

Time Commenced – 5.01pm
Time Finished – 7.10pm

Executive Scrutiny Board

17 January 2022

Present: Councillor Repton (Chair)
Councillors Care, Carr, Dhindsa, Grimadell, M Holmes, Martin,
Prosser

In attendance: Councillors S Khan and Nawaz
Heather Greenan - Director of Policy, Insight &
Communications
Steven Mason – Democratic Services Officer
Rachel North – Strategic Director of Communities and Place
Alison Parkin – Director of Financial Services
Simon Riley – Strategic Director of Corporate Resources
Andy Smith – Strategic Director of People Services

64/21 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Pattison and Pegg.

65/21 Late Items

There were none.

66/21 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

67/21 Council Plan and Budget Proposals 2022/23 and 2024/25

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director of Corporate Resources on Council Plan and Budget Proposals 2022/23 and 2024/25.

As part of the budget consultation process, the Board considered the report and the Council Plan 2022 – 2025 and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2022-23 to 2024-25 attached at Appendix 1 and 2 respectively.

The Director of Policy, Insight & Communications reported on how the Council Plan was refreshed, consulted on, and prepared.

The Director of Financial Services reported on the financial context that the budget was set in, including inflation, demand pressures and Government funding. Members noted the budget approach linked to partnership themes.

The Strategic Director of Communities and Place reported on the Green City priority and the associated key outcomes, pressures, and savings.

The Strategic Director of Communities and Place reported on the Vibrant City priority and the associated key outcomes, pressures, and savings.

The Strategic Director of Communities and Place reported on the City of Growth priority and the associated key outcomes, pressures, and savings.

Members questioned officers on the rewilding of Allestree Park, the Assembly Rooms, Raynesway Recycling Centre, the Sinfin waste treatment plant, renewable energy and electric car use, the Queen's Leisure Centre, and the importance of linking the growth agenda to carbon neutrality.

The Strategic Director of People Services reported on the Resilient City priority and the associated key outcomes, pressures, and savings.

Members questioned officers on NEET, early help, integrated care, working in partnership to streamline processes, the numbers of children in care, and demand management and the use of signposting.

The Strategic Director of Corporate Services reported on Working Smarter and the associated key partnership outcomes, pressures, and savings.

The Strategic Director of Corporate Services also reported on the reserves forecast, the capital programme and ambition.

Members questioned officer on the predicted inflation rate, Council Tax increases, the pay award, savings to be made, external advertising, social impact bonds, independent home to school travel, grey fleet mileage, energy projects, and budget risk reserve.

The Board debated, voted on and agreed a number of recommendations. Councillor Grimadell wished it to be recorded that he had abstained from voting.

The Executive Scrutiny Board resolved:

- 1. to recommend to Council Cabinet that it includes in its budget commitment, to provide a centrally located pool if the Queen's Leisure Centre and pool closes, together with the necessary budget provision for this;**
- 2. to recommend to Council Cabinet that it provides greater clarity, the necessary budget and plan to resolve the problem of the decaying Assembly Rooms sites future use;**
- 3. to recommend to Council Cabinet that when the Executive Scrutiny Board and Council makes a recommendation or passes a motion, that it acts on these rather than ignoring them;**
- 4. to agree that the Council's youth work and NEET support service play a vital role in helping some of the city's most deprived and disaffected young people. Whilst work with the Youth Alliance is welcome, the level of need means the Council should be aiming to**

develop its own youth support service, not cut it, which will prove a budget saving on statutory services in the long-run. The Executive Scrutiny Board therefore recommends that the proposed £303k cut to Youth and NEET support is rejected at Council Cabinet;

- 5. to agree that it supports efforts by Children's Services to reduce the number of children in care and to create more in-house care options for them. Nevertheless, the Executive Scrutiny Board notes that the pattern in recent years has been an overspend in children's services and increasing numbers of children in care. In order to set a realistic budget, the Executive Scrutiny Board recommends that Council Cabinet urgently revisits the budget allocation to children's services with a view to providing adequate contingency funds for children in care given the underlying trend of increasing numbers in care and unpredictable demand;**
- 6. to recommend to Council Cabinet that it continues to work to reduce 'silo thinking' between the Plan themes as well as between Council departments and partners;**
- 7. to recommend to Council Cabinet that it is reassured that there is no double-counting of commercial incomes across different budget lines; and**
- 8. to note that this Council Plan may be the first formal policy document stating a Derby Zero Carbon target date of 2035. There are also clear indications that energy prices are likely to rise dramatically in the next year and onwards. In the light of this, the Executive Scrutiny Board is disappointed that there is minimal investment proposed to replace gas heating or to improve energy efficiency in our buildings, apart from within the HRA. The Executive Scrutiny Board encourages Council Cabinet to review this area and bring back proposals in this area to Council.**

MINUTES END