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Overview, Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

Wednesday, 30 November 2022

Present: Councillor M Hall (Deputy Chair in the Chair)
Councillors L Arkley, Janet Hunter, J Kirwin, E Parker-
Leonard, M Thirlaway, M Wilson, P Earley and
G Westwater

In attendance:
Ms F Burton – Parent Governor Representative
Rev M Vine – Church Representative
S Fallon – Church Representative

Apologies: Councillors J Cruddas, D Drummond, M Green,
J Montague, A Newman, W Samuel and J Wallace

OV17/20 Appointment of Substitute Members

Pursuant to the council's constitution the appointment of the following substitute members was made:

Councillor G Westwater for Councillor J Wallace
Councillor P Earley for Councillor M Green

OV18/20 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Councillor Matthew Thirlaway declared a registerable personal interest and a non-registerable personal interest in Item 6 – Efficiency Savings Programme 2022/23 and Item 7 – Technical Services Partnership Performance Update Report as he is employed by Parkside Care Ltd (who has contracts with the Council to provide social care) and his father is employed by North Tyneside Council.

Councillor Margaret Hall declared a non-registerable personal interest in Item 6 – Efficiency Savings Programme 2022/23, as her daughter works in the social care sector.

OV19/20 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2022 be agreed.

OV20/20 Annual Report of the Elected Mayor

The Elected Mayor thanked the committee for the opportunity to present her Annual Report, share her priorities for the year ahead and to reflect on the achievements that had been made over the previous year.

The Elected Mayor stated that responding to the challenges of the pandemic had provided an opportunity to look at the way in which services were delivered and to make changes that

were better for residents and to build an even better North Tyneside. Thanks was expressed to Elected Members and officers for their hard work, dedication, support and commitment to the organisation.

Following the pandemic and in light of the changes in service delivery, the Council Plan had been refreshed, in consultation with residents and other key stakeholders. The plan now focused on five themes:

- A thriving North Tyneside
- A family-friendly North Tyneside
- A caring North Tyneside
- A secure North Tyneside
- A green North Tyneside

The Elected Mayor stated that, during these difficult times when residents are faced with a cost of living crisis, she was determined that North Tyneside is and can be:

- A place where local businesses and high streets thrive
- A place where great care is offered to those who need it
- A place where children and young people continue to receive an outstanding education and families flourish

The Council priorities included:

- Bringing more good quality jobs to North Tyneside
- Regenerating the high streets of North Shields and Wallsend
- Investing in adult education and supporting apprenticeships
- Promoting the borough's award-winning parks, beaches, festivals and other activities
- Reducing the number of derelict properties in the borough to make it more attractive for all
- Working towards the aim of delivering 5000 affordable homes
- Continuing to invest in roads and pavements
- Helping low income households to install low-carbon heating

The Elected Mayor stated that she was looking forward to building on the Authorities successes in the coming months and years. This included:

- Through the North Shields Master Plan, a transformation of the town centre and riverside into an environment where people choose to live, work and spend their leisure time
- 131 Bedford Street and the former Globe Gallery would be brought back into use for cultural purposes in the coming year
- Construction of 29 new family housing units on the former site of Unicorn House
- A scheme for the relocation of the Ferry landing into the Western Quay had been submitted for funding from Round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund
- Funding from the North East Local Enterprise Partnership to prepare a Masterplan for Wallsend. The plan focused on modernisation along the High Street including retail and residential properties
- More affordable homes and a new health centre as part of the regeneration of Wallsend Town Centre

The Elected Mayor highlighted the fantastic programme of outdoor events for Summer 2022 which included a Platinum Jubilee celebration and baton relay for her late Majesty the Queen. The Mouth of Tyne festival was once again a huge success, attracting over 100,000 people to the area across a weekend in July.

