

FINANCE & CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance & Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne, on Friday, 16th June, 2023, at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Lucy King in the Chair

Councillors: David Bennett, Rowan Clarke, Tom Munro, Sally Renshaw, Jen Wilson, Justin Gilbody

Also in attendance was Councillor Clive Moesby (Portfolio Holder for Resources)

Officers: Jim Fieldsend (Monitoring Officer), Kath Drury (Information, Engagement & Performance Manager), Amar Bashir (Improvement Officer), Joanne Wilson (Scrutiny & Elections Officer) and Lindsay Harshaw (Governance & Civic Officer)

FCOS01-23/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Chris Kane.

FCOS02-23/24 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

FCOS03-23/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

FCOS04-23/24 LIST OF KEY DECISIONS AND ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

Committee considered the List of Key Decisions and items to be considered in private document.

The Scrutiny & Elections Officer reported that there were two items in the latest version of the Forward Plan, these being:-

- Award of Void Cleaning Contract 2023-2027
- Household Support Fund 4 – Service Level Agreement

She stressed the importance of Scrutiny involvement before reports were submitted to Executive and asked that any queries be directed to the listed Officer or Portfolio

FINANCE & CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Holder in the first instance. Should Members then feel that a more detailed examination of the proposed decision was required, Members must contact the Monitoring Officer and Scrutiny Officer so that a meeting of the relevant Scrutiny Committee could be held to enable pre-scrutiny of the decision.

Moved by Councillor Tom Munro and seconded by Councillor Jen Wilson
RESOLVED that the List of Key Decisions and items to be considered in private document be noted.

FCOS05-23/24 MINUTES OF THE AUDIT & CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Moved by Councillor Tom Munro and seconded by Councillor Jen Wilson
RESOLVED that the Minutes of an Audit & Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee held on 16th March, 2023, be noted.

FCOS06-23/24 FINANCE & CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24 – APPROVAL OF PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny & Elections Officer reported that the main purpose of the report was to inform Members of the meeting programme for the year 2023/24 and planned agenda items. It was noted that the programme may be subject to change should additional reports/presentations be required, or if items needed to be rearranged for alternative dates.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources advised that he would attend meetings with the Section 151 Officer should finance/budget related items be included on future Agendas. He would also be attending Audit Committee meetings.

A Member referred to the meeting scheduled to take place on 24th January, 2024, and queried whether Scrutiny Chairs would be invited to provide an update. The Scrutiny & Elections Officer confirmed that all Scrutiny Chairs would be invited to the meeting to provide an update on progress with the Work Programmes. She also mentioned that as set out in the constitution all Scrutiny Members would be invited to the meeting as part of the budget setting/approval process.

Moved by Councillor Tom Munro and seconded by Councillor David Bennett
RESOLVED that the Finance & Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023/24, be approved.

FCOS07-23/24 MEMBER BRIEFING ON BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The Information, Engagement & Performance Manager and Improvement Officer gave a presentation which provided details in relation to performance monitoring.

FINANCE & CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The briefing explained why performance was monitored and set out the Council's performance management framework and monitoring arrangements.

It was noted that the Council's 'Ambition' document would be reviewed in the near future and all Scrutiny Members would be involved in the development of the new plan.

A Member queried how targets were set each year to ensure that they were effective and did not disincentivise staff. The Information, Engagement & Performance Manager advised that members of staff were expected to be involved in the setting of targets and indicators and that the Performance Monitoring Team would ensure that the targets were realistic and achievable.

A Member commented that in the past it had been necessary to review targets that had clearly fallen behind in order to get them back on track.

A Member asked if the pre-meetings were utilised to address any issues of concern in relation to performance monitoring. The Scrutiny & Elections Officer advised that the pre-meetings were to review the proposed agenda items and identify any gaps in the reports being presented. For performance reports this involved liaising with officers regarding any issues in order to ensure that as much information as possible was provided to Members at Scrutiny meetings. The thematic Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs were also part of that process. Portfolio Holders were also invited to the Performance meetings to answer any questions raised by Scrutiny.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources stressed the importance of monitoring performance in order to improve service delivery.

FCOS08-23/24 AMBITION PLAN TARGETS PERFORMANCE UPDATE – JANUARY TO MARCH 2023

The Information, Engagement & Performance Manager presented the report of the Quarter 4 outturns for the Council's Ambition targets 2020-24 and highlighted that:-

Out of the 31 targets:

- 18 (58%) were on track
- 4 (13%) had achieved their outturn for 2022/23
- 1 (3%) had failed to achieve its outturn for 2022/23
- 8 (26%) achieved previously

Out of the 46 performance indicators:

- 37 (80%) had a positive outturn
- 7(15%) had a negative outturn
- 2% were within target

The appendices attached to the report contained the performance outturn as of 31st March, 2023.

FINANCE & CORPORATE OVERVIEW SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

A Member queried what was regarded as a Stage 3 complaint. The Information, Engagement & Performance Manager briefly explained the Council's Corporate Complaints procedure and advised that Customer Services dealt with all complaints.

A Member referred to Rs 06 - % Council Tax arrears collected, and queried whether officers were actively engaged with those in arrears to ensure they were applying for any relevant benefits available to them. The Information, Engagement & Performance Manager commented that she would expect any funding/benefit schemes to be publicised, however, she would check that this was the case.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources advised that officers within the Council Tax Section maintained regular contact with those residents who were in arrears.

A Member queried whether information offering financial assistance had been sent out with Council Tax bills and if not, he suggested including this information in the future. The Information, Engagement & Performance Manager advised that she would check what information had been sent out.

Moved by Councillor David Bennett and seconded by Councillor Rowan Clarke **RESOLVED** that the quarterly outturns against the Council's Ambition 2020-2024 targets and relevant performance indicators be noted.

Councillor Munro left the meeting at 11:11 a.m.

FCOS09-23/24 MEMBER TRAINING 2022/23 – MEMBER DISCUSSION

The Scrutiny & Elections Officer asked the Committee to consider what training requirements it had for 2023/24.

It was agreed that the following training take place:-

- 11th July, 2023, at 2.00 pm – Introduction to Local Government Finance
- 26th July, 2023 (following conclusion of the Finance & Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee) – Understanding the Medium Term Financial Plan, Annual Budget and Budget Monitoring Reports
- Third Session (to be confirmed) – Financial Planning and Budgeting

Moved by Councillor Rowan Clarke and seconded by Councillor David Bennett **RESOLVED** that the training sessions as detailed above be organised to take place.

(Scrutiny & Elections Officer)

The meeting concluded at 11:25 hours.