



RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL AGENDA

Date: Wednesday, 23 September 2020

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Virtual Meeting

15 September 2020

PART 1

1. Apologies for absence, if any
2. Notification of Substitute Members, if any
3. Minutes of the previous meeting (**Pages 3 - 10**)
4. Urgent items of Business, if any (24 hours notice to be provided to the Chairman)
5. Declaration of Interests:
 - i. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests;
 - ii. Other Interests.
6. Questions to Portfolio Holders, if any
(At least two clear days notice required, in writing, to the Proper Officer in accordance with Procedure Rule 15).
7. 1st Quarter 2020/21 Financial, Performance & Procurement Report (**To Follow**)
8. Revised Performance Framework 2020/21 due to COVID (**Pages 11 - 20**)
9. Medium Term Financial Plan (**To Follow**)
10. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019-2020 (**Pages 21 - 30**)
11. Work Programme (**Pages 31 - 32**)
Any additional items to be added to the Work Programme:-
 - i. Chairman's items;
 - ii. Members' items;
 - iii. Forward Plan.

MARK TRILLO

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

Membership of Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Councillor A Hart (Chair)

Councillor C J S Atkins

Councillor E Fallows

Councillor N Hawkins

Councillor B A Hughes

Councillor K J Jackson

Councillor L D Lea

Councillor I Plant

Councillor D Shaw

Councillor N Yates

Councillor T Riley (Vice-Chair)

Councillor J Davies

Councillor M Gledhill

Councillor T Holmes

Councillor A Hulme

Councillor J T Jones

Councillor L A Malyon

Councillor P Routledge

Councillor P Wilkinson

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING

Minutes

WEDNESDAY, 15 JULY 2020

PRESENT: Councillor A Hart (Chair)

Councillors C J S Atkins, G Bentley, E Fallows, M Gledhill,
N Hawkins, B A Hughes, K J Jackson, J T Jones, I Plant, T Riley,
D Shaw and N Yates

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors M T Bowen, T Hall, S E Ralphs and J Salt

IN ATTENDANCE: C Hazeldene - Interim Chief Financial Officer
K Pointon - Principal Finance Officer
T Cooper - Head of OD & Transformation
L Vernon - Senior Officer – Governance & Member Support
S Hampton - Democratic Services Officer
P Trafford - Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES: Councillors T Holmes, L D Lea, L A Malyon and P Wilkinson

1 **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS, IF ANY**

Councillor G Bentley attended the meeting as substitute for Councillor L Malyon.

2 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

DECIDED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel held on 5 February 2020 be **APPROVED** as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

3 **URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS, IF ANY (24 HOURS NOTICE TO BE PROVIDED TO THE CHAIRMAN)**

There were no urgent items.

4 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS:**

There were no declarations of interest made.

5 **QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, IF ANY**

Question from Councillor Atkins:

Q1. What arrangements have been made for funding support for homeless people during the Covid-19 lockdown period within Staffordshire Moorlands. What number of homeless people have been provided for and what arrangements are being made for their longer term future?

Response – Councillor Bowen, Portfolio Holder for Communities:

“We entered a national lockdown on 23rd March 2020, and on the 27th March, the Government announced the “Everyone In” Initiative- aimed at getting all rough sleepers into a safe space to isolate. Given many hotels, hostels and similar were simultaneously closed this was a challenge. We ran media campaigns to get additional resource in place to enable us to meet this challenge. We worked with other authorities to pool and maximise resources in terms of both accommodation but also intellectual resource in determining the changing guidance from Government. We up-scaled and improved the out of hours response which is a further positive legacy.

Government have never formally ended this, however since 12th May we have moved to the “Keep Everyone In” phase – to ensure that wherever possible people are moved from B&B’s into suitable settled accommodation. Since lockdown, 37 households - either threatened with homelessness or actually homeless -have been supported to move into alternative accommodation, whether that is privately rented or within the social housing sector. There are currently just 2 cases remaining in B&B accommodation (as at 10.7.20), of which both have offers of accommodation for moving on.

The total cost of this provision to date has been £42,917, of which £11,639 has been recouped through housing benefit and a further £1,650 through specific funding from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for this purpose. The Council has also received non-ring fenced funding from MHCLG to cover additional costs arising from the impact of Covid-19 totalling £1,021,594 to date – of which a proportion will be allocated to the additional costs associated with providing temporary accommodation.”

Supplementary 1 – What ongoing work was taking place to avoid instances of homelessness with the onset of potential redundancies due to COVID?

The Housing Team always responded quickly to any situation presented to them, working quickly to alleviate any difficulties experienced.

Supplementary 2 – There were regular rough sleepers known to be in the district. Would the team be able to work proactively, given the potential increase in rough sleeping due to the oncoming recession and a likely increase in evictions?

There was only 1 known rough sleeper in the district last year, who refused any help offered. The team would respond where instances were known but more information was needed to identify such cases.

