

No.

LEARNING AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Remote meeting held on 17th September, 2020.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor S.J. Griffiths (Chairman); Councillors Ms. R.M. Birch, N.P. Hodges, T.H. Jarvie, G.C. Kemp, Mrs. J.M. Norman, A.C. Parker, Mrs. S.D. Perkes, L.O. Rowlands and N.C. Thomas.

Co-opted Members: Dr. M. Price (Roman Catholic Church) and Mrs. J. Lynch-Wilson (Parent Governor – Primary Sector).

Also present: Councillors N. Moore (Leader), L. Burnett (Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration), E. Williams (Cabinet Member Legal, Regulatory and Planning Services) and M.R. Wilson.

32 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Chairman read the following statement:

“May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing.”

33 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from Mr. H. Gapper (Welsh Medium Sector).

34 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN –

RESOLVED – T H A T Councillor Ms. R.M. Birch be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the Municipal year.

35 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 13th February, 2020 be approved as a correct record.

36 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations were received.

37 PRESENTATION: WORKING TOWARDS RECOVER – SEPTEMBER 2020 –

The Director of Learning and Skills, with support from the relevant Heads of Service, provided a PowerPoint presentation to the Committee which set out the vital work already undertaken across the Council in response to the Covid-19 national pandemic and the transitional corporate approach to recovery. This included:

- The Council's strategy to responding to the pandemic;
- Governance and decision making process;
- Learning from the Council's response;
- Focus on engagement and wellbeing including results of the staff survey;
- Objectives for the transition phase and the easing of lockdown restrictions;
- and
- Focus on the Council's recovery process and next steps.

On a Learning and Skills Directorate level, an update going forward was provided under the following headings:

- Schools' IT, digital inclusion, data and PPE
- Support for our more vulnerable pupils
- Summer provision
- HUB demand
- Libraries
- Adult and community learning
- Learn Welsh.

The Director issued thanks to all staff within the Directorate and schools in the Vale for their hard work and dedication and for their continued proactive contact which allowed services to adapt in both a fast paced and new environment.

The Committee echoed the Director's commendation and expressed its appreciation and thanks for the efforts made by staff to support vital services during this unprecedented time.

A Committee Member, in relation to the Hubs, queried how staff rotas were co-ordinated. In reply, the Director of Learning and Skills stated that this was organised by the Headteachers for the relevant Hub schools. This was mainly achieved by the tremendous goodwill of staff and had been very successful which had allowed schools to open and provide support to families. In addition, a central on-line system was developed for parents to book places. This allowed schools to co-ordinate rotas and to plan and organise their opening times.

Having considered the presentation, it was

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the Working Towards Recovery presentation for the Learning and Skills Directorate be noted.

No.

Reason for recommendation

In view of the information contained therein.

38 ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN MONITORING REPORT: QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE 2020/21 (DLS) –

The Director of Learning and Skills presented the report, the purpose of which was to present Quarter 1 performance results for the period 1st April, 2020 to 30th June, 2020 in delivering the Council's Annual Delivery Plan commitments as aligned to its Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives.

The Director advised that despite the significant challenges of responding to the global Covid-19 pandemic, which was at its height during the first quarter period, positive progress had been made in delivering the in-year commitments in relation to the Annual Delivery Plan.

Progress had therefore contributed to an overall Amber status for the Plan at Quarter 1.

65% (149 out of 228) of planned activities outlined in the Council's Annual Delivery Plan had been attributed a Green status reflecting the positive progress made during the quarter. 20% (47) of planned activities were attributed a Red status.

Of the 47 actions attributed a Red performance status during the quarter, 70% (33) were directly as a result of service reprioritisation measures undertaken in response to the impact of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. In relation to these areas, where appropriate, work was now recommencing alongside service reviews which would inform the Council's recovery planning and strategy going forward. Progress in relation to this would be reported during Quarter 2.

Of the 43 quarterly performance measures aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives, data was reported for 34 measures where a performance status was applicable. 70% (24) measures were attributed a Green performance Status, 3% (1) an Amber status and 27% (9) a Red status. Data was unavailable for 9 quarterly measures due to reprioritisation measures undertaken in response to the impact of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. A performance status was not applicable for 121 measures including a number of annual indicators (104) and those establishing baseline performance for the year (8).

