



CORPORATE SELECT COMMITTEE

Meeting: Monday, 27 November 2023 at 6.30 pm in Virtual Meeting

Present: Councillor C Payne (Chair)

Councillors P Bell, N Clarke, J Collins, O Cross, D Elliott-Starkey, L Grooby, R McKeown, R Quinn, P Reddy, E Siddall and J Taylor

In Attendance: Councillor(s) A McKeown and J Todd

24/25 TO RECEIVE DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST ON ANY MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE
(Agenda Item 2)

None

24/26 ANY MATTERS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE UNDER THE CALL-IN PROCEDURE
(Agenda Item 3)

None

24/27 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
(Agenda Item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September be approved as a correct record.

24/28 SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
(Agenda Item 5)

An update on Glossop Halls was requested which would be forwarded to the Economy & Growth Select Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Select Committee Work Programme be noted.

24/29 SECOND QUARTER FINANCE, PROCUREMENT AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

(Agenda Item 6)

The Committee considered a report which provided information around the Council's overall performance and financial position for the period ended 30th September ("Second Quarter 2023/24"). Detailed analysis was provided in the appendices to the report and the position was summarised at paragraph 3.3 of the report.

Members were advised that, through the development of the medium term financial plan, inflationary pressures were emerging including within the HRA in respect of capital and the housing repairs function delivered by Alliance Norse, which would be monitored and built into the upcoming budget and MTFP.

In response to a query regarding the effect of the council tax support scheme on collection rates, members were advised that a full evaluation was yet to be done but there had been a significant reduction in the numbers of enquiries and questions with positive feedback. Regarding business rates, improvements had been made in collection rates in recent months and the team are pro-active in inviting eligible businesses to apply for discounts.

Reference was made to allocations for works to Fairfield Roundabout and Buxton Pool energy efficiency measures, members were advised that the final works are still to be completed for the roundabout, and the allocation for Buxton Pool is for the element of the new heating system not covered by grant funding. Increased AES horticulture costs is a result of the effect of a greater than budgeted pay award.

Other matters discussed included the letting of units within The Springs, leisure use feedback, the Council's complaints process and the accelerated housing delivery programme in respect of Granby Road.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Second Quarter 2023/24 financial, procurement and performance position detailed in Appendices A, B and C and summarised at 3.3 of the covering report be noted;
2. That the Executive be recommended to approve the write-offs as set out in Appendix in part 2 of the agenda.

24/30 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

(Agenda Item 7)

The Committee considered a report which set out the Council's updated draft Medium Term Financial Plan which presents the Council's priorities in the context of the likely resources available, providing a financial context to future decision making. The MTFP is reflective of the current financial position of the Council part way through the 2023-24 year and contains a large number of assumptions that will be refined and quantified to inform a

final version of the MTFP for approval in February 2024. Therefore, to this extent, the report and its contents were considered indicative.

Particular reference was made to work required around the emerging inflationary pressures which affect all aspects of the Council's activity, but notably the housing repairs service.

In response to a question around the retrofitting of voids to decarbonise and whether HRA reserves could be used to undertake more of this work, to which members were advised of the significant pressures facing the HRA including meeting the Decent Homes Standard, repairs and inflationary pressures.

Discussion ensued around fleet investment and slippage in the capital programme due to supply chain issues leading to increased costs of replacement vehicles, the reporting of housing repairs and a benchmark exercise to be undertaken around fees and charges.

RESOVLED:

That the updated draft Medium term Financial Plan (Appendix A) be endorsed, and the Executive be recommended to approve the plan prior to it being refined in advance of full approval in February 2024.

24/31 ALLIANCE NORSE - ANNUAL REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE (PRESENTATION)
(Agenda Item 8)

This item was deferred.

24/32 EMPTY PROPERTIES
(Agenda Item 9)

The Committee were invited to review the level of discount for council tax on short term empty/unoccupied and uninhabitable properties.

During the ensuing debate, it was reported that the Council had employed an Empty Homes Officer recently who would be working closely with the Revenues Team to build a database of empty properties.

RESOLVED:

That the Executive be recommended to approve Option 1 as set out at paragraph 2.2 of the report, to take effect from 1 April 2024.

24/33 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT - ANNUAL TRADE UNION LIAISON UPDATE
(Agenda Item 10)

The Committee considered an update on trade union liaison and collective agreements for a period of 12 months.

It was suggested that a review of the partnership agreement be undertaken to assess how the unions and management work together to make improvements for staff. It was noted that there is a close working relationship with the unions and that the HR policies are being reviewed currently.

In response to a query regarding weight restrictions at recycling sites, members were advised there are other liaison meetings with AES and Alliance Norse.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted;
2. That an annual update on trade union liaison be submitted to Corporate Select Committee.

24/34 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT - TRAINING / DEVELOPMENT / APPRENTICES / GRADUATES
(Agenda Item 11)

The Committee considered a summary of the Alliance's workforce progression.

In response to a query regarding the relative progression of men versus women, the specific analysis had not been done by gender but feedback showed a healthy gender balance and female groupings were amongst the higher paid, although it was acknowledged that this did not apply at Head of Services and Executive Director level.

It was queried whether consideration had been given to older / retired people to project manage, to which members were advised that there was a strategy in place to include project management costs but consideration could be given to the suggestion. Reference was made to a community company called Extra Time whose aim was to encourage those who had recently retired back into the workforce.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

24/35 ANY QUESTIONS REFERRED TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER (MEMBER SERVICES TO BE ADVISED OF ANY QUESTIONS AT LEAST 4 DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING)
(Agenda Item 12)

None

24/36 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC
(Agenda Item 13)

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business as there may be disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

24/37 APPLICATIONS FOR WRITE OFF OF NON-RECOVERABLE DEBTS
(Agenda Item 14)

RESOLVED:

That the Executive be recommended to approve the write-offs as set out in the report.

The meeting concluded at 8.00 pm

CHAIRMAN