6 COVID-19 PANDEMIC - FINANCIAL RECOVERY & POSITIVE LEGACY

Claire Hazeldene – Acting Head of Finance – introduced the report, stating that work had commenced on the Council’s recovery from COVID 19 in late April 2020, with 5 main work streams having been identified:-

1. Reinstating services (to be reported to the Service Delivery Panel);
2. Economic recovery (Service Delivery Panel);
3. Community recovery (Community Panel);
4. Financial recovery (Resources Panel);

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5. Taking advantage of the positive legacy (Resources Panel).

Financial recovery

The development of the recovery response was underpinned by the assessment of the overall financial impact of COVID-19, with key priorities identified as:-

- Developing revised financial plans to take account of the financial impact and plan for the ongoing implications;
- Accounting for the significant treasury impact;
- Identifying and planning for the additional costs of additional service demands; and
- Providing for the additional costs arising from recovery.

A risk matrix was compiled identifying potential financial risks, rated on status as either green (costs already being incurred), amber (costs likely to occur – as yet unidentified) or red (remained a risk – not yet emerged to date). This currently showed as follows:-

General Fund	Impact Range based on Timescales		
	Low	Medium	High
	£	£	£
Impact Emerging	416,055	634,253	1,001,190
Impact Likely	340,458	552,492	808,112
Potential Risk	121,168	247,106	503,754
TOTAL	877,681	1,433,851	2,313,056

The £2.3m shown above had been offset by 2 funding allocations from government totalling £1m and a drawdown from reserves of £1.3m.

On 2 July 2020, the Secretary of State announced a further package of financial support in 3 parts:-

1. COVID-19 related expenditure – A further £500m non ring-fenced allocation, taking the total support to £4.3b;
2. Irrecoverable income loss – recognising that Councils had lost income from sales, fees and charges since the start of the pandemic and looked to reimburse 75% of such losses over and above 5% of planned income;
3. Losses in tax revenue – Tax deficits able to be repaid over 3 years rather than the usual 1 year.

Concerns regarding the long term impact of COVID-19 had led to work commencing on an early review of the Medium Term Financial Plan, a summary of which would be presented to the Audit & Accounts Committee in September 2020.

Taking Advantage of the Positive Legacy

Tanya Cooper – Head of Organisational Development and Transformation – outlined to members the following main areas:-

- Green infrastructure delivery;
- Digital infrastructure; and
- Transport e.g. increase in walking or cycling to work.

The reduction in travel, benefits to staff through home-working, additional channel shifts reducing direct contact, increased contact with local businesses in

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administering the grants and the reduction in unnecessary beaurocracy were all seen as positives. Areas under investigation were:-

Action	Possible output
Review internal processes that have already had to change as a result of home working / office closures	Identify processes that have been forced to change and already improved as a result of COVID. We want to retain these improved working practices, so that they are not disregarded in the future and an old way of working re-introduced.
Review of other internal service processes to remove manual, paper-based processes that have created hurdles during lockdown	Opportunity to positively steer our Digital Transformation further. Goal to digitise where possible & needed to improve overall efficiency – reduced manual / paper processes will also improve service area efficiency. Introduce electronic only copies of planning applications to Parish and Town Councils.
Reduse our staff carbon footprint (travelling / printing) by improved and increased use of technology and a delivery of a digital workplace.	Opportunity to embrace this digital direction with implementation of Microsoft 365 suite, enabling access for Teams, Sharepoint, Stream etc. Video conferencing for staff meetings will result in reduction in travel to attend meetings and participation in online training courses. Reduce post distribution – we can be more green and generate less paper. Reduction in collection and distribution of post frequencies = reduction in contract costs.
Increase the number of services that customers can make payments online for	Drive and promote online payments / alternative payment channels. Potential to reduce the number of chip and pin machines on receptions = consider impact on reception opening hours, agree to removal of existing (and costly) cash / cheque channels. This will enable us to promote online payments / DD's as customers will choose to transact with us in different ways.
Improve/ enhance council functions / services that are currently available online to the public.	Review of transactions / services that are not currently available online (Waste / Repairs / Pest Control / Licensing / NNDR) and make improvements to those that are already (CT / Benefits). Analyse queries that are / were

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	historically handled face-to-face (If not since lockdown, why?). Drive 'Do it online' – Delivery of more end-to-end transactions for customers to self-serve. This will include / improve automation of back office processes.
Develop OD strategy and ICT / Digital Transformation strategy enabling Agile working as a focus.	Increase in Agile working and increase to flexible working arrangements, skills and structure to support new ways of working – increased productivity from home-working. New / amended policy required – will ensure aligned with corporate plans. Understand our new way of working, assessing the IT requirements to support Agile working.
Virtualisation of Committee Meetings	Hold and stream public meetings via Teams. Issue of Committee reports and introduction of Information Digests to members.

