

## Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 23 July 2020 at 4.00 pm in Virtual Remote Meeting

Commenced 4.00pm  
Concluded 7.00 pm

### Present – Councillors

| LABOUR                                                         | CONSERVATIVE    | LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND INDEPENDENT GROUP |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------|
| D Green<br>Kamran Hussain<br>Watson<br>Tait<br>Shafiq<br>Salam | Riaz<br>Pollard | Griffiths                              |

### Councillor Tait in the Chair

Apologies: Cllrs Azam (Chair), Bibby.

#### 82. ALTERNATE MEMBERS (Standing Order 34)

#### 83. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

#### 84. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted to review decisions to restrict documents.

#### 85. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no referrals to the Committee.

#### 86. CALLED-IN DECISION - QTR. 1 FINANCE POSITION STATEMENT FOR 2020-21 (EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT "BT")

This call-in concerned the decisions in relation to the contract with Impower, as contained in the Quarter 1 Finance Position statement.

The reason for the request of the call-in was that this is a commitment to a significant expenditure on a consultancy, but that there is no indication of what this consultancy has achieved so far, what the proposed work will be in the future.

There was also no indication of the savings to be realised by the consultancy and therefore no indication of whether this is a good use of the councils finances.

The decision of the Executive was that the continuation of the contract with Impower be approved and to support the delivery of transformation, using the £1m investment which was approved as part of the 2020-21 Council budget.

Members questioned as to when the contract was originally let, whether the focus was on Health and Well Being, or more wider.

In response, officers indicated that in 2018, the focus of the contract was primarily on Health and Well Being. However the contract was later extended to other areas such as supporting the Council to identify future transformation projects.

Members questioned what the added value was of the Impower contract, how much longer Impower would be required for and whether Bradford Council could have not achieved these outcomes without the consultancy. As well as this, members were keen to understand how long the Council would be requiring the use of this consultancy.

Officers replied that with savings rounds, Impower provided challenge and critical oversight over the spend within teams and that Impower brought with the confidence and experience of working with other authorities and organisations.

Members of the Committee questioned that as the contract was published in February 2020, why five months later were the milestones being agreed and what had been proposed.

In response, officers highlighted that there had been a number of contract extensions in February 2020 and at various stages key performance targets had been put in place, to ensure that the contract was delivering. The contract is a three month rolling contract.

Members also expressed their concerns, in relation to the lack of milestones relating to the contract and not knowing what the milestones actually are, along with having a clear understanding on what the money was being spent on.

Furthermore, members indicated that with the various contract extensions, the value of this contract had gone above £2m, therefore this should have been considered by the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee much earlier than this.

Officers responded that they were trying to be transparent through this process, savings needed to be made across key Council service areas and officers would have been on track had it not have been for the COVID19 pandemic.

In addition, Officers stated that this was not an extension to the existing contract, but a new contract and that the Council is able to re-structure a contract to deliver the outcomes it wants. There was not a procurement exercise as such, which was why there was no report presented to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Members were unanimous in agreeing that they wanted to consider further the key outcomes from the work undertaken through the Impower Contract.

**Resolved –**

- (1) The Committee releases the decision for implementation.**
- (2) This Committee requests that a further report be presented to in three months which specifically focuses on the key outcomes delivered from the Impower Contract.**
- (3) This Committee requests that the Children’s Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee considers aspects of the Impower Contract that relate specifically to Children’s Services.**
- (4) This Committee requests that the Health & Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee considers aspects of the Impower Contract that relate specifically to Health and Well Being.**

*ACTION: Director of Finance*

**87. FULL-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Officers went through the report and provided members of the Committee with a summary of progress against Bradford Council’s key performance Indicators, for the municipal year 2019-20. Officers also highlighted the summary of achievements during 2016-20.

Furthermore, officers also stated that Bradford Council and its partners were in the process of developing a new plan for the next five years.

In addition, members also heard that the performance report covered a period where Local Government had faced unprecedented challenges as a result of COVID19, changing the way in which Bradford Council has had to operate.

Members were keen to understand what the plans for the economy were, as a result of COVID19.

In response, officer indicated that an Economic Recovery Plan was in development and that Bradford Council would be looking to support business further in the different business sectors, especially as business moved out of furlough.

Members also commented on the fact that the COVID19 pandemic, had not had any adverse impact on the levels of sickness absence across Bradford Council.

**Resolved –**

- (1) That officers engage with Corporate Overview & Scrutiny as part of the development of the new Council Plan and potential set of new Key Performance indicators.**

**(2) The Committee requests that the COVID19 Economic Recovery Plan be presented to the Regeneration & Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee.**

*ACTION: (1) Head of Policy and Performance (2) Strategic Director Place*

**88. FINANCE POSITION STATEMENT FOR 2019-20**

Bradford Council officers provided members with an overview of forecast financial position of the Council 2020-21. Officers also highlighted the latest spend against revenue and capital budgets and forecasts the financial position at the year end. Also included, was the Council's balances and reserves and forecasts school balances for the year.

In relation to Bradford Council's approach to Brexit and Brexit resilience, members were in agreement that it would be useful if a more detailed report could be presented to the Committee, in relation to its ongoing work relating to Brexit preparations.

Members questioned whether the £1.4m underspend on Public Health services, could actually be utilised for work relating to the COVID19 pandemic.

In response to this, Bradford Council officers indicated that they could use the underspend in Public Health Services for work relating to the COVID19 pandemic and this was part of the work relating to transitional services.

There was also some discussion amongst Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee members, in relation to the £27K infrastructure charging points and the £50k from the Local Transport Plan for the Taxi Scheme. Members were seeking further clarity on these. Bradford Council officers stated that they would provide this information to members of the Committee.

**Resolved –**

**Members considered and commented on the Finance Position Statement for 2019-20.**

*ACTION: Director of Finance*

**89. QTR. 1 FINANCE POSITION STATEMENT FOR 2020-21**

This report is the first monitoring report presented to members on the Council's 2020-21 financial position. Officers informed members of the revenue and capital financial position of the Council at the 31 March 2020.

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**Resolved –**

**The Committee requests that a detailed risk assessment report relating to Brexit, focusing on the Council's Plans and extent of any risk to be presented to Corporate Overview & Scrutiny at an early meeting.**

*ACTION: Head of Policy and Performance*

**90. CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21**

Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee members discussed the work programme and agreed that the ongoing detailed scrutiny reviews being undertaken by the Committee, needed to be concluded.

**Resolved –**

**Members considered the work programme.**

(Mustansir Butt – 01274 432574)

Chair

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

THIS AGENDA AND ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER