

EMPLOYER / TRADE UNION COMMITTEE**Monday, 13th June, 2022**

Present:-

Councillor P Gilby (Chair)

Gemma Masoud	Head of OD	Andrew Fowler	Unison
Theresa	Service Director	Maria Slack	Unison
Channell	Finance	Tony Devereux	Unison
Huw Bowen	Chief Executive	Trevor Barnett	Unite
		Lakhy Mahal	Unite

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

12 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Serjeant and J Innes.

13 MINUTESThe minutes of the meeting on 16th May 2022 were agreed as a correct record.**14 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The member for Unison asked if there was any update that could be shared regarding any discussions around mileage rates. The Chief Executive confirmed that there was no update to share.

15 FINANCE UPDATE

The Service Director for Finance presented an update to the Committee on the latest financial position.

The Council had approved the GF fund in Feb 21 with a gap of £188k to be funded from reserves and at that point the MTFP was unbalanced for all years. The deficit assumed the in year delivery of savings amounting to £524k, of which £374k would be delivered through the ICT improvement programme. A further £250k vacancy rates allowance was also included within 21/22 and for all years of the MTFP.

The budget was set in the midst of the pandemic which made it difficult to accurately project budgets. The financial impact of Covid on the demand for Council Services

had been significant, resulting in new cost pressures and significant reductions across all income streams.

Since the budget was set other cost pressures had emerged including the additional cost of kerbside recycling due to the previous contractor entering into administration, reduction in income in sports centres, car parks and venues and a reduction in income from Vicar Lane and industrial and commercial properties. Costs were somewhat offset by savings from the buyout of the superior landlords interest in the Pavements Shopping Centre and Covid related govt support.

The member for Unison questioned whether or not CBC had considered bringing the kerbside recycling back "in house". The Chief Executive confirmed that Viola were the only bidder for the contract and stated that all areas of waste collection were contracted out til 2025 so CBC would be reviewing all options prior to 2025, including the feasibility of bringing these services back "in house".

At Q2 the forecast deficit was c £1m and a range of management actions and mitigations were put in place to address this adverse variance, including maximising grant opportunities, reviewing non-essential spending and appropriate charging to other funds. The Council recognised that the forecast would have major implications if the MTFP was left unresolved.

Carry forwards included vacancies (£144k), training (£38k) and Spirepride (£90k). It was noted that the Council had continued to experience difficulties recruiting across all roles and service areas. This, together with the impact of Covid on the additional workload had led to a number of projects that were due to be undertaken in 2021/22 being delayed.

Other movements were said to include the Living Wage (£34k) to enable the real living wage rate of £9.90 to be paid from 1 April and Pride (£12k) a commitment to fund £4k p.a. for the next 3 years.

The budget report March 22 recommended that any underspending to be transferred to the budget risk reserve. This reserve currently stood at £1.6m and would increase to £2.1m. It was stated that there were likely to be significant cost pressures in year, particularly in relation to fuel, utilities and general cost inflation.

Actual capital expenditure on schemes was £36.5m compared to the original budget estimate for the year of £17.2m as at Feb 2021 and £42.8m at the revised budget stage in Feb 2022. The main reasons for the variances from the revised budget estimate included underspends on the Waterside Basin Square Development, the Northern Gateway Enterprise Centre, Hollis Lane Link Road Phase 1, Disabled Facilities Grants and Green Homes Grants.

There were no significant overspends on any capital schemes during 2021/22.

The HRA estimated balance was due to fall to £6.339m at 31 March 2022 with the actual balance at c£13m. This variance was down to DRF being underspent due to slippage on capital £9m, the detrimental impact of the pandemic on Repairs and

Maintenance, with capital programme activity costs increasing and an increase in depreciation due to increase in property values.

Total HRA capital expenditure was £21.7m against the budget of £32.5m giving an underspend of £10.88m (33% of the budget). This was funded by the right to buy sales and other asset sales with the balance from revenue. It was also noted that several named schemes were not finalised at the year end and approval was being sought to carry forward £10.8m from 2021/22 to 2022/23 to enable the schemes to be completed.

Cllr P Gilby left the meeting at this point. Andy Fowler took the chair.

RESOLVED –

That the update be noted.

16 HR / OD UPDATE

The Head of OD presented an update to the committee on the work of HR and OD.

Deborah Wickham was confirmed as the Interim Housing Services Director, Alan McCarthy was due to commence the role of Interim Director Property Services on 17th June 2022 and recruitment for the role of Head of Procurement was due to commence soon.

Consultation on the proposed new RPE policy was underway and the feedback date of 8th July had been agreed.

The Head of OD shared details of a new Financial Well Being Benefit that was being introduced across various other councils. This was essentially an AVC Pension Scheme which offered potential savings opportunities for individual employees. Discussions were currently ongoing to explore the opportunity of this new scheme and more details would be shared in due course.

It was confirmed that pay claims for this year had been tabled for Greenbook and Chief Officers and the East Midlands pay negotiations were underway and would be continuing throughout June. The Head of OD proposed to provide a full update in the next committee in July.

A question was asked by the member for Unison regarding the Director of Property Services role. The Chief Executive confirmed that a CLT decision was taken to boost resources in Property Services with the new Interim Director role now in place.

RESOLVED –

That the update be noted.

17 **LIVING WAGE**

The Head of OD provided an update to the committee on the Living Wage.

The member for Unison asked if there was a timescale involved.

It was confirmed that the proposal for the Living Wage would be sent to Cabinet in July as there was a budget requirement to maintain it and that the outcome for the Living Wage was expected in November.

RESOLVED –

That the update be noted.

18 **DJCC FEEDBACK**

There was no feedback.

19 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The member for Unison raised a point about the suspension of Union access to the SHE system. It was stated that this was affecting the service Unions could provide and concerns were shared around the apparent lack of timetable for resolutions. It was confirmed that this point had been raised in the last Health & Safety Committee.

The Chief Executive agreed to raise with the CLT and provide further updates.

RESOLVED –

That the action be noted.

20 **DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the committee would take place on Monday 11th July 2022 at 9.30am.