Members raised queries as follows (*responses in brackets*):

- Was there planning in place in the event that the pandemic should worsen over winter? (*Weekly meetings were taking place with senior management and Project Leaders, keeping a close monitor on the situation*);
- What were the 'Community safety issues' referred to in the report? (*The potential risk of impact of a recession and resultant unemployment*);
- Virtual meetings seemed to be taking longer than normal meetings. Some of the 'cut and thrust' could be lost. Technical difficulties had been experienced. There was a desire to go to 'Hybrid' meetings but this would need an act of parliament. (*Noted*);
- Were any staff redundancies envisaged as a result of COVID-19? (*No, the desire was for more flexibility.*);
- The democratic process must be maintained. With regard to electronic-only planning documents being issued to Parish / Town Councils, some did not have the facilities to function in this way. (*This was under investigation. The current arrangement was for electronic-only.*);

DECIDED – That the Panel **NOTE** the details of the Council's recovery to the COVID-19 pandemic, **SUPPORT** the proposed recovery plans and **IDENTIFY** the areas of activity requiring further consideration.

7 4TH QUARTER FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT & PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Keith Pointon – Principal Finance Officer – informed members of the Council's overall financial, procurement and performance position for the period ending 31 March 2020 ("Fourth Quarter 2019/20).

The position was summarised as follows:-

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Subject	Headline	Reference
Finance	<p>Headlines for the Fourth Quarter were:</p> <p><i>Performance against Budget</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the Fourth Quarter stage the General Fund provisional outturn for 2019/20 was an underspend of £1,322,792. <p><i>Efficiency Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2019/20 general fund efficiency target of £842,000 had been exceeded with £1,025,000 of savings achieved. <p><i>Capital Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The revised Capital Programme budget for 2019/20 was £3.3m. The outturn for the year was £2.7m; a variance of £0.607m – mostly in respect of underspend of Disabled Facilities Grant works. <p><i>Treasury Management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash investments held at 31 March 2020 totalled £9.7m. The Ascent loan and debenture currently stood at £14m; • Council borrowing at 31 March 2020 totalled £10m (related to the Ascent loan); • The Council's net interest income receipts were £73,110 surplus above budget. <p><i>Revenue Collection</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 98.55% of Council Tax was collected by 31 March 2020 compared to 98.66% for the same period last year; • 99.30% of Business Rates was collected by 31 March 2020 compared with 99.13% for the same period last year; • At the end of the Fourth Quarter debt that was over 60 days old was £70,729 which compared with £70,434 at 31 March 2019. 	Appendix A
Procurement	<p>The Procurement headlines for the Fourth Quarter were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 procurement activities were completed; • The procurement forward plan included 56 procurement activities for completion in 2020/21 (either SMDC only or joint); • At 31 March 2020, 67% of procurement activity undertaken was on the forward plan and the Council paid 97% of its invoices within 30 days during the year. 	Appendix B
Performance	<p>The Performance headlines for the Fourth Quarter were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 67% of the key performance indicators met target (43% of which were better than the previous year); • The Council received 63 complaints and 65 compliments in the Fourth Quarter; • 12 projects on track, 1 completed, 1 red rated and 6 grey. 	Appendix C

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Clarification was given regarding the Local Business Concordat, which featured as part of the updated Procurement Strategy. A discussion paper was to be published and it was hoped to encourage more local businesses to tender for works. The intention was to partially adopt the 'Preston model' in the process and member comments were invited. There was to be a section to include other local organisations.

A review of the Parking Strategy was also under way and requests for additional 'Blue Badge' spaces would be incorporated.

DECIDED – That the Panel:

- **NOTED** the Fourth Quarter 2019/20 financial, procurement and performance position detailed in Appendices A, B and C and summarised at 3.3 of the covering report;
- **RECOMMENDED** for approval the allocation of the surplus on the General Fund Revenue Account to reserves as explained in Appendix A (paragraph 2.10);
- **RECOMMENDED** for approval the proposal to carry forward unspent revenue budget as described in Appendix A (paragraph 2.12); and
- **RECOMMENDED** for approval the proposals to carry forward unspent budget as set out in Appendix A (paragraph 5.6).

8 FINANCIAL PLANNING PROCESS

Claire Hazeldene outlined the interlinked nature of this report to show the proposed financial planning process in order to review the longer term impact the Coronavirus pandemic had had on the financial position of the Authority.

The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) had been formally approved by Full Council in February 2020. The pandemic had had, and was likely to continue having an adverse impact on the Council's financial position, arising from additional expenditure, lost income and savings targets which were likely not to be met.

Estimates showed the impact for 2020/21 to be £2.3m, with government funding of £1m having already been received and further assistance to be released shortly. There were to be 3 central pillars of support:-

1. COVID-19 related expenditure;
2. Irrecoverable income loss;
3. Losses in tax revenue.

In addition, there was a potential additional resource needed with regard to community safety.

The 2020/21 position was being monitored closely and would be reported to members as part of the normal quarterly financial reporting process. The annual review of the MTFP had already commenced and would be presented to members once completed, expected to be in September 2020.

