



**CORPORATE RESOURCES & GOVERNANCE
SCRUTINY & IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, 25 JANUARY 2023 AT 10.00 AM
CIVIC CENTRE, RIDLEY STREET, REDCAR, TS10 1TD**

CONTACT

David Boville
01642 444617

Tuesday, 17 January 2023

CIRCULATION

Councillors C Massey (Chair), S Jeffrey (Vice-Chair), C Brady, J Craig, G Cutler, D Dowson, M Head, A Hixon, S Moody, I Nightingale, V Rider, Sandra Smith, P Thomson, A Turner and A Watts
Councillors M Lanigan and G Nightingale (Cabinet Members - for information)
All Members of the Council (for information)
Managing Director (Head of Paid Service)
The Press [except for Confidential item(s)]

A G E N D A

	<u>Pages</u>
1. Apologies for Absence.	
2. To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2022.	2 - 8
3. Declarations of Interest.	
4. Relevant Cabinet Reports.	
Would Members please refer to their copy of the Cabinet Workbook for the meeting (these papers will follow).	
5. Motion Tracker. (Verbal Update)	
6. Action List	9
7. Any items the Chair certifies as urgent.	

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CORPORATE RESOURCES & GOVERNANCE SCRUTINY & IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Corporate Resources & Governance Scrutiny & Improvement Committee was held on Wednesday, 14 December 2022 at the Civic Centre, Ridley Street, Redcar, TS10 1TD.

PRESENT Councillor C Massey (Chair)
Councillors S Jeffrey (Vice-Chair), B Ayre (substituting for Councillor C Brady), D Dowson, M Head, S Moody, I Nightingale, V Rider, Sandra Smith and P Thomson .

OFFICIALS J Sampson, S Newton, P Winstanley, M Lyth, C Styles, D Boville, S Connolly and A Pearson.

IN ATTENDANCE Councillor G Nightingale, B Clarke and B Hunt.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Brady, A Brown, J Craig, G Cutler, A Hixon and A Watts.

12 **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2
NOVEMBER 2022**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Corporate Resources & Governance Scrutiny and Improvement Committee held on 2 November 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

13 **BUDGET PROPOSALS 2023/24**

The Managing Director presented the Cabinet's budget proposals for the forthcoming 2023/24 financial year along with an indicative medium term financial plan through to 2027/28, which would be considered by Cabinet on 20 December 2022 before being submitted for public consultation.

As part of the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- A more user-friendly set of information would be prepared for public consultation, with the full report still being available to view should the public wish. A narrative would be provided explaining the Council's current financial position and what was being done to address this. The narrative would include information on local government funding cuts, the impact of inflation and the increase in demand for Council services.

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- The Council purchased its utilities through the North East Purchasing Organisation (NEPO) and there was time limited support from government to assist with energy costs.
- An increase in staff wages was a pressure in the budget that needed to be addressed.
- The Council was exploring ways of working with partner organisations to drive down cost, good examples of this were the new Energy from Waste Facility and Adoption Tees Valley.
- The Council should re-double its efforts on partnership working, particularly in relation to capital investment.
- Council borrowing had been reviewed and reduced where possible.
- Consultation with Members was needed on the proposals for the Borough's libraries.
- Consultation on the budget would begin once Cabinet had approved the proposals, however non-executive Members should have been consulted more thoroughly on the budget proposals before being presented to Cabinet for approval.
- Members who may be supportive of the budget in general were not in favour of every proposal suggested within the report.
- The current budget gap was expected to be approximately £9.5m. The current budget proposals would reduce that gap to approximately £7.6m. It was possible that the remaining funding gap would need to be resolved through cuts to services.
- The budget proposals marked as 'proceed' would be consulted on as part of the general public budget consultation and these were felt to have a minimal impact on frontline services. Those proposals marked as 'consult' would also have specific additional consultation.
- The Members budget conference would have been a good opportunity to explain some of the proposals contained within the report.
- Reduction or removal of Members Ward Allowances and the Boroughwide Public Realm programme would have a significant impact on the way Councillors and the Council interacted with residents.
- Members were being asked for their opinion on a budget with limited time and information.
- It would be useful to know if other budget proposals had been considered by the Cabinet and subsequently rejected.
- The introduction of three days voluntary unpaid leave may have a large impact on workforce capacity.
- The report did not highlight the impact on the wider economy of the budget proposals.
- This was an extremely difficult economic environment, and the report did not give enough information to make a determination if

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the budget proposed was the best option for the residents of the Borough.

