

explaining key variances over the first four months of the year, and provides an overview of various elements of the Council's Balance Sheet as at 31 July 2021.

In summary, there is a forecast underspend against the budget for 2021/22 of £126k. Members noted that the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy reported that the minimum level of general fund reserves should be maintained at £4.0m to cushion against any potential, future financial risks that may face the Council. The forecast level of general fund balances as at 31 March 2022 will be £4.183m. Based on the position as at 31st July 2021, there is a forecast change to the Capital Programme of £350k in terms of slippage across years and £699k increase in programme budgets.

Revenue Budget Monitoring

Decision:

- 1. To note the forecast outturn for revenue and the level of reserves based on the position as at 31st July 2021.**
- 2. To note the virements to the revenue budget made during the period, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.**

Reasons for recommendations:

To ensure the Council's budgetary targets are achieved.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None

Capital Budget Monitoring

Resolved:

- 1. To approve the revised capital programme as attached at Appendix A, which reflects all approved amendments to the programme over the four months to 31st July 2021 as detailed in section 11 of this report.**
- 2. To approve the following variations to the programme (which have been included in Appendix B)**
 - a) £150,000 budget to be funded from reserves for capital works to upgrade and unify the network to include access points for improved Wi-Fi coverage.**
 - b) £100,000 increase to the Whittle GP Surgery programme due to telecommunications and car parking work to be funded from an increase in borrowing.**

All other approvals are within existing delegated limits as detailed in section 11.
- 3. To note the position in the Balance Sheet monitoring section of the report in respect of cash, investment and loan balances and debtors, as at 31st July 2021.**

Reasons for recommendations:

To ensure the Council's Capital Programme is monitored effectively.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None

21.EC.50 Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring Report 2021-22

Councillor Alistair Bradley, Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform), presented the report of the Deputy Chief Executive which sets out

the performance against the delivery of the Corporate Strategy and key performance indicators during the first quarter of 2021/22, covering the 1st April to the 30th June 2021.

The overall performance of key projects is good, with 92% of projects rated green and 8% rated amber. Action plans for those projects rated amber are contained within this report.

Performance of the Corporate Strategy indicators and key service delivery measures continue to be closely monitored, with 70% of Corporate Strategy measures and 67% of key service delivery measures performing on or above target, or within the 5% threshold. Performance against the agreed measures remains positive, with the Council continuing to work proactively to support local residents and communities. Where indicators are performing below target, action plans are in place to improve performance.

Members discussed the reasons why the processing of major planning applications was below target as well as querying the current vacancies in the ICT Team in relation to the workplace strategy.

Decision:
That the report be noted.

Reasons for recommendation(s):
The Council's performance framework sets out the process for reporting progress against the objectives of the Corporate Strategy. Robust monitoring ensures that the council continues to deliver its priorities and achieves the best outcomes for residents.

Alternative options considered and rejected:
None

21.EC.51 Shared Consultation Framework

Councillor Alistair Bradley, Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform), presented the report of the Deputy Chief Executive which sets out the Shared Consultation framework for approval.

In November 2020, a review was launched to produce a shared consultation policy with South Ribble Borough Council, seeking to harmonise and strengthen the approach to consulting across Chorley Council. This forms part of the wider implementation of shared services Phase 1.

This resulted in the creation of the Consultation Framework, which is shared between Chorley and South Ribble Councils. The purpose of the framework is to ensure that the council has a clear statement of the approach it will take to consultation, supporting all officers to apply a consistent approach. The framework also provides staff with a straightforward guide on how to conduct consultations, outlining the overall approach and presenting a step-by-step toolkit on how to conduct consultation activities.

Decision:
To approve the Consultation Framework in Appendix A.

Reasons for recommendation(s):

1. The Consultation Framework sets out how Chorley Council undertakes consultations.
2. Without a framework, consultations may not be consistently planned and undertaken in the proper way across the council. This can lead to poor consultations and consequently poor decision making. This framework is a shared approach across Chorley and South Ribble Councils which will provide a consistent approach for staff to work too.
3. Consultation is also a way for communities, residents and businesses to engage with the Council and shape their local area. Without a framework key features that promote inclusivity and accessibility may not be routinely applied, inadvertently leaving some voices unheard.
4. The framework provides officers across Chorley Council with the guidance and tools to undertake high quality consultations as and when needed.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

To not have a framework. As shared services continues to develop consultations could continue to be undertaken unilaterally by services, however the quality may be inconsistent. Further to this, different processes across shared teams could lead to confusion or misapplication, whereas a single shared framework will provide consistency.

