

Overview, Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

Monday, 10 October 2022

Present:

Councillors L Arkley, D Cox, J Cruddas, M Hall, J Kirwin, J Montague, A Newman, M Thirlaway, W Samuel, M Wilson, Burton, Rev M Vine, P Earley, B Burdis, M Murphy and G Westwater

In attendance:

Ms F Burton - Parent Governor Representative
Rev M Vine – Church Representative
Councillor C Johnson – Deputy Mayor

Apologies:

Councillors D Drummond, M Green, Janet Hunter, E Parker-Leonard, J Wallace and S Fallon – Church Representative

OV8/22 Appointment of Substitute Members

Pursuant to the council's constitution the appointment of the following substitute Members was reported:

Councillor M Murphy for Councillor D Drummond
Councillor P Earley for Councillor M Green
Councillor B Burdis for Councillor E Parker-Leonard
Councillor G Westwater for Councillor J Wallace

OV9/22 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Councillor Julie Cruddas declared a non-registerable personal interest in Items 6 & 7. She is a Director of Justice Prince Community Interest Company.

Councillor Martin Murphy declared a non-registerable personal interest in Items 6 & 7. He has a family member who is employed by the Council

Councillor Matthew Thirlaway declared a non-registerable personal interest in Item 4, 5, 6, 7. He has a family member who is employed by the Council.

Councillor Matthew Thirlaway declared a non-registerable personal interest in Item 8. He is employed by a social care provider.

Councillor Peter Earley declared a registerable personal interest in Item 8. He is a Trustee of the North Tyneside Carers Centre.

OV10/22 Minutes

Resolved that the minute of the meeting held on 13 June 2022 be agreed.

OV11/22 2023- 2027 Financial Planning and Budget Process incorporating the Associated Engagement Strategy

The Committee received a report that outlined the process that was to be adopted for the Authority's Financial Planning and Budget Process for 2023/24 and its proposed framework for four years to 2026/27.

The report set out information in relation to the 2023-27 Financial Planning and Budget Process, including key decisions milestones that included:

A review of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

- Development of the detailed General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Budgets for 2023/24.
- An update of the Investment Plan and the Treasury Management Strategy, and
- The Budget Engagement Strategy to be adopted as part of the 2023-2027 Financial Planning and Budget process.

The Committee was informed of the process to how Budget Scrutiny would be conducted. There was to be established a Budget Sub-group of up to 10 Members with all non-executive Members to be canvassed to take part in a one full day scrutiny to take place on 1 December.

Agreed that the 2023-2027 Financial Planning and Budget Process incorporating the Associated Engagement Strategy be noted.

OV12/22 Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025 Performance Report

The Senior Manager - Policy, Performance and Research presented an update on progress with delivering the Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-2025.

The Committee was provided information that highlighted the work undertaken in each of the plans priorities;

A thriving North Tyneside –

The Authority was working closely with a range of partners to unlock local potential and opportunity through the delivery of projects in the three town centres, North Shields, Whitley Bay and Wallsend.

In relation to bringing good quality jobs to North Tyneside it was reported that the impact of

covid-19 has seen a 13% decrease during 2021/22 compared to the previous year.

Level 1 apprenticeships had decreased in relation to the 2021 level and was in part due to national changes, however, it was reported that an increase in Level 2 and Level 3 apprenticeships had seen during 2021.

Customer First Centres visits had reduced by 55% compared with pre-pandemic levels.

With respect to North Tyneside being a destination of choice, day visits and overnight stays had seen a reduction compared with pre-pandemic 2019. The Authority had retained its Blue and Green Flag standards in relation to its beaches and parks, with resident satisfaction consistent with previous years.

The long-term vacant dwelling in North Tyneside continued to decrease and was at its lowest level in seven years.

The Authority had worked with stakeholders to ensure that social value commitments were aligned and included into the Authority's procurement and commissioning processes to contribute to maximising environmental sustainability.

A secure North Tyneside

A concern with residents was that anti-social behaviour was perceived to be increasing and a reduction in residents feeling safe in their local area after dark. During 2022 a multi-agency North Tyneside Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Task Force had been established to develop and deliver a shared plan to tackle ASB as a partnership making a difference for residents, communities, visitors and businesses.

In relation to roads and pavements maintenance the majority 59% were assessed as good, however 34% of the network required maintenance and identified for improvement.

The Authority had agreed to extend its Council Tax Support and Hardship support schemes.

In relation to tackling socio-economic inequalities, there continued to be a variance in life expectancy between areas in the most and least deprived areas.

Provisional figures showed there was an increase in children living in relative in low-income families and a number of initiatives that the Authority had introduced to address food poverty were highlighted.

The delivery of the Affordable Homes Programme was on track with the target of 266 homes being met in 2021/22.

A Family-friendly North Tyneside

In relation to schools 96% primary and 88% secondary schools were rated as Good.

There continued to be a high number of children subject to a child protection plan and there also was an increase in the number of contacts with Children's Safeguarding Services.

The number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) continued to increase, which had

prompted the Authority submitting a High Needs Recovery Plan to the department of Education that detailed how the Authority would reduce the funding deficit.

A caring North Tyneside.

