

FINANCE, ASSETS & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 30th March, 2023
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

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Present: Councillor Mark Holland (Chair)

Councillors:	Bryan	P Waring	Talbot
	Parker	Bettley-Smith	Allport
	J Tagg	Brockie	Lawley

Apologies: Councillor(s) Stubbs
Sarah Wilkes

Substitutes:

Officers:	Vanessa Higgins	Policy and Strategy Business Manager
	Georgina Evans-Stadward	Service Director - Strategy, People and Performance
	Craig Turner	Finance Manager

Also in attendance: Councillor Simon Tagg Leader of the Council and
Portfolio Holder - One Council,
People and Partnerships

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest stated.

3. **MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING**

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19th January 2023 be approved as a correct record.

4. **FINANCIAL & PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 3**

The Policy & Strategy Business Manager introduced the new style Performance Reports. Members expressed their satisfaction over the format and presentation of the data.

Questions were asked and responses were provided as follows:

- Cllr Bettley-Smith: how were the targets derived and how did we make sure that the staff stayed motivated when continuous improvement was expected?

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- The target setting process was done with the heads of services as part of the Priority Delivery Plans set over three years. The question of how to keep staff motivated would be answered later during the meeting.
- Cllr Lawley: when would the document be available on the internet and would it be possible to click and access the data itself? – The data would be available online imminently.

The Leader presented the financial position and performance report's figures for the third quarter of the financial year. While the sickness absence trend was still higher than previous years, work was being done on wellbeing initiatives and long term absences were minimized. It was noted that the Council achieved the Thrive Foundation accreditation which recognises the quality of processes in terms of health including mental health.

Further questions were asked and responses were provided as follows:

- Cllr Waring on page 29 of the pack: on the one hand, the Council was consistently exceeding the speed of major development applications target, which may therefore not be challenging enough and could be raised accordingly; on the other hand just below, the Council was consistently way below target for quality of major development applications which seemed unrealistic. Could we see the national average perhaps so that these targets make sense? On a separate note, how was the Council's performance measured with regard to litter? – The targets represented national performance standards and the Council didn't have any say in them. Resources may be moved from one area to another when exceeding those targets. About the litter figures, a sample of locations was used and compared to national standards.
- Cllr Bettley-Smith: once again, how did we keep the staff motivated when already exceeding targets? – Continuous improvement was sought with staff and heads of service working closely to review targets as required to ensure that the staff stay both motivated and empowered to make suggestions.
- Cllr Brockie: a great deal of resources seemed to be put in gathering figures about whether or not the targets were met as well as trying to meet those targets; this raised the issue of how much money was actually saved and also the impact on staff's mental health; was there not an easier way to proceed? – The set of indicators and information collected was needed to measure progress on plans and know where to take action and what to do to make improvements. Automated systems were being put in place to simplify data collection and steps were taken to make sure workers were comfortable with the process.

Resolved: That members note

1. the contents of the report and appendices A and B and continue to monitor and challenge the Council's performance alongside its financial performance for the same period;
2. the new style reporting framework.

[Watch the Debate on YouTube](#)

5. ONE COUNCIL UPDATE

The Leader introduced the latest update on the One Council Programme aimed at supporting the provision of coordinated, efficient and high quality services to residents while meeting financial challenges and securing long term progress and strategic planning. The focus was on the mobile multifunction team deployed to support neighbourhood services delivery. It was noted that the Council recently won the IESE Public Sector Transformation Awards.

The Director of Strategy, People and Performance reminded members of the purpose and functioning of the programme including focus group, shared values and cultural transformation.

[Watch a summary of the Council's Cultural Transformation](#)

Future operating models, timelines and building blocks were subsequently presented among which the mobile multifunction team aimed at improving the effectiveness of enforcement activities in the neighbourhoods and town centres.

Questions were asked and responses were provided as follows:

- Cllr Waring: was there any scheme such as an employee reward scheme and could more information be provided about the data behind the figures? – Different metrics and sets of data were used and these could be subject to another presentation at a later meeting. About staff achievements and recognition, employees' input had been sought but very little feedback was received; small ways of celebrating these had been put in place through Team Talk and Castle News and a wider scheme was being discussed.
- Cllr Brockie: regarding the mobile multifunction team, how about existing contracts and employment rights? – Risks assessments were undertaken to ensure people felt safe at work and adequate training was provided; a recruitment process was also in place.
- Cllr Parker: which licensing enforcement activities were concerned by the transition? – The transition was about ensuring that the work was being done by people with the right skillset.

It was agreed that another update would be provided around the autumn.

Resolved: That the update report be received.

[Watch the debate here](#)

6. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the work programme and the possibility of adding the next One Council update to the September meeting.

Resolved: That the work programme be received.

[Watch the debate here](#)

7. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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There were no questions from members of the public.

8. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Monday 26th June 2023.

**Councillor Mark Holland
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 8.18 pm