

## Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday, 18 July 2018 in the Ernest Saville Room - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 5.30 pm  
Concluded 7.55 pm

### Present – Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
Cooke Hargreaves M Smith	Azam Duffy Bacon Thirkhill K Hussain Watson	Sunderland

### Councillor Azam in the Chair

#### 1. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

In the interest of transparency Members disclosed the following interests:

- (i) In relation to the item on Commissioning of Specialist Services (Minute 8), Councillor Duffy disclosed that she had involvement with learning disabilities.
- (ii) In relation to the Finance reports (Minutes 6 & 7), Councillor Kamran Hussain disclosed that a family member was employed as an accountant in a school. Together with the Chair he also stated that he was a private sector landlord.
- (iii) Also in relation to the Finance reports, Councillor Sunderland disclosed that her aunt was in receipt of residential care services.

**ACTION:** *Interim City Solicitor*

## 2. MINUTES

### Resolved –

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2018 be signed as a correct record.**

## 3. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

## 4. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no referrals made to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## 5. 2017-18 ANNUAL FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Interim Strategic Director for Corporate Resources submitted a report (**Document “A”**) which provided members with an insight into the Council’s overall finance and performance position at the end of the 2017-18 financial year.

The report was also considered by the Executive at its meeting on 10 July 2018.

In relation to Performance, the Head of Policy and Performance summarised the Council’s overall performance over the last 12 months, the Council and the wider district had had a number of successes which had been validated by external sources and partners. It was noted that performance against the Council Plan indicators was good, with most of the targets being met, notable successes were alluded to including the Care Quality Commission praising both the NHS and the Council for its strong and mature partnership working; the district being the fourth most improved area on education attainment; the district was also rated as the best place to start a business in the UK by Barclays as well as the Council being rated as one of the top 10 most productive Councils in England.

In relation to the financial performance, the headline financial result showed that the Council underspent the £375.2m approved net budget by £0.3 million in line with previous forecasts. Despite the overall underspend, there were a number of significant departmental budget variances, particularly in the area of Adults and Children’s Services.

During the discussion Members asked a number of questions, the questions together with the responses are detailed below:

In relation to a question on what was being done to address the low number of staff performance appraisals being undertaken, it was stated that current figures showed that only 15% of appraisals were recorded on the system. In order to improve this situation, Human Resources had recently introduced a new Performance Management System, which will be mandatory and therefore this low uptake should be addressed as the programme is rolled out.

In relation to a question regarding the parameters of the £500k housing allocations, it was explained that this amount would go towards unlocking housing sites and work with developers to bring developments into fruition and stop the practice of land banking.

In relation to road accidents, a Member stated that it was important to track this further via the Area Committee framework. A Member added that dangerous driving and the running of red lights was a particular issue in parts of the district. However Members acknowledged the success of 'Operation Steerside' in addressing dangerous driving.

A Member commented that the number of empty homes in the district was still very high and landlords should be compelled to rectify their properties.

In relation to the impact of fly tipping and the costs associated with dealing with the problem, the Assistant Director Sport and Leisure agreed to provide Members with the costs involved outside of this meeting.

In relation to a question on the take up of 2 year old nursery places, it was explained by the Strategic Director Children's Services that although in some wards the take up was extremely good and the overall average across the district was good, there were some huge disparities, and Members would be provided with a breakdown by ward, together with information around stakeholder involvement.

A Member raised an issue regards the number of permanent exclusions and the anecdotal evidence that some of this cohort were being advised to home school their children, and that she was concerned that this might not be in the best interest of the child. In response the Strategic Director stated that nationally there had been a rise in the number of exclusions as well as a rise in elective home schooling, and although he saw the positives in home schooling, this was not always the best option in some cases, particular in the context of poor attendance and vulnerable learners, and therefore a discussion had to take place on the issue.

A Member acknowledged the progress that had been made in Bradford in terms of educational attainment levels across the primary and secondary school sector and that this was admirable in what was a very challenging environment.

A Member questioned the impact on morale and the ability to deliver services following the budget reductions in SEND and Early Help. In response the Strategic Director Children's Services stated that on both these transformational programmes the Service was on track to deliver the savings, and although the morale of staff was always a big issue, he was confident that a more focussed

service, around locality working would pay dividend.

A Member stated that although she acknowledged the effort of the street cleansing teams, she had observed a notable difference in street cleansing in the Keighley West area and this had to be addressed.

In relation to health targets and health inequalities, a Member stated that the KPIs set out in the report did not adequately address the issues and that he would go as far to suggest that they were the wrong targets. In response the Strategic Director Health and Wellbeing stated that she acknowledged that there were a whole raft of indicators you could look at in the health sphere, however there were correlations such as that between health and wealth, ward inequalities and the increasing number of people living longer in poor health that needed to be measured. However the correlation between obesity and developing a number of health conditions could not be ignored. Members also suggested that a detailed analysis should be carried within GP practices in order to gauge and map out health inequalities across the district.

