

## **EFFICIENCY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 31 October 2019

**PRESENT** – Councillors Durham (Chair), Allen, Bartch, Cossins, Harker, Keir, Paley and Renton

**APOLOGIES** – Councillors L Hughes, Mrs D Jones and K Nicholson.

**ABSENT** –

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** – Councillor Johnson

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – Elizabeth Davison (Assistant Director Resources), Dave Winstanley (Assistant Director Capital Projects, Transport and Highways Planning), Brian Robson (Head of Capital Projects), Anthony Sandys (Head of Housing and Revenues) and Shirley Wright (Democratic Manager)

### **ER12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Harker declared an interest in Minute ER14 below as Chair of Governors of Borough Road Nursery School. There were no other declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

### **ER13 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2019**

**MINUTES** – Submitted - The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 12 September, 2019.

**RESOLVED** - That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

### **ER14 PROJECT POSITION STATEMENT AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - QUARTER 2 2019/20**

The Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report (previously circulated) together with a report (also previously circulated) which was being considered by Cabinet at its meeting to be held on 5 November 2019, giving a summary of the latest capital resource and commitment position to inform monitoring of the affordability and funding of the Council's capital programme, together with an update on the current status of all construction projects which were currently being undertaken by the Council. Members' views were also requested on a number of changes to the programme which were being recommended for approval by Cabinet.

It was reported that the Council had a substantial annual construction programme of work which was delivering a wide range of improvements to the Council's assets and more critically to Council services and that there were currently 33 live projects currently being managed with an overall projected outturn value of £68.765 million with the majority of those projects running to time, cost and quality expectations with no foreseeable issues.

Attached to the report was a project position statement which was required to be completed by all project managers for all projects over £75,000 and which brought together details of the current live construction projects up to the end of August 2019 by delivery area and provided details on the numbers, the current status position on each project with regards to budget and completion and any comments on current issues.

Discussion ensued on the level of information included within Appendix 1 of the submitted report which it was suggested could be more comprehensive to enable Members to fully scrutinise the individual projects and the Assistant Director reported that the appendix was a summary of the more detailed information contained within Appendix 2, however, the Council was currently transitioning to a new project management system 'Project in a Box' which would give a more accurate and detailed representation of the current position going forward.

Reference was made to the control points within the procedures, particularly control point 5, which was used to evaluate and review the project at completion stage and highlight any lessons learnt which could be applied to other similar projects.

Reference was made to a training session which had been arranged for Members of this Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Council's project management arrangements and the Chair referred to a communication he had sent out to Members requesting that any questions, comments or concerns be forwarded to him so that a further training session could be arranged if needed.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be received and that Cabinet be advised that this Scrutiny Committee supports the proposed adjustment as set out in paragraph 20 of its report.

## **ER15 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2019/20 - QUARTER 2**

The Managing Director submitted a report (previously circulated) together with the quarter 2 revenue budget outturn report (also previously circulated) which was due to be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 5 November, 2019.

It was reported that the Council's projected reserves at the end of 2019-20 were £16.597 million, £0.804 million lower than quarter 1's reported position and that of the £16.597 million, there was a risk reserve balance of £4.350 million and a commitment to use £11.212 million to support the 2019-20 MTFP, leaving £1.035 million one-off funding to further support the general fund moving forward.

Particular reference was made to the pressures within the Children's Services budget, together with the reasons for some of those pressures and the work being undertaken to try to reduce the overspend within that area, particularly a piece of work which was being undertaken with the DfE following a successful innovative project in Leeds.

References were also made to the cost of school transport, the increased cost arising from the auto enrolment into the Council's pension scheme and the carry forward request for funding to undertake Equality and Diversity training.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted and that a briefing session be arranged

between this Scrutiny Committee and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to obtain further details in relation to the Children's Services overspend and the project being undertaken in conjunction with Leeds City Council and the DfE.

#### **ER16 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT - SCHEME APPROVAL 2020/21**

The Managing Director submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the draft Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme for 2020-21 (also previously circulated) prior to its consideration by Council.

It was reported that, although no changes to the current CTS scheme were being recommended, Councils were required to set a CTS scheme each year and that, as part of that exercise, consider whether any changes should be made to the existing scheme and, where changes were to be made, what transitional protection, if any, should apply to those affected by those changes.

**RESOLVED** – That it be noted that no changes are being recommended to the 2020-21 CTS Scheme.

#### **ER17 SCRUTINY COMMITTEES - PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Managing Director submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to a number of proposed changes (also previously circulated) to the Terms of Reference of this Council's Scrutiny Committees, following a number of changes which were to be implemented to the Cabinet Portfolios with effect from 1 December, 2019..

It was reported that the proposed changes, which would require Council approval, sought to align the scrutiny committees more closely with the revised Cabinet portfolios and would come into effect on 5 December 2019

**RESOLVED** – That the report be received and that Council be advised that this Scrutiny Committee has no comments to make on the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference of this Scrutiny Committee.

#### **ER18 WORK PROGRAMME**

The Managing Director submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the work programme items scheduled to be considered by this Committee and to give consideration to any additional areas Members felt should be added to the previously approved work programme.

It was suggested that, as the Terms of Reference for this Scrutiny Committee were to be amended, it would be useful to re-look at the work programme once those changes had been approved.

The Chair reported that he intended to submit quad of aims in relation to the maintenance of Council properties and fuel efficiency of the Council's fleet vehicles

**RESOLVED** – That the report be received.