In relation to the 9 measures attributed a Red performance status during the quarter, the impact of Covid-19 had contributed to missing target.

A detailed report outlining the progress made this quarter towards achieving the Council's Annual Delivery Plan commitments was provided at Appendix A to the report.

A Committee Member stated that with pupils now returning to school, and the alleged increase in domestic abuse, were there any wellbeing implications for

No.

schools and were teachers properly aware. In reply, the Head of Additional Learning Needs and Wellbeing stated that the situation had not been without impact and the Directorate had been supporting schools with the return through additional training. However, it was still early days and so there had not been a severe impact. In addition, Welsh Government had provided funding in order to provide more counselling and therapeutic services and so the Directorate was helping schools to become prepared for the new start of the term.

The Committee agreed to send its formal thanks and appreciation to all staff in the Directorate and the Vale schools for their hard work and commitment during the Covid-19 pandemic.

RECOMMENDED –

(1) T H A T the Committee's thanks and appreciation be passed on to staff in the Directorate and all Vale schools for their hard work and commitment during the Covid pandemic.

(2) T H A T the performance results and progress towards achieving the Annual Delivery Plan 2020/21 commitments as aligned to the Council's Corporate Plan Well-being Objectives within the remit of the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee, be noted.

(3) T H A T the remedial actions taken to address areas of underperformance and to tackle the key challenges identified within the remit of the Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee be noted.

Reasons for recommendations

(1) To pass on the Committee's thanks and appreciation.

(2) To ensure the Council clearly demonstrates the progress being made towards achieving its commitments in the Annual Delivery Plan 2020/21 aimed at making a positive difference to the lives of Vale of Glamorgan citizens.

(3) To ensure the Council is effectively assessing its performance in line with the requirement to secure continuous improvement as outlined in the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2009 and reflecting the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that it maximises its contribution to achieving the well-being goals for Wales.

39 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL TO 31ST JULY 2020 (DLS) –

The Principal Accountant presented the report, the purpose of which was to advise the Scrutiny Committee of the progress relating to revenue and capital expenditure for the period 1st April to 31st July, 2020.

No.

The forecast for this Committee is an overspend of £324k. The Education Pressures reserve has a current balance of £452k and therefore if the Education Service is unable to mitigate the overspent position by year end, funding will be transferred from the reserve

Directorate/Service	2020/21 Amended Budget £000	2020/21 Projected £000	Variance (+)Favourable (-) Adverse £000
Schools	93,850	93,850	0
Strategy, Culture, Community Learning & Resources	11,344	11,698	-354
Directors Office	231	231	0
Additional Learning Needs & Wellbeing	3,021	3,050	-29
Standards and Provision	4,080	4,021	+59
Unplanned use of reserves to fund overspend	0	(324)	+324
Total	112,526	112,526	0

As part of the Final Revenue Budget Proposals for 2020/21, an efficiency target of £45k was set for the Committee. Attached at Appendix 1 to the report was a statement detailing all efficiency targets for 2020/21 and it was anticipated that this would be achieved in full by year end.

Appendix 2 to the report detailed financial progress on the Capital Programme as at 31st July, 2020. Members were aware that Appendix 2 included requests for unspent committed expenditure to be slipped from the 2019/20 Capital Programme into 2020/21 as approved by emergency powers on 23rd July, 2020.

Having considered the report, it was

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the position with regard to the 2020/21 revenue and capital budgets be noted.

Reason for recommendation

That Members are aware of the projected revenue outturn for 2020/21.

40 UPDATED WORK PROGRAMME SCHEDULE 2020/21 (MD) –

The Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer presented an updated Committee Work Programme for 2020/21.

No.

The Committee noted that Work Programme was presented in a new format which provided greater information regarding the purpose and impact of reports and agenda items. The Director of Learning and Skills stated that there would be two further reports for the October meeting and the Director asked if the following could be added to the Work Programme:

1. Establishment of a new primary school in Cowbridge;
2. Establishment of a Learning and Wellbeing Centre at the Court Road Depot site and a Resource Base at Gladstone Primary School.

The Committee agreed that the reports requested by the Director at the October meeting would be added to its Work Programme.

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the Committee's Work Programme be amended with the additional two reports for the October meeting and the revised version uploaded to the Council's website.

Reason for recommendation

For information.