was advised that specific plans to reduce current over-spend would be provided when the draft financial plan was agreed.

With regard to strategic risk, a substantial issue was Brexit, and how this could impact on Service Delivery. The Council was in regular dialogue with Government on a regional basis. A report was going to the next Council meeting that outlined the risks involved.

A discussion took place regarding the presentation of strategic risks in the report and it was agreed that a scale be added to the graphic.

A Member commented that a potential risk was the provision of local schools, and how with ongoing housing developments to the south of the Town this would affect the need for additional school places. It was suggested that the Director of Education be invited to update OSB on this matter.

A Member queried what evidence supported the 'smiling' faces in the report summary. It was confirmed the results and trajectories of each category in the report were underpinned by different data sets and that 'smiling faces' were shown if a category had shown improvement. It was agreed that the current report would be used as a 'spring board' so that OSB can seek further detailed information should it be needed.

ORDERED:-

1. That the Director of Business, Performance and Change be invited to the next meeting of OSB to discuss financial plans to reduce overspend in Children's Services.
2. That future reports will include a scale for risks.
3. That the Director of Education attend the next meeting of OSB to provide an update on additional school places.
4. For future updates to OSB, officer should be equipped with detailed data should Members require further information.

3 FINAL REPORT – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY PANEL – AIR POLLUTION

The Chair of the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel presented the Panel's Final Report in relation to its investigation of Air Pollution.

As part of the Chair's overview the following points were raised:

- Despite its reputation, the Town's air quality was good.
- Only one part of the Town suffered from poor air quality which was the A66/A19 corridor owing to heavy goods vehicle activity at key times of the day
- The Panel's work had helped to improve the perception of air quality in the Town
- The Town had two monitoring stations that measured air quality and there was a variety of tools to do this including air diffusion tubes
- The general air quality in the town was excellent and did not breach EU standards

A Member queried if there were any mitigating actions being taken to address the link between poor air quality and more deprived areas. It was clarified that while that link exists, this was not that prevalent in Middlesbrough as all residential areas had a good standard of air quality.

- Leicester City Council attended the panel to provide information

- The Council was looking to invest in Mobile air quality monitoring stations
- Representatives from the H21 project also provided information about hydrogen initiatives as Teesside acts as a hydrogen hub and could be a world leader.
- The TVCA had the power to introduce hydrogen powered buses as part of its bus franchising strategy

A Member queried what the current policy was regarding tree planting and replacement. It was confirmed that the Council had previously replaced trees that were cut down on a 1 to 1 basis. However this was no longer the case, although tree installation is built into Planning processes. It was also confirmed that there was additional funding available for community groups for tree installation from the Woodland Trust.

OSB complimented the panel and officers on the quality of the report.

The Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure recommended the following to the Executive:-

1. The Council revert back to replacing all trees on a '1 for 1' basis. The environmental impacts in terms of carbon footprint of planting one tree are massive and where trees have to be removed they should be replaced as a matter of course.
2. The Council should actively encourage local Community Groups, Elected Members and others to access the funding that is available through the Woodland Trust for trees for their local areas and facilitate planting of those trees across the town.
3. Middlesbrough Council's recently established Housing Delivery Vehicle (HDV) should seek to mitigate potential air pollution through design and development in all its projects, ensuring that electric charging points are included as standard in any new builds.
4. Linked to the Panel's 2017 report on Bus Services - Middlesbrough Council, through its seat on the TVCA - should lobby private bus companies to deliver hydrogen-powered buses in Tees Valley. Any future voluntary/enhanced partnership/franchising scheme should include provisions for hydrogen buses, with the Tees Valley applying for funding from the Government's Low Emission Bus Scheme (DfT/OLEV) for the purchase of low emission buses and associated infrastructure.
5. The Council should set as an aspiration that by 2023 at least half its vehicles will be powered by hydrogen. This aspiration should be set with a view to continuing joint-working with TVCA and supporting projects such as H21, to deliver research and development into hydrogen power and subsequent large-scale infrastructure investment. Where opportunities arise, the Council should promote making hydrogen a viable alternative fuel source as the move towards increased domestic and industrial use continues apace, recognising both the environmental and economic benefits of decarbonisation.
6. A survey is undertaken to ascertain the current use of electric/hybrid/hydrogen vehicles by Middlesbrough residents.
7. The Council should explore all available opportunities to promote car sharing schemes not only to its own employees but also the wider community and in collaboration with local businesses and other stakeholders.
8. In order to encourage the take-up of low emission vehicles in Middlesbrough, consideration is given to Council Tax reductions for people using electric or hydrogen vehicles.

ORDERED:- That the conclusions and recommendations, as set out above, of the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel in relation to Air Quality, be endorsed and referred to the Executive.

4 EXECUTIVE UPDATE

The Democratic Services Officer submitted a report advising Members of the matters considered by the Executive at its meeting on 22 February 2019, namely:-

- Revenue Budget, Council Tax, Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy 2019/20
- Strategic Plan 2019-22
- Centre Square Master Plan
- Air Quality in Middlesbrough
- Selective Landlord Licensing - Consultation Response (Newport)
- Pay Policy Statement 2019/20
- Strategic Plan 2018-22 Progress at Q3

ORDERED that the information provided be noted.

5 EXECUTIVE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Chief Executive 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.

A Member of the Board queried whether enquiries could be made as to how each of the Scrutiny Panels could establish a route for issues emerging from the Panels to feed into the Council's business imperatives.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board proposed that a meeting be arranged between all Scrutiny Panel Chairs and relevant officers to consider the issue.

ORDERED:- That the information provided be noted.

6 SCRUTINY PANEL PROGRESS REPORTS

The Chair of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel advised that the panel last met in January to hear an overview of how the Voluntary and Community Sector, or VCS, operated in Middlesbrough and about its links with the Council by the Director of Culture and Communities and the Chief Executive of the MVDA.

The Panel found the information provided informative and was encouraged by the work that was clearly evident. Based on this information, the Panel decided to undertake an assurance review of the work carried out by the Council and VCS.

The Panel was hoping to consider a draft report at its meeting in February and a final draft at

its March meeting. Due to staffing issues in Democratic Services this has, regrettably, not been possible.

Instead, the Panel would consider the findings, conclusions and recommendations at its meeting in April.

The Chair of the Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel advised that the panel was continuing to work on its investigation into Social Care support for older carers and had received input from Aging Better Middlesbrough and Age UK and its next meeting would look at some of the projects being undertaken.

The Chair of the Children's and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel advised OSB that the panel was continuing its investigation into Mental Health in young people. As part of that the panel had heard from CAHMS, Headstart and County Psychological Service and to get an alternative perspective between seven and nine representatives from educational establishments in the Town would provide their views on what opportunities were available for Children and Young People.

The Chair of OSB advised that the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel's topic of how consultation was carried out by the Council had been parked and placed on the Panel's Forward Work Programme for consideration in the 2019/20 municipal year.

The Chair of the Adult Social Care and Services scrutiny panel provided an update on the work of Health Scrutiny and advised that a report had been submitted to the Panel regarding Brexit and the impact this would have from a pharmaceutical perspective and drug availability, specifically the implications of cost. It was agreed that further work would need to be undertaken in this regard. The panel also received further information about breast radiology services and how James Cook Hospital had not had such services for three years and that a letter to the Secretary of State was being considered. There was also an update from Tees Esk and Wear Valley customer satisfaction survey.

ORDERED:- That the information provided to the Board be noted.

7 **ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.**

A Member raised the issue that actions from a Scrutiny Report concerning Kinship Carers may not have been carried out by the Service Area.

ORDERED:- That the Director of Children's Care be invited to the next meeting of OSB to provide an update.