21.EC.52 Workplace Strategy

Councillor Alistair Bradley, Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform), presented the report of the Deputy Chief Executive which sets out the Workplace Strategy 2021-2024 for consideration and approval.

The Workplace Strategy is the beginning of an ambitious plan and programme of works to transform where and how the council will work over the next three years. The strategy has been developed based on the experience of working through the Covid-19 pandemic, best practice, and feedback from staff. It aims to achieve flexibility and efficiency while maintaining productivity and performance. It sets out the vision, priorities, objectives, principles, and approach to developing our working places and practices for the future.

Members welcomed the report and discussed the Workplace Strategy and flexible working, in particular the wellbeing of staff, Members interconnectivity with officers, the impact on the local economy and how to manage the impact on the Town Centre, as well as requesting a detailed cost-benefit analysis.

Members recognised the possibility that more than 50% of office-based staff would need to be accommodated for at any one time and discussed how to overcome this. Utilising alternate council offices as part of the shared service and alternative town centre offices were suggested. Members also focused on reaching out to staff in the villages by creating offices in the community through partnership working and providing office drop-in centres, such as libraries in rural areas.

It was requested that the report be amended to make reference to consultation with Councillors and proposed that updates on the Workplace Strategy be regularly reported back to Members.

Decision:

That the Workplace Strategy is approved and progressed to support the future efficient operation of the organisation.

Reasons for recommendation(s):

To realise the social, economic, and environmental benefits of new ways of working in line with the changing operating context and workforce expectations.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

To revert back to pre-Covid-19 working practices. This option has been rejected based on the opportunities presented to modernise our approach and in line with feedback from staff.

21.EC.53 Exclusion of the Public and Press

Decision: To exclude the press and public for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

21.EC.54 Museum, Culture and Tourism Team Review

Councillor Alistair Bradley, Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform), presented the confidential report of the Deputy Chief Executive which sets out the new structure for the shared museum, culture and tourism team following a period of formal consultation.

Decision:

To agree the proposals for the new structure as set out in Appendix A.

Reasons for recommendation(s):

To complete the creation of a shared communications and visitor economy service with a new team that will take on the tourism function and the operation of the Astley Hall and Coach House complex.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

It has been considered to not share the museum, culture and tourism team but this was rejected due to the desire to establish an events team at South Ribble and the benefits the extra resilience would bring to the already established team at Chorley.

21.EC.55 Procurement of Handyperson & Affordable Warmth Assistance service

Councillor Peter Gabbott, Executive Member (Homes and Housing) presented the confidential report of the Director of Communities which outlines the proposed arrangements for the procurement of the Handyperson and Affordable Warmth Assistance service, to ensure that a new contract to deliver the service commences on 1 April 2022, and seeks Executive Cabinet approval to delegate the decision to appoint a Service Provider, following a procurement exercise, to the Executive Member (Homes and Housing).

Decision:

- 1. To approve the proposed arrangements for the procurement of the Handyperson and Affordable Warmth Service.**

2. To approve the proposed assessment methodology and evaluation criteria outlined in this report: 65% Quality weighting and 35% Pricing weighting.
3. To approve the proposal to apply Procurement Policy Note (PPN) 11/20, published in December 2020 and effective from 1st January 2021, which allows Local Authorities to reserve this procurement for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSEs).
4. That approval for the contract award decision is to be delegated to the Executive Member (Homes and Housing) once a preferred Service Provider has been identified following a tendering exercise to be conducted by means of 'The Chest' procurement portal.

Reasons for recommendation(s):

1. At the meeting on 17th June 2021, Executive Cabinet gave in-principle approval to allow a procurement exercise during the current financial year, in order to appoint a Service Provider to deliver the Handyperson and Affordable Warmth Assistance service, on an initial two year contract, from 1st April 2022, with an option to extend for a further year. Therefore, the recommendation in this report is consistent with the previously agreed course of action.
2. The retention of Handyperson and Affordable Warmth Services will enable the Council to continue to offer a broad range of appropriate assistance to Chorley residents.
3. Longer term funding commitment will enable consistency in terms of service planning and service delivery as well as being a more attractive proposition for potential Service Providers, thereby making it more likely to create competition in the market.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

Alternative options were presented to Members in the 16th June Executive Cabinet report, including ending the funding of the service, but it was recognised that the service is valuable to customers and is an important part of the overall 'offering' from the Council's Home Improvement Agency.

Chair

Date