

## Minutes of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board

11<sup>th</sup> September, 2019 at 5.45pm  
at Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

**Present:** Councillor L Giles (Chair);  
Councillors E M Giles and Singh.

**Apologies:** Councillors Moore and Rollins.

**In attendance:** R Griffiths (Strategic Finance Manager);  
S Lilley (Business Partner – Finance).

### 16/19 **Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> August, 2019 be approved as a correct record.

### 17/19 **Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring 2019/20**

The Cabinet, at its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2019, had referred the Council-wide budget monitoring report for Quarter 1 for consideration by the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board.

Details of the Council's revenue and capital expenditure as at the end of June 2019 were received by the Board.

At a service level, excluding Public Health and the Housing Revenue Account, there was a forecast year-end overspend of £1.5m made up as follows:

Corporate Management – balanced budget;  
Resources – surplus of £0.162m;  
Adults Social Care – surplus of £0.107m;  
Children's Services – deficit of £1.531m;  
Regeneration and Growth – deficit of £0.252m;  
Housing and Communities – surplus of £0.014m.

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In addition, there was a projected year end surplus of £0.864m within Public Health. Including Public Health, the directorate-level forecast outturn position was an overspend of £0.352m.

The Board noted the reasons for the variances at the end of Quarter 1 for each service area.

Following comments and questions from members of the Board, the following responses were made and issues highlighted:-

- The budget monitoring information presented related to the Children's Services that were retained by the Council and did not include the Sandwell Children's Trust budgetary information. The Board requested that an additional meeting be arranged, with the Council's representatives on the Strategic Partnership Board to discuss matters relating to the contract monitoring arrangements and the resourcing of the Trust.
- Transport Services for young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) was an area of particular pressure which was currently the subject of a detailed review. Members asked for an update on the review.
- The Board noted the budget pressures around the provision of temporary accommodation for the homeless and asked for further information, including if the introduction of Universal Credit had impacted upon numbers of people needing temporary accommodation.
- Section 106 monies were paid by developers towards the cost of providing community and social infrastructure that must be used for specific purposes. Directors were working to investigate how the Council could best make use of the Section 106 monies that it held and the Board asked for further information on this work.
- The Board requested further information on the performance for Business Rates collection rates for 2019/20 so far.
- Work was underway to review Providence Place to secure effective commercial use on floors not occupied by Council services.

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### Resolved that:-

- (1) the relevant Directors provide the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board with briefing notes on the following matters:-
  - (a) Homelessness – further information on the increase in numbers and any impact of Universal Credit;
  - (b) Section 106 – further information on the use of Section 106 monies and the impact of covenants placed on their use;
  - (c) Business Rates – request for information on the collection rate.
- (2) the Council's representatives on the Sandwell Children's Trust Strategic Partnership Board be invited to an additional meeting of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board to discuss matters relating to the contract monitoring arrangements and the resourcing of the Trust;
- (3) an update on the progress of the review of Special Education Needs Transport be brought to an additional meeting of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board.

(Meeting ended at 6.14 pm)

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