DECIDED – That the Panel **NOTED** the proposed process.

Members passed on their thanks to the Finance team for their ongoing efforts.

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9 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Whilst no Work Programme had been published as part of the agenda for the meeting, it was agreed to add an update report on the Council's Empty Property Strategy for a future meeting.

10 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

DECIDED:-

That pursuant to Section 100A (2) and (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or nature of the proceedings whereby it is likely that exempt information as defined in Section 100A (3) of the Act would be disclosed to the public in breach of the obligation of confidence or exempt information as defined in Section 100I (1) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act would be disclosed to the public by virtue of the paragraphs indicated.

11 **EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

DECIDED – That the exempt minutes of the meeting of the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 5 February 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The meeting closed at 11.20 am

_____Chairman _____Date

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report to the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel

23rd September 2020

TITLE:	Revised Performance Framework 2020/21 due to COVID
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Sybil Ralphs - Council Leader SMDC
CONTACT OFFICER:	Vanessa Higgins - Information Business Partner
WARDS INVOLVED:	All

Appendices Attached

Appendix 1: Amended Performance Targets 2020/21

1. Reason for the Report

- 1.1 This report provides information on the proposed amendments to the current performance targets for 2020/21, which have been made necessary because of the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on the council's ability to meet its previously agreed targets.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Panel note the proposed amendments and comment accordingly.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 The Council's 2019-2023 Performance Framework was considered by Resources Panel on 5th February 2020. It contains the Council's performance targets for the years 2020/21 through to 2022/23 and reflects the ambitions of the 4-year Corporate Plan adopted in October 2019.
- 3.2 The advent of a national lockdown on 23rd March 2020 had a dramatic effect on the Council's ability to carry out certain functions as previously planned and a major impact on the local economy and our communities. It has therefore been necessary to review the targets agreed pre-lockdown for 2020/21 and propose a revised set of targets for the areas affected. The usual service planning activity for 2021/22 will follow in due course with the involvement of this Panel at the appropriate stage.

4. How this report links to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The Performance Framework translates the ambitions of the Corporate Plan into measurable targeted activity and therefore links to all four of the Council's aims and the supporting objectives.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 This report is for information only and therefore no alternatives have been presented. However, if the target review had not taken place the 2020/21 Q4 report would show a higher than usual proportion of 'off track' measures due to lockdown and on-going coronavirus restrictions, which were outside the council's control.

6. Implications

- 6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)
None
- 6.2 Workforce
The adoption of revised targets will help ensure that colleagues do not become demotivated by now-impossible targets due to external factors outside their control
- 6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment
None
- 6.4 Financial Considerations
Several financial metrics have been adversely affected by the pandemic, in particular revenue.
- 6.5 Legal
None
- 6.6 Climate Change
There are no implications from this report although it is hoped that there will be some positive legacy aspects from lockdown in terms of reduced business co2 emissions from employee transport
- 6.7 Consultation
All Heads of Service have been fully engaged in the process of reviewing their 2020-21 targets in response to lockdown
- 6.8 Risk Assessment
The impact of lockdown on the council's risk profile was the subject of an Information Digest Report to Audit & Accounts Committee in June 2020

ANDREW P STOKES
Chief Executive

Web Links and
Background Papers

Performance Framework 2020-2023

Contact details

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Information Business Partner
vanessa.higgins@highpeak.gov.uk

7. Detail

- 7.1 The Council's 2019-2023 Performance Framework was considered by Resources Panel on 5th February 2020. It contains the council's performance targets for the years 2020/21 through to 2022/23 and reflects the ambitions of the 4-year Corporate Plan adopted in October 2019.
- 7.2 The advent of a national lockdown on 23rd March 2020 had a dramatic effect on the council's ability to carry out certain functions, particularly where access to premises was involved such as regulatory inspections. It also had a major impact on the Staffordshire Moorlands' economy and the health and wealth of its communities. It has therefore been necessary to review the 2020/21 targets agreed pre-lockdown and propose a revised set of targets for the relatively small but significant number of areas affected.
- 7.3 Of the 131 performance indicators in the previously agreed framework for 2020-21, around a fifth (18%) are now subject to revised targets as a result of this COVID-19 review. The revised targets for social media impact have been amended upwards to reflect the increased reach of the council during lockdown. The remainder are largely unaffected or measure contextual data only.
- 7.4 The usual service planning activity for 2021/22 to 2023/24 will follow in the New Year with the involvement of this Panel at the appropriate stage.