- It was unfortunate that consultation with elected Members and the public appeared to be happening simultaneously. There needed to have been more of a conversation with Members as a whole before the budget proposals were put in writing:-**NOTED**

14 **COUNCIL TAX BASE 2023/24 AND THE COUNCIL TAX COLLECTION FUND POSITION 2022/23**

The Managing Director presented a report setting out the Council's council tax base for the financial year 2023/24 and the estimated forecast outturn position for the council tax accounts 2022/23, which was due to be considered by Cabinet on 20 December 2022:-**NOTED**

15 **FEES AND CHARGES 2023-24**

The Managing Director presented a report setting out the Cabinet's proposals for the fees and charges for the 2023/24 financial year, which was due to be considered by Cabinet on 20 December 2022.

As part of the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- There had not been adequate consultation on the proposed changes to fees and charges, particularly in relation to new car parking fees.
- The report did not outline what impact the new fees and charges for car parking was expected to have on the visitor economy. The new charges in Normanby would have an impact on the number of shoppers and the car parking facilities at Flatts Lane were already very poor.
- It was felt that with the cost of appropriately surfacing the Flatts Lane Visitor Centre Car Park and installing a ticket machine, it would take a number of years before the car park would break even, let alone make a profit.
- Introducing a charge to the Flatts Lane Visitor Centre Car Park would result in residents using alternate leisure provision elsewhere in the Borough or in Middlesbrough.
- In previous years where the introduction of new car parking fees were considered, detailed consultation with ward members was carried out.
- Existing ticket machines needed to be checked to ensure they were fully operational.
- Principle 5 of the car parking strategy made no reference to introducing new car parking charges.
- There was not enough information provided to determine if the

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new car parking charges being proposed were appropriate and there had not been enough opportunity for these to be discussed before being presented to Cabinet for approval.

- Of all the new parking charges being proposed, there was no intention to introduce an overnight charge for Cat Nab Car Park, which was an issue that had been specifically discussed with ward Councillors.
- It was not clearly exactly how much additional income was expected to be generated through the increased car parking fees. It would be useful for members to have sight of this information, broken down by car park where possible.
- The increase in fee for a replacement bin would mean many residents would not replace their waste bin, leading to an increase in side-waste and fly-tipping.
- There was a need to consider if residents could afford the proposed fees. It could be felt that the proposed fees and charges were discriminatory as they would have a larger impact on the Borough's most vulnerable residents.
- No information had been provided on the economic impact of the proposed changes to fees and charges, particularly in relation to tourism as many of the new charges affected car parking and public toilets.
- The report should be deferred to allow for more appropriate consultation with Members and residents alongside the wider budget proposals. The report could be deferred but this would have an impact on the budget as certain increases had already been accounted for.
- It may be more prudent to consider an additional 1% Council Tax rise, rather than an increase in fees and charges as at least that would offer some element of protection to the Borough's most vulnerable residents.
- There had been very little objection by Members to the proposed rise in Council Tax and the Adult Social Care Levy which suggested an appreciation of the financial situation many local authorities found themselves in as a result of Government funding cuts. However, there was clear opposition to a number of the proposed fees and charges as it was felt that the proposals could cause a disproportionate amount of upset to residents compared to the expected financial gain to the Council.
- The introduction of a fee for an ECO FLEX 4 assessment on a household's eligibility would lead to the Borough's most vulnerable residents not being able to access Government funding designed to make their houses more energy efficient.
- There had been no consultation on the proposed increase in the rental fee for a beach chalet in Saltburn. Before any change is agreed Members should have sight of the business plan.

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- There was no objection in principle for the introduction of a fee for the use of public toilets, however it needed to be clear that the fee would pay for the ongoing operation and maintenance of those toilets:-**NOTED**

16 **FINANCIAL POSITION 2022/23 - QUARTER 2**

The Managing Director presented a report setting out the forecast year-end position for the Council as at Quarter 2 of the 2022/23 financial year, which was due to be considered by Cabinet on 20 December 2022.

As part of the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- Most of the cost saving measures identified so far were one off savings, and so would not assist with future budgets.
- Future reports would allocate budgets to the current Directorate structure:-**NOTED**

17 **PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2023/24**

The Managing Director presented a report seeking approval of a revised Pay Policy Statement for the year 2023/24 to ensure the Council's compliance with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011, which was due to be considered by Cabinet on 20 December 2022.