During 2021/22, 86% people who received a short-term service during the year subsequently received either no ongoing support or support of a lower level, which was a slight improvement from 2020/21.

The Authority continued to increase fees to external social care providers that take account of the increase in the National Living Wage.

It also recognised the additional pressures on home care and extra care services and included an added element in the fee increase calculation to allow providers to pay the Real Living Wage.

The Authority continued to develop the Social Care Academy to support care providers and employees.

The number of residents presenting as homeless and being accepted as priority homeless was increasing.

The Authority continued to work with VODA as the North Tyneside Infrastructure Organisation for Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector organisations in North Tyneside.

A green North Tyneside

The recycling rate in North Tyneside remained consistent at 38% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting during 2021/22.

The Environmental Hit Squad were established in 2019 to target specific areas where litter and fly tipping and the number of fixed penalty notices issued remained consistent compared to the previous year.

£8m funding has been secured from the Green Homes Grant Local Delivery Scheme to install low carbon heating, energy efficiency measures and renewable energy systems in over 500 homes with low-household incomes and had been installed in 260 homes.

It was reported that 72.1% of adults in North Tyneside walk or cycle at least once a week, which is showing an upward trend and is slightly higher than the proportion regionally and nationally.

The carbon footprint of Authority operations had decreased by 53% against the baseline year in 2010/11, well in advance of the 2023 target of 50%.

The carbon footprint of the Borough had decreased by 47% between 2005 and 2020 and by 51% when accounting for population growth.

Members were offered the opportunity to ask questions following the presentation.

A Member questioned the how the Authority would finance and approach the provision of 5000 affordable homes. The Deputy Mayor provided an explanation of how the Affordable

Homes Programme would deliver affordable homes.

In relation to caring for people including if they become homeless it was asked what support was available to residents to help them to continue to be secure in their home. In response it was indicated that the Housing Options Service would be requested to provide a written response to the committee.

A Member praised the Authority for the continued increase fees to external social care providers to take account of the increase in the National Living Wage, however, a concern was raised that although the increased fees was being provided to providers, the increase was not in all cases being passed onto the carers as intended. In response the Deputy Mayor stated that the Authority was aware of this practice, and it would look into how to ensure the provided increased fees was received by those it was intended.

In relation to opportunities for cycling and walking a member questioned if there was a definition for what constituted walking (was this measure in distance or walking to work). The officer stated that methodology for the measure would be investigated, and a response would be provided.

In relation to libraries and leisure centres open, it was requested that a breakdown of 2021/22 library and customer services centre attendances be provided.

Agreed that (1) Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-25 Performance Report be noted; and (2) the responses relating to areas raised throughout the meeting to be provided.

OV13/22 Efficiency Savings Programme: 2021/22 Quarter 4: Progress Report

The Committee received a report that provided an update on the outturn of key 2021/22 projects and business cases within the Efficiency Savings Programme.

The financial position at 31 March 2022 showed that there was £0.007m savings had not been achieved from the £4,537 target, where £3.941m had been delivered against the overall target via project activities outlined in associated business cases. A further £1.039m was achieved as the direct result of management actions during the course of the financial year.

Agreed that the Efficiency Savings Programme 2021/22 Quarter 4 Progress Report be noted.

OV14/22 Efficiency Savings Programme: 2022/23 Quarter 1: Progress Report

The Committee received a report that provided an updated the progress of key 2022/23 projects and business cases within the Efficiency Savings Programme.

New savings were proposed for 2022/23 of £3.113m combined with £1.607m of savings targets that were agreed in prior years budget setting processes for delivery in 2022/23.

Savings targets of £2.373m within Health, Education, Care and Safeguarding (HECS) and £0.164m within Commissioning & Asset Management (C&AM) were met in 2021/22 through

Covid grants, alternative management actions or through one-year funding sources. These targets still require permanent achievement increasing the total savings brought forward from prior year business cases to £4.144m.

The overall target to achieve in 2022/23 was £7.257m and the financial position at 30 June 2022 indicated that £2.948m had been delivered against the overall target via project activities outlined in the associated business cases, with the remaining target of £4.309m to be achieved.

Agreed that the Efficiency Savings Programme 2022/23 Quarter 1 Progress Report be noted.

OV15/22 Cabinet Response to Overview and Scrutiny Home Care Study Group Report

The Committee received the response report from Cabinet to the recommendations submitted by the sub-group of the Adult Social Care, Health & Wellbeing Sub-committee to its review into Home Care Provision in North Tyneside.

Appended to the report were the actions to be taken with associated timescale for the completion of each of the recommendations.

Agreed that the recommendation response from Cabinet in relation to the work of the sub-group of the Adult Social Care, Health & Wellbeing Sub-committee to its review into Home Care Provision in North Tyneside be noted.

OV16/22 Cabinet Response to Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee Report on Green Skills for Retrofit Jobs

The Committee received the response report from Cabinet to the recommendations submitted by the sub-group of the Economic Prosperity Sub-committee to its review into Green Skills for Retrofit Jobs.

Appended to the report were the actions to be taken with associated timescale for the completion of each of the recommendations.

Agreed that the recommendation response from Cabinet in relation to the work of the sub-group of the Economic Prosperity Sub-committee to its review into Green Skills for Retrofit Jobs be noted.