Staffordshire Moorlands Performance Framework 2020-21



Aim 1: Help create a safer and healthier environment for our communities to live and work

Measure	Reported	2019-20 Target	2019-20 Result	2020-21 Target	Target Review
Objective: Increased supply of good quality affordable homes					
NEW: % of initial applications opened at the prevention and relief duty stages.	Monthly	NEW	60%: 40% May 2020	65%:35%	60%:40%
NEW: Number of TA placements (including B&B made for families) placed over 6 weeks	Monthly	NEW	15 (no families) May 2020	0	5
% of active housing register applicants in priority need (classes A and B) who have been registered in excess of 6 months	Annual	15%	7.69%	15%	30%
Objective: Provision of sports facilities and leisure opportunities focused upon improving health					
NEW: Number of priority areas, where place-based work to reduce inactivity, is being undertaken.	Annual	NEW	NEW	2	1



Aim 2: To use resources effectively and provide value for money

Measure	Reported	2019-20 Target	2019-20 Result	2020-21 Target	Target Review
Objective: Ensure our services are easily available to all our residents in the appropriate channels and provided 'right first time'					
No. / % of interactions: a) phone b) face to face c) web	Monthly	a) 37% b) 23% c) 40%	a) 39253 39% b) 20595 20% c) 41526 41% 2019-20 a) 6438 40% b) 0 0% c) 9820 60% May 2020	a)38% b)23% c)39%	Refocus the PI : a) % of assisted contact (phones and face to face) b) % of web TARGETS a) 59 % b) 41 %
Avoidable contact (number taken from customer portal)	Annual	12%	N/A	12%	15%
Objective: More effective use of Council assets					
% & number of council owned business units occupied	Annual	92.1% (35/38)	95% (37/39)	92.1% (35/38)	33/39 (85%)
Objective: Effective use of ICT					
NEW: Number of Onevu (customer portal) accounts	Quarterly	NEW	NEW	22,000	21,000
Objective: Effective use of financial and other resources to ensure value for money					
Number of twitter followers	Quarterly	1875	1974	1975	2000
Number of Facebook followers	Quarterly	800	1923	1150	2000

Measure	Reported	2019-20 Target	2019-20 Result	2020-21 Target	Target Review
Collection rates: Business rates	Monthly	98.1%	99.3% 2019-20 16.68% May 2020	98.2%	96%
Collection rates: Council Tax	Monthly	98.1%	98.55% 2019-20 19.82% May 2020	98.2%	96.2%
Collection rates: Sundry Debt (value of SD over 60 days old)	Quarterly	5% reduction	£70,729	2% Reduction	Match 2019/20
% of procurement activity on the Procurement Forward Plan (Joint Alliance measure)	Quarterly	72%	67.38%	65%	60%
% of internal audit recommendations implemented within timescale	Quarterly	97.5%	98.28%	98%	92%
% of corporate efficiency savings met	Annual	100% of target	49% 2018-19	100% of Target	50%
a) Expenditure variance to budget b) Income variance to budget	Annual	Net Budget +/- 5% variance	a)(0.05%) b)1.43% Q3 2019-20	Net Budget +/- 5% variance	Net Budget +/- 25% variance



Aim 3: Help create a strong economy by supporting further regeneration of towns and villages

Measure	Reported	2019-20 Target	2019-20 Result	2020-21 Target	Target Review
Objective: High quality development and building control with an open for business approach					
% of planning applications with pre-application enquiries	Annual	10%	10%	10%	5%



Aim 4: Protect and improve the environment and respond to the climate emergency

Measure	Reported	2019-20 Target	2019-20 Result	2020-21 Target	Target Review
Objective: Provision of high-quality public amenities, clean streets and environmental health					
% of 'high risk' premises (A-C) inspected per annum	Quarterly	100%	100%	100%	75%
% of routine permitted process premises inspected	Quarterly	100%	85%	100%	75%
% food premises compliant with FSA criteria	Annual	98%	98%	98%	95%

Measure	Reported	2019-20 Target	2019-20 Result	2020-21 Target	Target Review
Number of community clean-up campaigns	Annual	75	67	80	60
Number of pest control contracts	Annual	54	54	56	54
Private water supplies - % of sampling programme completed	Annual	100%	100%	100%	75%

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel

23 September 2020

TITLE:	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019-2020
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Sybil Ralphs - Council Leader SMDC
CONTACT OFFICER:	Sally Hampton - Member and Community Services Officer
WARDS INVOLVED:	Non Specific

Appendices Attached:

Appendix A -Terms of Reference and Membership of Overview and Scrutiny Panels

1. **Reason for the Report**
 - 1.1 To provide Councillors with a summary of the work undertaken by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Panels during 2019 – 2020.
2. **Recommendation**
 - 2.1 That the report be noted.
3. **Executive Summary**
 - 3.1 During 2019/20, the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Panels continued to scrutinise performance internally/externally, hold the Cabinet to account and contribute to policy development. The range of work and issues considered by each Panel during 2019/20 are summarised in sections 6 - 9 of the report. Appendix A of the report contains the terms of reference of each Panel and its membership.
4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**
 - 4.1 The successful delivery of all corporate priorities is dependent upon the effective scrutiny and development of Council policies and services.

