

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held
at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 12 September 2018

Present:

Members: Councillor R Singh (Chair)
 Councillor S Bains
 Councillor R Brown
 Councillor L Harvard
 Councillor K Sandhu
 Councillor K Taylor
 Councillor R Thay

Other Members: Councillors

Employees:

Apologies: Councillor R Auluck and T Sawdon

Public Business

7. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

8. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2018 were signed as a true record.

9. Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Board considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive, Place, which presented a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for adoption by the City Council. The previous strategy was approved in December 2017. The Strategy set out the financial planning foundations that supported the Council's vision and priorities and the financial and policy context for the Council's forthcoming Budget process. Cabinet would consider proposals within the Pre-Budget Report in November and the final Budget Setting Report will be brought to Cabinet and Council in February 2019.

The Board recognised that the City Council continued to be faced with a challenging and fluid financial position affected by temporary shortfalls in delivery of its existing savings plans and financial pressures within services for children, housing and homelessness. Although the Council has some ambitious Capital Programme plans, the scale and pace of these represent a significant challenge in terms of the Council's ability to deliver them to the required timescales and within its existing project capacity.

Notwithstanding the approaches set out in the strategy, the Council would need to maintain dynamic financial models that take account of changes in its medium term budget position and ongoing re-evaluation of its Capital Programme. This may include adopting some measures which have a shorter-term focus or which re-evaluate the Council's approach to financial risk. These will be set out fully at the point of decision making.

The Board questioned officers on a number of aspects of the report including:

- Potential Impact of the Fair Funding Review and move to 75% business rate retention and the consequential impact on the capital programme
- The potential local economic impact of Brexit
- The knock-on impact of financial savings in other areas

Following discussion about a number of aspects arising from the report, the Board agreed to recommend that Cabinet consider taking a collaborative approach to assess the gender based impacts of any services changes. They also agreed that they would further look at Fair Funding, the local impact of Brexit, and those savings in the MTFS which had yet to be achieved.

RESOLVED that the Board

- (i) **Recommend that Cabinet consider taking a collaborative approach with partners to assess gender based impacts of proposed service changes.**
- (ii) **Identified the following areas for further scrutiny:**
 1. **The developing Fair Funding proposals for Local Government Finance**
 2. **Local economic impacts of Brexit**
 3. **Identification of savings in the MTFS which have yet to be achieved.**

10. Work Programme and Outstanding Issues

The work programme was noted with the following updates:

- The Workforce Strategy Review, Leadership Development Investment and Results of the Staff Satisfaction Survey to be added to the November 2018 agenda.
- The Capital programme report to be circulated to members of the Board inviting questions and those would then be put to officers in advance of the meeting.
- ICT Strategy, ICT Service Level Agreements and ICT Asset Register to be considered in February 2019.

11. Any other items of Public Business

There were no other items of business.

(Meeting closed at 3.45 pm)