

## **OVERVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY FORUM**

**Tuesday, 13th November, 2018**

Present:-

Councillor Sarvent (Chair)

<p>Councillors J Barr Callan Caulfield L Collins</p>	<p>Councillors Dyke Falconer Flood P Innes</p>
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Councillor Tricia Gilby, Leader of the Council +++  
Kevin Hanlon, Director of Finance and Resources ++  
Charlotte Kearsey, Democratic and Scrutiny Officer  
Donna Reddish, Assistant Director – Policy and Communication +

+ Attended for Minute No. 26  
++ Attended for Minute No. 27  
+++ Attended for Minute No. 26, 27 and 29

### 24 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS INTERESTS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

No declarations of interest were received.

### 25 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Borrell and Perkins.

### 26 **DEPUTY LEADER - COUNCIL PLAN AND CORPORATE PERFORMANCE PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Leader and Assistant Director – Policy and Communications attended to provide a progress report on the Council Plan for Year 4, 2018/19.

The Assistant Director advised that of the 32 key activities for 2018/19 four had been completed and a further 22 remained on target. This was a significant improvement from the quarter 1 position. The Corporate

Management Team had re-prioritised and challenged performance to bring the majority of activities back on track.

The Committee was advised that 91% of priorities for a thriving borough remained on target compared to 73% in quarter 1. Furthermore, 71% of priorities for improving quality of life and 73% of targets for value for money remained on target.

Due to the financial challenges facing local authorities there had been significant focus on the value for money strand of the Council Plan and day to day financial management.

There were five activities which were rated amber and one rated as red. It was explained that these were of significant size and complexity, such as, the Staveley and Rother Valley Corridor which involved a number of key stakeholders and a complex mix of activities required to start delivery. Officers would continue to work and negotiate with partners to bring this site, and others, forward.

Despite challenging circumstances, performance had been improved or maintained on several key economic indicators and customer focused activity, these included:

- 100% of local labour clauses had been maintained but the percentage of jobs secured for local people had increased from 42% to 72%;
- There had been a reduction in the number of young people not in education, employment or training;
- Town Centre occupancy and market stall occupancy remained on track;
- The number of complaints in key service areas had reduced but customer contact times via the call centre had been maintained;
- Chesterfield Borough Council's social media presence had continued to grow.

An area of concern was the reduction in performance across the planning application process. Investigation indicated that increased demand and capacity issues had impacted on service delivery. The Assistant Director

– Economic Growth would be preparing a response to these challenges. Members supported a resolution to the issues within the Planning Service.

In reference to the multi-agency alcohol health improvement activity, Members noted some concerns about identifying those in need because many people drink at home so it was important not to only rely on the Licensing Team.

Members were pleased to see that the activity to produce a Health and Wellbeing Strategy was rated amber in light of the challenging financial environment. The Assistant Director noted that delivery of the strategy would be complex due to the partnership working required.

The Chair thanked the Leader and Assistant Director for providing the update and answering their questions.

#### **RESOLVED –**

That an update be brought to the first meeting of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum in 2019/20.

#### **27 DEPUTY LEADER - BUDGET MONITORING AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL FORECAST**

The Leader and Director of Finance and Resources attended to provide an overview of the budget over the first half of 2018/19 and updated Members on the budget forecast for the end of 2018/19 and predictions for 2019/20.

The Council was on target to balance the budget for 2018/19 however, significant challenges for 2019/20 and beyond remained.

Details of the savings versus cost pressures for the current and previous two budgets were provided. Chesterfield Borough Council staff had been working hard to find savings but despite saving as much as possible the income had not matched the pressures. It was explained that the challenges would only increase in the coming years.

The financial challenges were explained and included:-

- Business rate income uncertainty due to appeals;

- Declining Pavements and Vicar lane income;
- Fair Funding;
- Economy risks;
- Growth requests across services;
- Capital project budget pressures.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget 2018/19 was balanced in the long term.

The HRA capital spend for the 2018/19 budget was £20 million. There had been £3.8 million brought forward from future year's to fund external wall insulation and new build schemes and it was estimated that there would be an underspend of around £1.5 million on the current year's schemes. The net impact of these changes would be an increase of capital expenditure of £2.3 million in 2018/19.

The Council's reserves were reviewed and restructured in 2017/18. The current reserve balances were explained to the committee.

Members noted that there had been success made in mitigating known risks but there were many unknown risks which would be challenging.

Members enquired about Business Rates and whether these could be lowered. It was explained that Business Rates were set nationally and CBC had no involvement.

The Chair thanked the Leader and the Director of Finance and Resources for providing the update and answering their questions.

## **RESOLVED –**

That an update be brought to the first meeting of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum in 2019/20.

The Forward Plan was considered.

**RESOLVED –**

That the Forward Plan be noted.

**29 SCRUTINY MONITORING**

A monitoring progress update on the Cabinet response to the recommendations of the Town Centre Scrutiny Project Group report was provided.

The Scrutiny Monitoring Schedule was considered.

**RESOVLED –**

1. That the update on the Cabinet response to the recommendations of the Town Centre Scrutiny Project Group report be noted.
2. That the Cabinet response to the recommendations of the Town Centre Scrutiny Project Group report be approved.
3. That the Scrutiny Monitoring Schedule be approved.

**30 SCRUTINY PROJECT GROUP PROGRESS UPDATES**

**HS2 Scrutiny Project Group**

Lead Member of the project, Councillor Flood, advised that the recommendations within the report of the scrutiny project group had been approved by Cabinet.

**RESOLVED –**

That the update be noted.

**31 WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE OVERVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY FORUM**

The Work Programme for the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum was considered.

**RESOLVED –**

That the Work Programme be approved.

**32 JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

There were no updates.

**33 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENTS**

The next East Midlands Scrutiny Network meeting would be held at Rutland County Council.

The Forum was advised that the Scrutiny Network had been invited to Chesterfield Borough Council in March, 2019.

**34 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum held on 11 September, 2018 were presented.

**RESOLVED –**

That the Minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.