

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**15 NOVEMBER 2017**

### **PRESENT**

Councillor M. Young (in the Chair).

Councillors M. Cordingley (Vice-Chairman), R. Bowker, C. Boyes, K. Carter, Mrs. P. Dixon, J. Holden, M. Hyman, A. Mitchell, D. Western and A.M. Whyte

#### Also Present

Cllr S. B. Anstee - Leader of the Council

Cllr Mr J. Reilly - Executive Members for Highways, Parks & Environmental Services

#### In attendance

S. Pearson - Corporate Director, Economic Growth, Environment and Infrastructure

N. Bishop - Chief Finance Officer

P. Helsby - Interim Director One Trafford Partnership

P. Forrester - Head of Governance

H. Ashcroft - Senior Environmental Services Officer

C. Gaffey - Democratic & Scrutiny Officer

### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J. Harding and S. Khan.

## **22. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2017, be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interests were made by Members.

## **24. 2018/19 BUDGET PRESENTATION**

The Committee received a presentation of the Leader of the Council providing an update on the 2018/19 Budget Proposals. It was noted that the budget shortfall for 2018/19 stood at circa £5.5m, which would be met primarily through income generation, including business rates retention and additional income from the Council's new Investment Strategy.

The Council were in discussion with AGMA regarding the business rates retention scheme to ensure this reflected the high level of business rates generated by Trafford. The Executive would confirm the outcome of these discussions at the Budget Scrutiny Working Group Sessions at the beginning of December following AGMA's decision at their meeting at the end of November. The Working Group Sessions would also include information following the national budget announcement due later in November, as well as information on risk assessments made against the Council's proposals.

The Leader advised that no significant changes to services were being proposed, and that these budget proposals would look and feel different to ones proposed in the past.

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Front line services such as school crossing patrols and libraries would not be affected, and many of the efficiencies were a continuation of proposals made as part of previous budgets. As was the case in 2017/18, Council Tax would be increased by the allowed 1.99% for 2018/19, and the Social Care Precept would also be adopted.

The Committee questioned the robustness of the proposals and raised concerns that the current budget shortfall could not be filled by investment income alone. In response to the Chairman's question on the risk of not achieving the proposed income targets, the Leader confirmed that many of the income projections on page 5 of the supplementary agenda were relatively low risk, as they had either already been agreed or had little scope for change. It was also noted that a substantial majority of the savings proposals were already being delivered.

The Committee discussed the potential effect of interest rate rises and inflation on the budget projections. It was advised that much of the investments made by the Council had a fixed rate of return, so the projections shouldn't be affected by a change in interest rates. It was also noted that inflation and other external factors, as well as the lead time for returns on investment, were always considered with any new investments. It was noted that the acquisition of a property in Warrington was now complete.

Scrutiny Members were keen to receive information in relation to risk assessments and how services might be affected by the proposals. The Committee looked forward to a full update at the Budget Scrutiny Working Group sessions at the beginning of December.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

**25. ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN 2017/18 - Q1 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources providing a summary of performance against the Council's Annual Delivery Plan (ADP), 2017/18. The report covered the period 1st April to 30th June 2017, and was presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

Members asked that the meeting schedule be re-evaluated to ensure that the ADP Reports brought to the Committee were relevant. The current report's information was outdated, with the Quarter 2 ADP Report expected to be published the day following the meeting.

Members discussed the continued missed targets in relation to Delayed Transfers of Care and sickness absence. It was noted that Delayed Transfers of Care was a national issue, and it would be useful to receive a national comparison in relation to some indicators. Members were asked to identify the indicators for which they would like a national comparison for their inclusion in future ADP reports.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**26. REPORT ON COMPLAINTS DETERMINED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN 2016/17**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Member for Corporate Resources setting out the background of the statutory duty to report to Members on adverse outcomes of complaints formally investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman. The report provided Members with a summary of complaints determined in 2016/17.

The Chairman requested that the next annual report come with comparative figures for previous years.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**27. MANAGEMENT OF THE NEW GREEN WASTE FEE AND SYSTEM - UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Member for Highways, Parks and Environmental Services providing an update on the overall implementation and management of the Green Waste Fee scheme, which commenced on 1 June 2017.

The Executive Member for Highways, Parks and Environmental Services confirmed that the success of the roll out of the scheme had exceeded expectation, with a much larger uptake than originally expected. The larger than expected uptake had initially caused some issues with the scheme's implementation, including delays in providing subscription packs to residents; however these issues had been addressed in readiness for the 2018/19 roll out. A new permit plan was in place, and a new company had been approached to deliver the roll out which would allow for information of new subscribers to be uploaded daily, with packs sent out via a Royal Mail tracked service.

The Executive Member for Highways, Parks and Environmental Services advised that he had not seen an increase in fly tipping since the scheme's introduction. Members discussed possible alternatives to the use of bin stickers, as well as the process for reporting contaminated waste to Amey. It was noted that there had not been an increase in complaints of people burning waste.

The Committee discussed the subscription projections for next year, as well as the potential for increasing this over time. In the context of budget assumptions it was noted that a cautious approach had been taken to ensure they were not overestimating. It was suggested that a multi-year permit could be offered to residents in an attempt to reduce administration costs, and the service agreed to explore this.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**28. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18**

The Committee received a report of the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee detailing the Scrutiny Committee's work programme for the remainder of the 2017/18 municipal year.

The Committee discussed the upcoming Budget Scrutiny arrangements. Members agreed that the sessions on 5 and 7 of December would be split, with one session

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focusing on the general budget, while the other focused more on the Children, Families and Wellbeing Directorate. All Scrutiny and Health Scrutiny Members would be invited to attend both sessions.

It was agreed that the Task & Finish Group review into SLAs offered to schools would be deferred and reconsidered as part of the 2018/19 work programme.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and finished at 7.35 pm