

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY

13 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr C Ladkin - Chairman
Cllr P Williams – Vice-Chairman
Cllr JMT Collett, Cllr SM Gibbens, Cllr K Morrell, Cllr LJ Mullaney and Cllr R Webber-Jones

Officers in attendance: Rebecca Owen and Ashley Wilson

138 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Sheppard-Bools.

139 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was moved by Councillor Webber-Jones, seconded by Councillor Collett and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March be confirmed as a correct record.

140 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

141 BUSINESS RATES & POOLING UPDATE QUARTER 4 2020/21

Members were updated on the 2020/21 position in relation to business rates and pooling. The report was noted.

142 SUNDRY DEBTS QUARTER 4 2020/21 AND QUARTER 1 2021/22

Members were updated on the position at the end of 2020/21 in relation to sundry debts. It was noted that the pandemic had had an impact on collection, particularly from commercial tenants. It was reported that some debtors had agreed payment plans or had requested rent reductions or payment holidays.

Concern was expressed about recovering the backlog of debt over time and the amount of debt over the 90 day target and it was questions whether it was difficult to assess whether it was under control. In response, it was suggested that an analysis of debts over 90 days and over 120 days be separated out in a future report.

Both reports were noted.

143 TREASURY MANAGEMENT QUARTER 1 2021/22

Consideration was given to the treasury management activity in quarter 1 of 2021/22. The report was noted.

144 PERFORMANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK END OF YEAR SUMMARY FOR 2020/21

Members were presented with the end of year 2020/21 position in relation to performance indicators, service improvement plans, corporate risks and service area risks. It was reported that, as a result of the pandemic, many indicators were lower than they otherwise would have been, however an appendix had been included which showed all of the additional work undertaken. During discussion, the following was raised:

- The delayed government spending review which had prevented certainty in the MTFS
- The national debt which may have implications for local authorities
- The reasons for targets not having been lowered if they can't currently be met and it was questioned how useful the targets were to monitor performance during the pandemic when so much other valuable work had been undertaken.

A member asked whether targets were likely to be met this year now restrictions had been lifted. In response it was felt that it wouldn't be an automatic improvement due to the backlog. It was suggested that it would be useful to see which targets were being missed prior to the pandemic so trends could be considered.

A member queried why the local plan was no longer listed as a high risk on the risk register in case the implementation date wasn't met. It was agreed that this would be reported back to the relevant manager.

The report was noted.

145 FINANCE & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the work programme for 2021/22 and beyond.

It was requested that a report on the performance management targets be brought to the December meeting to consider whether there was a better way to monitor performance or to acknowledge when performance was improving towards meeting the target and to prioritise improvement against those indicators that had most impact on residents.

It was questioned whether Finance & Performance Scrutiny might be the most appropriate body to monitor the Crescent development and it was agreed that this would be raised with the chair and vice-chairs of the overview & scrutiny function for consideration.

A discussion on the MTFS in light of the forthcoming spending review was requested and this was agreed for the December meeting.

It was also queried whether it would be appropriate for this committee to deal with climate change and to scrutinise progress of the Climate Change Working Group. This was suggested for the March meeting.

In relation to the work programme as drafted, it was agreed that the frontline service reviews would be re-programmed so there was only one at each meeting, starting with the review for the Planning service area in November, the Environmental Health review in December and Housing in March. Members also agreed that they wished to cover all of the areas listed for Environmental Health (alcohol, taxi and gambling licensing; tattooists and body piercing; and scrap metal dealers) in a single report.

It was requested that an update on the local plan be brought as part of the frontline service review for Planning.

(The Meeting closed at 7.24 pm)

CHAIRMAN