

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Meeting held 15 February 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Tony Damms (Chair), Ian Auckland, Steve Ayris, Douglas Johnson, Pat Midgley, Ian Saunders and Peter Rippon (Substitute Member)

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Booker, George Lindars-Hammond, Helen Mirfin-Boukouris, Steve Wilson and Josie Paszek, with Peter Rippon attending as her substitute.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where a resolution may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 10th November, 2016

4.1.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10th November, 2016, were approved as a correct record.

4.2 1st December, 2016

4.2.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 1st December, 2016 were approved as a correct record and, arising therefrom, Councillor Pat Midgley stated that, further to concerns expressed by some Committee Members at the meeting of the Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee on 9th November, 2016, regarding the late circulation of the presentation on Shaping Sheffield – The Plan, arrangements had been made for the Plan to be considered at a special meeting of the Committee, which had been held on 8th February, 2017.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 There were no questions raised, or petitions submitted by members of the public.

6. REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18

- 6.1 The Committee considered reports of the Acting Executive Director, Resources, on the Capital Programme 2017/18 and the Revenue Budget 2017/18, which were to be considered by the Cabinet on the afternoon of 15th February, 2017.
- 6.2 In attendance for this item were Councillor Ben Curran (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources), Eugene Walker (Acting Executive Director, Resources), Dave Phillips (Head of Strategic Finance), Mike Thomas (Acting Assistant Director, Strategic Finance), Laura Pattman (Director of Business Strategy, Communities) and Paul Schofield (Finance and Commercial Services Business Partner).
- 6.3 Dave Phillips introduced the Revenue Budget 2017/18 report, indicating that, as in previous years, following cuts in Government funding, producing a balanced budget had been a very demanding process. As part of the process, the Council had been forced to identify £40m savings, and deal with other issues, such as rising demand pressures, specifically relating to Adult Social Care. Mr. Phillips concluded by referring to the Council's unearmarked reserves, indicating that they were presently at a minimum level. In addition, the Council had earmarked reserves, which were all set aside for specific purposes.
- 6.4 Members of the Committee raised questions and the following responses were provided:-
- Although the figure for gross business rate estimated income had reduced by approximately £5 million since 2016/17, this did not mean that the City's economy was shrinking, but was partly as a result of a number of successful appeals against the level of business rates, thereby resulting in a reduction in estimated income for the City. In addition, the national business rates revaluation had reduced the gross figure, although this was compensated for by additional grant income. The reduction in income in terms of business rates should not be confused with the economic performance of the City.
 - A key aim of the Better Care Fund was, through funding provided by the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), to provide improved community-based services, in order to reduce the numbers of people being unable to be discharged from hospital due to a lack of such services. It was hoped that savings would be identified which, in turn, would eliminate the need for this contribution after 2015/16. This had become a major issue nationally, and one which the Health Service had been attempting to remedy for some years, but, due to the increase in demand, savings had yet to be made. It was hoped that the Shaping Sheffield Plan would provide an opportunity in terms of identifying such savings.

- Although a general Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) in terms of the Revenue Budget 2017/18 had been included in the report, attached at Appendix 9, the EIAs completed by Council Services for each budget-saving proposal had not been appended to the report, but a list of the EIAs was included in Appendix 9. They could be made available on request, and were also available on the Council website.

6.5 It was stated that some Members had faced difficulties in accessing the appropriate links on the Council website in connection with the individual EIAs.

6.6 Dave Phillips also made reference to the report on the Capital Programme 2017/18.

6.7 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the reports of the Acting Executive Director, Resources, on the Capital Programme 2017/18 and the Revenue Budget 2017/18, together with the comments made and the responses provided to the questions raised;
- (b) expresses its thanks and appreciation to all officers, and Councillor Ben Curran (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources), involved in producing a balanced budget for 2017/18;
- (c) recommends that the reports of the Acting Executive Director, Resource, on the Capital Programme 2017/18 and the Revenue Budget 2017/18, respectively, be submitted to Cabinet without amendment; and
- (d) in the light of the concerns raised with regard to the difficulties in accessing the links, on the Council website, to the individual Equality Impact Statements, requests the Head of Policy, Performance and Communications to attend a future meeting to provide an update on the new Sheffield City Council website, and report on this specific issue, as part of the update.

7. WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

7.1 RESOLVED: That the draft Work Programme for 2016/17, set out in the report of the Policy and Improvement Officer now submitted, be approved.

8. ISSUES TO RAISE FROM OTHER SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

8.1 It was noted that there were no issues raised by Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees.

9. PUBLIC FEEDBACK ON SCRUTINY

- 9.1 The Committee received and noted a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer, containing a summary of public feedback received by members of the public who had attended meetings of the Committee during the Municipal Year 2016/17.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 10.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on a date to be arranged.