



City and County of Swansea

Minutes of the **Scrutiny Performance Panel – Service Improvement & Finance**

Committee Room 5, Guildhall, Swansea

Monday, 19 August 2019 at 9.30 am

Present: Councillor C A Holley (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

P Downing
M H Jones
D W W Thomas

Councillor(s)

P R Hood-Williams
P K Jones

Councillor(s)

L James
C E Lloyd

Other Attendees

Clive Lloyd Cabinet Member - Business Transformation & Performance (Deputy Leader)

Officer(s)

Bethan Hopkins Scrutiny Officer
Richard Rowlands Strategic Delivery & Performance Manager.
Ben Smith Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): J W Jones, I E Mann, B J Rowlands and R C Stewart

Co-opted Member(s):

Other Attendees: R C Stewart

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- 1 **Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.**
 - None
 - 2 **Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips**
 - None
 - 3 **Minutes.**
 - Approved
 - 4 **Public Questions**
 - None
 - 5 **Annual Performance Monitoring Report 2018/19**
Safeguarding
 - The Panel had questions over some of the measures within 'Safeguarding' and will refer these to the relevant panels for exploration (AS8, Measure 18, AS13)

- Panel said the length of time it takes for information to come to the Panel is unacceptable but it is linked to the reporting cycle of the Council
- Impressive that the current performance is maintained given the budget cuts
- CFS18 – 6% increase in LAC compared to 17/18 but trend decreasing
- Safe 8b - Pleased that elected members have been undertaking safeguarding training

Education and Skills

- Majority of targets met or within 5% of meeting targets
- EDCP18D – 12% increase in number of NEETS compared to 17/18. The year 11 cohort showed that 3.9% of the cohort had very high vulnerability assessment profile – need the percentage expressed within all of Year 11 for perspective, not just the NEETS
- EDCP18D – Refers to 'known' NEETS. Panel query about 'unknown' NEETS
- BBMA4 – Questions over why the target of new apprenticeships and trainee starts is so high with a budget under pressure
- EDCP27/39 – Both missed target
- EDU016a/b – Both slightly missed targets due to illness
- EDCP40/41 – Free school meals impacted by absence

Economy and Infrastructure

- 86% of PIs met target with 57% improving
- EEF002 – Target met but it is 53% lower than 17/18
- ESD1 – Lowest since records but delays in major schemes
- WMT009B – Target met but down due to changes in wood collection and a dry summer reducing garden waste

Tackling Poverty

- 62% of targets met but 67% showed a decline in performance
- Most met PIs
- HBCT01a/1b/2a/2b – most declining due to staff reduction and Universal Credit roll out. Reducing staff has directly caused a problem, losing experience and resource
- POV10/11 – New PIs not running at full capacity but should improve

Transformation and Future Council

- CHR002 – Not getting to bottom of issue. Ongoing issues with staff sickness, reductions in budget reduce staff increasing pressure on remaining teams
- FINA6 – Ongoing struggle to balance the budget
- Will invite the Deputy Chief Executive to discuss some issues

National Indicators

- 61% met targets and 52% improved compared with 17/18
- PAM20/21/22 – All missed targets due to budget pressures
- PAM029 – Missed due to complex needs of children

- The departments set their own targets but the Strategic Delivery Unit review and challenge these prior to review and challenge / approval at CMT
- Changing (national) indicators year on year (by Welsh Government / WLGA) doesn't allow for compilation of data and trend analysis
- Will be asking for some Heads of Service to come to future meetings

6 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring 1st Quarter 2019/20

- Recommendations approved by Cabinet for Directors to bring proposals to rebalance budget and not spend wherever possible
- Majority of budget proposals on track but still financially adrift overall
- Budget propped up with emergency one off Welsh Government grants
- No officer is allowed to overspend
- Base budget cannot afford new pressures
- Base budget £3.45m for contingency but doubled it this year one off using reserves – this process cannot continue
- Legally the budget is balanced for the year but dependant on draws from reserves and use of contingency etc
- Future years will be much harder
- Underspent on capital
- Only balanced by contingency and reserve draw downs
- Pace and scale of savings is still a challenge
- Query over why electricity bill is reported so high
- Still prudent to have a Capital Equalisation Reserve – will all be needed in the future to fund planned capital expenditure and in line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015

7 Revenue Financial Outturn 2018/19

- Still prudent to have a Capital Equalisation Reserve – will all be needed in the future and in line with the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015
- The Capitalisation Equalisation Reserve lowers the risks of affording the future capital programme
- Revenue headroom needs to be made for financing the capital programme borrowing
- Environment continues to come off badly even with new environmental objectives and legal obligations

8 Revenue Outturn 2018/19 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- No issues to report

9 Capital Outturn and Financing 2018/19

- Want some clarification over p127 C1/C2/C3. What do these relate to? Will ask in letter

10 Work Plan 2019/20

- Archives and Charges at next meeting

The meeting ended at 10.50 am