

Overview Select Committee (OSC) Finance Task Group

Minutes of Meeting held on 30th August 2018

Present

Cllr Baljit Singh, Chair of Task Group

Cllr Ratilal Govind, Vice-Chair

Cllr Inderjit Gugnani

Cllr Virginia Cleaver

Cllr Jean Khote

Alison Greenhill, Director of Finance

Apologies

None received

1. Revenue Budget Monitoring P3 2018/19

- 1.1 Cllr Singh introduced the revenue monitoring report and the recommendations.
- 1.2 Cllr Singh highlighted the two appendices as being very important documents. These set out spending review decisions (SR4) and the outcome of a review of earmarked reserves, which directs those reserves no longer required for their original purpose into the managed reserves strategy.
- 1.3 Cllr Govind asked for further staffing information after Alison explained that the Business Service Centre (BSC) savings arose following a staffing review. However as the review was planned, vacancies had been held to minimise the impact on staff.
- 1.4 Cllr Khote asked for further information on the handyperson review saving.
- 1.5 Cllr Govind requested an update on the number of completed and proposed community asset transfers (CATs). Cllr Gugnani pointed out that this will be the subject of a review to be undertaken by the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Commission.
- 1.6 Cllr Cleaver asked for an update on the experience so far of Universal Credit full service and the impact it has had on the city. Alison gave members an update and in summary to date it has been relatively smooth thanks to the hardwork of our staff, the local DWP and JCP staff and the voluntary sector and advice providers.
- 1.7 Alison explained the additional income we receive relating to a contribution to the cost of care of service users at Hastings Road day centre from the CCG. Cllr Cleaver was pleased that health are contributing to the high cost of providing services to adults with significant needs.
- 1.8 Cllr Singh asked for the role of the new brokerage team to be explained and for “the plan” in relation to increasing the number of foster carers to be shared with members of the committee. He expressed concerns over the continued use of expensive independent foster agencies and

agency staff whilst acknowledging that this is not a problem unique to Leicester, but an unfortunate trend across the country and with a strong link to remuneration.

- 1.9 The commission discussed the (national) pressure regarding funding of the schools high needs block and Cllr Singh suggested that the Children's scrutiny commission should consider a review of this area.

2. Capital Budget Monitoring P3 2018/19

- 2.1 Cllr Singh introduced the capital monitoring report, noting the relatively low level of spend, which is usual at this early stage in the year.
- 2.2 Cllr Singh recommended that all Scrutiny Chairs should look carefully at their elements of the capital programme and ensure that schemes are considered by commissions at an early and appropriate stage.
- 2.3 Cllr Cleaver asked for an update on the extra care schemes and the only red flagged scheme in the programme, the finance and HR /payroll systems replacements. Alison updated members on the outcome of a government consultation on the implications on housing benefit and that a positive outcome had been achieved. Alison explained the difficult technology projects and the issues the council had faced. This is not unusual for technology projects although not at all desirable.
- 2.4 Members discussed Right to Buy (RTB) receipts and the restrictions imposed on the use of them arising from the HRA ring-fence regulations.