Other key highlights and events across the year included:

- Blue Flag and seaside awards achieved at Kings Edwards Bay, Tynemouth Longsands and Whitley Bay beaches
- The number of long-term vacant dwellings had continued to decline, with the lowest levels in the last 7 years
- The Bread and Butter Thing continued to grow, providing residents with access to weekly food for £7.50
- Supporting volunteers to welcome Ukrainian families to the borough
- The launch of warm welcome venues in libraries and customer first centres, extending support to residents by offering hot drinks, a place to relax and an opportunity to get involved in free activities
- Delivery of the affordable homes programme which was on track to meet the ambitious 5,000 affordable homes target. The target of delivering 266 affordable homes in 2021/22 had been achieved

The Elected Mayor stated that she was looking forward to seeing even more progress in the borough and to building back an even better North Tyneside.

The Chair thanked the Elected Mayor for her presentation.

It was **agreed** to note the update from the Elected Mayor.

OV21/20 Efficiency Savings Programme 2022/23 Quarter 2 Progress Report

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

Members were informed that new savings were proposed for 2022/23 of £4.720m combined with £2.537m of savings targets that still required a permanent solution from previous years meaning an overall target to achieve in 2022/23 of £7.257m.

The project work and the realisation of associated savings for the new 2022/23 savings had been broken down over the four workstreams: Digital, Data and Customer; Workforce Planning and Organisational Development; Commissioning, Procurement and Commercial; and Asset Management. In the previous year business cases were broken down by the six key outcomes of: Ready for School; Ready for Work and Life; Cared for, Safeguarded & Healthy; Great Place to Live, Work and Visit; Fit for Purpose Organisation; and Managing Resources.

The financial position on 30 September 2022 was set out in a table within the report. Of the £7.257m target, £3.719m had been delivered against the overall target via project activities outlined in associated business cases. £3.538m of the overall target was yet to be achieved and was contributing to the wider Authority pressure reported to Cabinet.

As part of the Authority's programme management arrangements, all business cases and

projects within the Efficiency Savings Programme were monitored on a regular basis. Each project was given a RAG rating for project delivery and savings delivery.

Members discussed the projects which had a red rating, which meant that milestones were significantly delayed and/or there were major concerns about delivering future milestones. Pressures relating to Home to School Transport and Children's Health Funding were highlighted and it was noted that different ways of working were being explored to bring about efficiencies. In relation to Leading Sector-Led Improvement, it was noted that there were high standards in Children's Services and that sharing expertise with other local authorities had achieved some income. However, this had been halted due to the pandemic and restricted travelling.

The efficiency savings linked to Keeping Children in Care within the Borough was still a challenging area. It was highlighted that there had been a significant increase in the number of children in the care system and a higher level of complexities. New provision had been opened within the borough and the service would continue to be led by what was best for the child and family.

It was **agreed** to note the update provided.

OV22/20 Technical Services Partnership Performance Update Report

The Committee received a report which set out the 2021-22 year end performance outcome for the partnership. The year-end performance had been approved by the established partnership governance arrangements.

The authority monitors performance of the partnership on a regular basis and Capita are required to meet a series of important performance milestones for each service they deliver on behalf of the authority.

Performance scorecards were reported for each of the following service areas:

- Property Services
- Engineering Services
- Regulatory Services

Service delivery performance was attached as Appendix 1 to the report and financial performance was delivered as Appendix 3.

At its meeting in March 2022, the Committee had been advised about the development of the Annual Service Plan 2022-23 for the partnership. It had been approved and aligned with the updated Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-25.

The Committee focused attention on the performance indicators that had a red RAG status. In relation to Freedom of Information Requests (FOI), it was noted that in January (2022) there had been 4 requests not responded to within the required timeframe. This had been down to issues with IT and the volume of information requested. Performance in relation to FOIs was now in green.

In relation to roads and pavements, quality of maintenance repairs, performance was in red during February and March 2022. This was attributed to problems with officer succession, causing a lack of quality monitoring and issues with the software used. These issues were

addressed, and performance was back on track. In relation to planning appeals contrary to officer decisions, performance had been below expected standards across Quarter 4. It was noted that plans were in place to make sure that officer decisions are robust.

It was **agreed** to note the performance update.

OV23/20 Exclusion Resolution

Resolved that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and having applied a public interest test as defined in Part 2 of Schedule 12A of the Act, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business of the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A to the Act.

OV24/20 Technical Services Partnership - Financial Information

Agreed that the financial update 2021/22 be noted.

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