Mark Trillo
Executive Director (People) and Monitoring Officer

**Web Links and
Background Papers**

[Overview & Scrutiny Panel agendas and reports](#)

Contact details

Sally Hampton
Member and Community Services Officer
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5. Detail

- 5.1 The Cabinet is responsible for making the day-to-day decisions concerning the implementation of policies of the Council. Overview and Scrutiny Panels ensure that the Cabinet is publicly held to account for their actions and seeks to promote open and transparent decision-making and democratic accountability. They also have a role in researching, scrutinising other bodies and ensuring that the Council's policy and budget framework is respected and realising the key aims of the Council's Corporate Plan. Overview and Scrutiny Panels may appoint Task and Finish Working Groups/Sub-Committees to examine any issue in more depth.
- 5.2 Effective participation has taken place with the involvement of partners, outside organisations and individuals at Panel and Working Group meetings. Cabinet Portfolio Holders also attend such meetings to provide updates or answer questions.
- 5.3 Each Overview and Scrutiny Panel is responsible for setting its own Work Programme. These are informed by the Council's Forward Plan containing Key Decisions to be made by the Council's Cabinet. The Work Programme is listed as a standing item for review and approval at each Panel meeting. Executive Directors work closely with the Chairs of each Panel to assist in the planning of agendas, provide briefings and ensure the Panel meets its objectives. Support is also provided by the Democratic and Community Services Team together with Officers from the Council's various service areas. Following the local election in May 2019, at the first meeting of each of the scrutiny Panels, the responsible Executive Director gave a briefing to outline the above to members.

6. Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel

- 6.1 To ensure that financial management is sound thorough consideration was given to regular financial, procurement and performance reports, which included performance against the budget and a review of fees and charges. Members were kept up to date with progress with regard to the Council's Efficiency Programme, revenue collection, treasury management, Capital Programme and customer feedback.

- 6.2 The findings from the Annual Report, the Draft Performance Framework and suggested approach and timescale for the development of the new 4-year Corporate Plan were presented to members and recommended for approval by Cabinet.
- 6.3 At a subsequent meeting, the new Corporate Plan 2019-2023 was considered by the Panel and members commented on the summary of the plan. It was essential for the Council to develop and agree a Corporate Plan. The plan would provide clear direction for the delivery of services to achieve the Council's vision, aims and objectives to deliver positive outcomes for citizens. To conclude, the Panel agreed with the recommendations and requested that Council approved the Council's vision, aims, objectives, influencing objectives and priorities. On 16th October 2019 the Corporate Plan was adopted by Full Council and in November 2019, the Panel was updated on the Communication and Engagement Plan.
- 6.4 Members were presented with the updated Medium-Term Financial Plan 2020/21 – 2023/24. The report set out the context for the preparation of the 2020/21 budget which was presented for approval by the Council in February 2020.
- 6.5 Andrew Stokes – Executive Director & Chief Finance Officer – presented the proposed Budget for 2020/21, the updated Medium-Term Financial Plan 2020/21 – 2023/24, the Capital Strategy 2020/21, the proposed Fees and Charges for 2020/21 and the Procurement Forward Plan 2020/21. Members had the opportunity to scrutinise the details for each item contained within the appendices to the main report.
- 6.6 Claire Hazeldene - Deputy Director, Finance, Income and Procurement attended various meetings of the Panel to introduce various reports such as:-
- Business Rate Reliefs granted by the Council in advance of a review of the policy later that year;
 - A schedule of applications for write-off of Council Tax, Business Rates and Sundry Debts;
 - The latest position on the AES phase 3 financial arrangements, and commissioning structure.
 - The review of the Business Rate Reliefs policy and the Council Tax Reductions and Levies Policy.
- 6.7 For the first time, the Health and Safety Annual Report was presented to the Panel as it had previously been presented to the Joint Consultative Committee.
- 6.8 Members had the opportunity to scrutinise the draft Performance Framework and associated targets for 2020/23 and the findings from the recent online consultation, which sought feedback from a range of stakeholders on the council's new corporate plan priorities for 2019/23 were shared.
- 6.9 From March 2020, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, face to face meetings of the Panel were unable to take place. To ensure the business of the Council continued and for members to have the opportunity to comment on reports

outside of formal committee meetings, information digests were distributed to all councillors. The Resources Panel received an information digest on the progress of the Council's Empty Property Strategy.

7. Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel

- 7.1 The Panel scrutinised a range of subjects over the year focused on services provided by the authority. This included the annual report on the performance of Alliance Environmental Services Ltd (AES) and a presentation was delivered by Kevin Melling and Jane Thomason from AES. At the request of the Panel, a report on recycling and reuse services was provided and a visit to the Materials Recycling Facility at Shotton in Deeside took place on 30th October 2019.
- 7.2 Consideration was given to a variety of regeneration items such as the Growth Strategy, Investment and Acquisition Strategy and Wharf Road and Tunstall Road masterplans which had been prepared to assist with the delivery of the emerging Local Plan. Members commented and gave feedback to the Head of Regeneration and Executive Director (Place).
- 7.3 The Executive Director (Place), also updated members on the progress of the Accelerated Housing Delivery Programme which was a package of measures to tackle the low level of development activity in the district.
- 7.4 The Panel scrutinised the annual performance update from Parkwood Leisure which was provided by the Regional Director - Alex Godfrey and was informed of the development work to help establish clear plans for future investment and management options for leisure centres, in line with the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy and ambitions for a reduced service subsidy.
- 7.5 Members received a report which provided an update following the first year of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, with information relating to implementation and homelessness applications made during 2018/19.
- 7.6 The Leader of the Council attended a meeting of the Panel at which the future of Leek Trestle Market was discussed. Members were also kept informed of the changes to Leek Market's rules and regulations to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the market operation.
- 7.7 Finally, at the request of a Panel member, David Smith – Principal Officer, Communities and Partnerships, outlined the publicity and communication carried out by the Council in relation to dog fouling.

8. Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel

- 8.1 Members received annual updates from Biddulph, Cheadle and Leek Citizens Advice Bureaux and scrutinised the annual operational policing report provided by Chief Inspector Mark Thorley and his colleague Sergeant Rob

- Peacock. The Panel asked for statistics on the number of convictions to be included in the next annual update.
- 8.2 The Panel debated the withdrawal of free TV licences for over 75 year olds. Members were concerned that for some pensioners this could lead to issues around social isolation and a letter was sent to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with a copy of the letter sent to the BBC raising these concerns.
- 8.3 Members considered a briefing paper introduced by Sharon Wheeler – Property Manager, which provided a performance and development update on Your Housing Group business areas identified in the legacy agreement. The Panel would normally receive 6 monthly update twice a year, but due to Covid-19, the update scheduled to take place on 23rd March 2020 was postponed. However, prior to this meeting, all Panel members were offered one to one appointments with the Property Manager to raise any specific concerns.
- 8.4 The outcome of an assessment of the air quality in Leek and Cellarhead had concluded that it was necessary to declare two Air Quality Management Areas, encompassing the roads and properties within these areas. Daniel McCrory – Senior Officer, Pollution Control, introduced a report which kept the Panel informed on this matter. Following the meeting, members liaised directly with the officer in regards to specific requests for the installation of monitoring equipment in other areas.
- 8.5 Further to children’s meals being debated at Full Council in October 2019, Councillor Ralphs attended a meeting of the Panel to inform members of the work she had undertaken on this important issue. Members had the opportunity to give feedback and make suggestions to the Leader.
- 8.6 In response to members concerns in relation to flyposting and banners seen in the area, Ben Haywood, Head of Development Services and David Smith, Principal Officer Communities and Partnerships, provided a presentation on the consent, control and enforcement of advertisements. It was agreed that the Enforcement Team would take a look at the advertisement banners and ‘A’ boards in Leek and Werrington and for the flyposting policy to be reviewed.
- 8.7 The Panel gave its consideration to a report which detailed proposed changes to the Dog Fouling Order, which was due to cease to have effect on 20th October 2020. The Panel was in agreement with the recommendations but suggested to Cabinet that it did not allow the (Dogs on a Lead Order and Dog Exclusion Order) to expire.
- 8.8 Mark Forrester – Head of Democratic and Community Services, attended a meeting to keep members informed of the use of the Councillors’ Community Initiative Fund (CCIF) in 2018/19.
- 8.9 The minutes of the last Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel and reports from the Chairman were issued with each agenda to ensure the Panel is kept informed of the work undertaken by the Panel at the County Council.

Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel

- 9.1 The Panel scrutinised a range of subjects over the year, focused on items relating to the health service at the request of the Panel via the Work Programme. Members received updates from each of the representatives below and had the opportunity to ask questions:-
- Jackie Owen - Healthwatch Staffordshire Manager and Maggie Matthews - Chair of Healthwatch Advisory Board, provided an annual update and an overview of the work carried out by the organisation.
 - David Pearson - Vice Chair of the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Sustainability and Transformation Partnership gave a presentation to explain Together We're Better Health and Care.
 - Joanne Robinson - Senior Commissioning Manager, SCC and Suzanne Rhodes - Community Engagement Programme Manager, advised the Panel of the services provided by Everyone Health.
 - Neil Carr - Chief Executive, Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Tracey Bullock – Chief Executive, Royal Stoke University Hospital, provided annual updates for their organisations.
- 9.2 On two occasions special meetings of the Panel took place. The first was to introduce the proposal for a Single Strategic Commissioning Organisation which was set out in the form of a presentation from Dr Alison Bradley and Anna Collins - Associate Director of Communication and Engagement. Subsequently, a formal response was sent to the CCG on behalf of the Panel. The second special meeting was arranged at the request of the Panel due to the Annual NHS England Assessment of the North Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Commissioning Group. The Accountable Officer – Marcus Warnes attended the meeting and explained the reasons for the assessment to be graded as inadequate and the actions which were in place. In relation to the same matter, a letter was also sent to Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to urge the department to place the CGG into special measures.
- 9.3 A member of the Panel provided feedback on the pilot scheme to move diabetic eye screening into dedicated NHS provision rather than patient's own opticians. The aim was to increase attendance and provide staff specifically trained in diabetic eye care. The aim of the project was to achieve over 80% access to eye clinics within the 6-month trial and as the trial was approaching completion, data showed that this had been achieved.
- 9.4 A representative from the West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) attended a meeting, to outline the decision to remove the Rapid Response Vehicles from the fleet. The WMAS officer recognised the concerns of the rural community and gave assurance that this model provided a robust response to patients and clinical outcomes were continually measured and monitored. Despite many concerns from members, the decision had been made and would not be reviewed.
- 9.5 The Dementia Care Working Group has continued to meet and has met with staff from two local GP surgeries and the Lead Advisor from the Dementia Connect Service.

Gwyneth Mangono from the Midlands Partnership NHS Trust (MPFT), has attended a meeting to advise members of the role of the Trust in relation to dementia, along with Kat Horner - Dementia Friendly Communities Officer, who explained the process involved to create a Dementia Friendly Community. The Group will report back its findings and final recommendations to the Panel in the near future.

- 9.6 The minutes of the last Staffordshire County Council Healthy Staffordshire Committee were issued with each agenda for the Panel to be kept informed of the work undertaken by the Committee.

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APPENDIX A

Terms of Reference and Membership of Overview and Scrutiny Panels

Overview & Scrutiny Panel	Scope
<p>Resources Membership: Cllrs; Atkins, Davies, Fallows, Gledhill, Hart, Hawkins, Holmes, Hughes, Hulme, Jackson, Jones, Lea, Malyon, Plant, Riley, Routledge, Shaw, Wilkinson and Yates.</p>	<p>Budget and policy framework, service improvement and performance monitoring; resource allocation; accessibility of services; co-ordination of scrutiny work programme; Strategic Alliance and efficiencies; overview and scrutiny of all functional responsibilities of the portfolios covering finance and resources, customer services and performance management.</p>
<p>Service Delivery Membership: Cllrs; Aberley, Bentley, Brady, Davies, Emery, Flunder, Hart, Hawkins, Herdman, Hoptroff, Page, Plimley, Price, Redfern, Roberts, Salt, Sheldon, Ward and Whitehouse.</p>	<p>The delivery of council services including environment, planning (including development and property); housing and regeneration; culture (arts, leisure, sport, parks, countryside, tourism); overview and scrutiny of the portfolio(s) covering regeneration, environment, culture, leisure and planning, development and property.</p>
<p>Health Membership: Cllrs; Alcock, Atkins, Cawley, Fallows, Flunder, Herdman, Holmes, Hughes, Hulme, Jones, Lawson, Malyon, McNicol, Price, Redfern, Riley, Salt, Swindlehurst, Ward and Wood.</p>	<p>Scrutiny of health service provision in the Staffordshire Moorlands (as defined in the Code of Joint Working with Staffordshire County Council) contributing to the work of the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee, which has overall responsibility for health scrutiny.</p>
<p>Community Aberley, Bentley, Heath, Herdman, Hoptroff, Hughes, Johnson, Jones, Martin, Mcnicol, Riley, Roberts, Shaw, Swindlehurst, Taylor, Ward, Wood and Yates.</p>	<p>Democratic and community engagement, equalities and diversity, sustainability & climate change, community safety, the Council's Community Leadership Scheme, locality working, the councillor call for action, the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and other partnerships. The commissioning/delivery of services by Staffordshire County Council, parish/town councils and the voluntary/third sector.</p>

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**Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Work Programme 2020-21**

Date	Item	Contact Officer
23 September 2020	1 st Quarter 2020/21 Financial, Performance & Procurement Report	C Hazeldene
	Medium Term Financial Plan	C Hazeldene
	Revised Performance Framework for 2020/21 due to COVID	V Higgins
25 November 2020		
	2nd Quarter 2020/21 Procurement, Performance & Financial Review	C Hazeldene
	Medium Term Financial Plan Update	A Stokes
	Corporate Plan: Communication and Engagement Plan and Performance Framework Update	A Stokes
3 February 2021		
	3rd Quarter 2019/20 Procurement, Performance & Financial Review	C Hazeldene
	2021/22 Budget & Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 – 2023/24	C Hazeldene
	Health and Safety Annual Report	D Owen
	New Performance Framework	V Higgins
24 March 2021		

To be confirmed	Empty Property Strategy (including initiatives and grants for these to come back into operation)	A Stokes
	Procurement Strategy	C Hazeldene
	Council Tax Valuation	C Hazeldene
	Methodology of informing members of local developments	A Stokes
	Implications of the new statutory guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities	
	Income Charging Strategy (Including Car Parking)	
	Facilities Management Contract Appraisal	

	Review of Member Allowances	
	Councillor Data Sharing Protocol (Information available to Councillors, in particular GDPR)	
	Disabled Facilities Grants Progress	A Patterson
	Leisure Centres Update	