Members were advised that the arrangements for special severance payments would not have an impact on the Council's procedures relating to redundancy:-**NOTED**

18 **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2021-2022 AND LOCAL CODE OF GOVERNANCE**

The Managing Director presented a report seeking views on the draft Annual Governance Statement and Local Code of Governance, which was due to be considered by Cabinet on 20 December 2022 before being approved by Governance Committee on 6 February 2023.

As part of the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- The IT budget included funding for the ongoing maintenance of the Council's IT infrastructure and was not solely allocated to cyber-security. The risk of cyber-attack was ongoing and so it was felt prudent for it to remain as a key risk to the Council.
- There should be a risk highlighting the impact on the Borough's

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residents from the continued long-term contraction of the UK economy. While this was contained within the risk relating to the Medium Term Financial Strategy, it was felt that the impact on resident should be explicitly stated:-**NOTED**

19 **QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT.**

The Managing Director presented an update on the performance of elements of the Resources Directorate as at the end of Quarter 2 2022/23.

As part of the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- There were currently no clear plans for how the proposed Saltburn Foreshore Manager post would be funded. At present it was thought that this would be done either through the securing of external funding or through a restructuring of current position.
- Members had not been consulted on the relocation of the Redcar Library provision to Tuned In. The current plan was for the library to be housed temporarily at Tuned In until the culture and leisure anchor attraction was completed on Redcar High Street.
- The Kickstart programme was excellent, and it was hoped that an alternate funding source could be found to allow it to continue.
- Members requested a briefing at a future meeting regarding what actions the Council was taking to assist residents dealing with the cost of living crisis. Members were advised that this had formed a part of the budget conference and the relevant slides would be circulated to Members:-**NOTED**

20 **MOTION TRACKER. (VERBAL UPDATE)**

The Governance Manager presented an update on the Motions that had been passed at the last meeting of the Borough Council:-**NOTED**

21 **ACTION LIST**

The Governance Manager presented an update on the actions arising from the last meeting of the Resources Scrutiny & Improvement Committee:-**NOTED**

Resources Scrutiny Committee

ATTENDANCE RECORD - 2022/23

Surname	First name	15.06.2 2	27.07.2 2	21.09.2 2	02.11.2 2	14.12.2 2	25.01.2 3	dd.mm. yy	dd.mm. yy	dd.mm. yy	Total Meetings Attended / total possible
Massey	Chris	✓	✓	✓	Apols2	✓					
Jeffrey	Sue	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Brown	Alec	Apols	RA1	X	X	Apols					
Dowson	Deborah	✓	✓	Apols	✓	✓					
Head	Malcom	✓	✓	Apols1	Apols3	✓					
Nightingale	Irene	✓	✓	Apols3	✓	✓					
Hixon	Andrew	✓	✓	Apols3	Apols2	Apols3					
Turner	Andrea	X	Apols	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Thomson	Phillip	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Wells	Billy	✓	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Smith	Sandra	✓	Apols1	✓	✓	✓					
Cutler	Graham	Apols 1	✓	✓	✓	Apols3					
Rider	Vera	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Watts	Anne	✓	✓	✓	✓	Apols					
Craig	Julie	✓	Apols2	Apols1	✓	Apols2					
Moody	Shaun	n/a	n/a	X	✓	✓					
Brady	Charlie	n/a	RA	✓	✓	RA					
Substitutes											
Brook	Adam		✓								
Cook	Carrie		✓								
Ayre	Billy					✓					

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Key	
✓	Attended
RA	Apologies Submitted (replacement attended)
Apols	Apologies Submitted (no replacement)
X	Did Not Attend (no apologies received)
C	Cancelled Meeting
n/a	Not a Member

Reason for Absence (NB Full details may not be provided for reasons of confidentiality)	
1	Personal Commitment
2	Work Commitment
3	Illness/Medical
4	Conflicting Council Commitment
5	Other
6	Civic Duties

Scrutiny & Improvement Committee – Action list

Actions from 14.12.22 meeting		
Action	Officer	Update
Fees & Charges	PW	The Fees and Charges Report was approved by Cabinet for further consultation, with a view to an amended report being considered alongside the budget papers at the special Cabinet & Borough Council meeting scheduled to be held on 23 February 2023.
Annual Governance Statement - There should be a risk highlighting the impact on the Borough's residents from the continued long-term contraction of the UK economy. While this was contained within the risk relating to the Medium Term Financial Strategy, it was felt that the impact on resident should be explicitly stated.	AP	This will be presented to the Governance committee for consideration when the Annual Governance Statement is presented for approval on 6 February 2023.
Quarter 2 Performance Report – the information presented to the members conference on the cost of living crisis be circulated to Members.	PW	This was done on 14 December 2022.