

Service and Resource Planning 2015/16 – 2017/18 Summary of Comments from Performance Scrutiny to Cabinet

At its meeting on 18 December 2014 the Performance Scrutiny Committee considered a report that formed part of a series relating to the Service and Resource Planning process for 2014/15 to 2017/18.

The Committee considered in turn the Directorate Business Strategies and savings proposed for the service areas as well as the service and community impact assessments (SCIAs). They also took into consideration councillor comments from briefing sessions and the cabinet meeting held on 16 December 2014. The Director and relevant cabinet member for each Directorate were available to respond to questions.

The Performance Scrutiny Committee held a further meeting on 8 January 2015 where they considered a further report relating to the Service and Resource Planning process for 2014/15 to 2017/18. The Committee considered in turn the capital programme, the Treasury Management Strategy, the revised Corporate Plan 2015/16 – 20/17-18, and the proposed Corporate Performance Indicators for 2015/16.

The comments below are presented to Cabinet in order that they can take the comments into consideration in proposing their budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

Adult Social Care

- The committee discussed in depth the potential impact and related increase in cost of paying social care providers at a level that allowed them to pay care workers the living wage. The committee invite Cabinet to keep this issue under review throughout the budget decision making process.

Economy & Environment

- The committee were exercised about the need to maintain the quality of Council services that are delivered through contracts, particularly where there is a need to make savings. They noted that it is important to ensure quality services are provided and not just to drive out value.

Children, Education & Families

- The committee drew attention to the importance of ensuring that the reshaping of early help services is effective, not just in delivering savings but also in ensuring quality services for families and children.
- The committee also noted the interdependency between the reshaping of early help services and the need for wider change to the shape and structure of services across the whole Children, Education and Families directorate.

Chief Executive's Office

- The committee noted an opportunity for the library service to develop in a way that supports a broader move to digital access of our services and would like consideration of savings proposals in relation to libraries to recognise this.

OFRS & Community Safety

- The committee wished to note the important role that the fire service play in maintaining community safety and were keen to ensure that any savings proposals did not undermine this priority.

Corporate Plan

- The committee wanted to ensure that the principles of public scrutiny and public accountability were reflected more clearly within the corporate plan.
- The committee also made suggestions including: making our values more prominent in the plan; establishing public performance values as well as commercial values; acknowledging the potential negative impact of economic development; removing references to the 'golden thread' and rethinking the use of the terms 'safety net' and 'thriving'.

Corporate Performance Indicators

- The committee would like Cabinet to note the importance of having realistic and manageable indicators that create transparency around the Council's performance, in support of our need to remain accountable to the public.
- Furthermore the committee asked directorates to review the level of challenge within targets in the following areas: timeliness of child protection reviews, delayed transfers of care, missing children, numbers of apprenticeships and community information networks.

Capital Proposals and Treasury Management Strategy

- The committee noted the treasury management strategy and capital proposals. They invite Cabinet to consider taking any necessary steps ensure that the capital receipts from property disposal are maximised by considering future property value.

Overall Statement

- The committee drew attention to the need to maximise income generation opportunities across all directorates, by ensuring that fees and charges have been properly reviewed and increased where appropriate.
- The committee wished to be directly involved in the scrutiny of contract performance, to ensure that effective public scrutiny was taking place.

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Performance Scrutiny Committee Chairman

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