In relation to the overspend in Adults, the Strategic Director stressed that a shift from residential care to providing care within the home was paying dividend and this was not just about rationing hours, but about providing better quality services within a different delivery model.

In response to a question relating to a 10% increase in the cost of running the markets, it was explained that this was primarily as a result of a drop in the number of units being rented and the corresponding loss in business rates.

A Member raised the issue of the significant increase in the number of reported crimes, and the Head of Policy and Performance stated that he would let Members have figures on recent crime trends in the district. In addition it was suggested that crime data divisible by Ward would be useful to analyse, and that that the Police Commander attends a future meeting to address Members questions on the issue.

#### **Resolved –**

- (1) That officers be thanked for submitting a detailed report and that Members be provided with an update on performance appraisals undertaken between June and August 2018 as well as a breakdown on the take up of 2 year old nursery places by ward.**
- (2) That this Committee requests that more detailed information regarding the parameters of the £500k housing allocations be considered by the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

***ACTION: Head of Policy and Performance / Overview and Scrutiny Lead***

## 6. QTR. 1 FINANCE POSITION STATEMENT FOR 2018-19

The Assistant Director of Finance and Procurement submitted a report (**Document “B”**) which provided Members with an overview of the forecast financial position of the Council for 2018-19.

It examined the latest spend against revenue and capital budgets and forecasted the financial position at the year end. It stated the Council's current balances and reserves and forecasted school balances for the year.

The report was also considered by the Executive at its meeting on 10 July 2018.

The Business Advisor Management Accounting gave an overview of the main financial messages contained in the report. Based on the 31 May projection, the Council was forecasting to spend £5.8m above the approved budget of £358.1m. The projected overspends related to the continued pressures within Adults and Children's Services, as well in the Department of Place.

In relation to a question on the overspend, it was pointed out that Strategic Directors were taking the necessary action to address the overspend, such as looking at the use of agency staff and consultants. In addition there was also a monthly exceptions reporting to CMT.

In response to a question on Member input into the overspend, it was explained that the Leader was keen on having a Member challenge group looking at the budget process in September.

In relation to the overspend in Waste Management, it was suggested that the Regeneration and Environment O&S Committee should consider the issue in more detail and how the overspend could be addressed.

### **Resolved –**

- (1) That the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewed and commented on the Qtr 1 Finance Position Statement for 2018-19, and that officers be thanked for submitting a detailed report.**
- (2) That this Committee requests that the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the approaches being used to address the overspend on the area of Waste Management.**

***ACTION: Strategic Director Place / Overview and Scrutiny Lead***

**7. COMMISSIONING OF SPECIALIST SERVICES FOR DOMESTIC AND/OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND THOSE WITH MULTIPLE NEEDS AT RISK OF /OR WORKING IN PROSTITUTION**

The Strategic Director Health and Wellbeing submitted a report (**Document “C”**) which provided information to advise members of the forthcoming procurement of a contract with a value of in excess of £2million.

Bradford Council and the combined Clinical Commissioning Groups provides funding for a range of specialist services to support people who are or who have experienced domestic and/or sexual violence, or who may have multiple needs and be working in /or at risk of working in the sex industry.

These contracts were due to expire on the 31st March 2019 and it was important that a re commissioning programme, leading to a formal procurement process, is run to identify and purchase these services for the future. Officers had already started to review and evaluate existing services and other models of service delivery; working with providers, service users and stakeholders to understand need better.

In response to a question on how the commissioning process worked and responsibilities around it, it was explained that the Joint Commission Team comprised of a number of partners, including representatives from the Health, Police and the Local Authority as well as staff within Children’s Services and representatives from the CCGs, however the contract ultimately resided with the Local Authority .

In relation to a question on refuges and the involvement of Mannigham Housing, it was explained that further discussions will be had with the Association on how this facility can be kept open.

A Member ascertained what the outcomes were in relation to the contract, and it was explained that at this stage of the process the outcomes referred to were high level outcomes and that these will then be broken down into more tangible outcomes, following discussions through the contract specification phase.

In relation to a question on the experience of service users and there main concerns, it was explained that by far the biggest issue for service users exiting the service was around housing options.

A Member commended the work being done by the different agencies in supporting the most vulnerable in our society.

**Resolved –**

**That the Committee recognises the breadth, importance and complexity of the work undertaken by providers in relation to the above services and supports the continuation of these via the new commissioning programme.**

***ACTION: No Action***

**8. CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19**

The Chair of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee submitted a report (**Document “D”**) which included proposed items for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee DRAFT work programme for 2018/19. The Committee was asked to consider which items it wished to include in the work programme.

The Chair stated that if Members had any further suggestions for the work programme that they contact the Overview and Scrutiny Lead.

**Resolved –**

- (1) That the work plan for the committee be approved.**
- (2) That the work programme 2018-19 continues to be reviewed regularly during the remainder of this Municipal Year.**

***ACTION: Overview and Scrutiny Lead***

Chair

**Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**