

FINANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11 March 2020

Present: Councillor M Turmaine (Chair)
Councillor P Kloss (Vice-Chair)
Councillors D Allen-Williamson, N Bell, J Johnson, A Khan,
J Pattinson, G Saffery and Stanton

Also present: Councillor M Watkin (Portfolio Holder for Finance)

Officers: Interim Head of Finance
Finance Manager
Democratic Services Officer (AG)

22 Training: local authority treasury management

The Interim Head of Finance provided an overview of local authority treasury management.

During and following the presentation, the Interim Head of Finance responded to questions from members.

It was agreed that the presentation would be circulated to the committee for future reference.

23 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

24 Disclosure of interests

There were no disclosures of interests.

25 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2020 were submitted and signed.

26 Finance Digest Period 10

The committee received the report of the Interim Head of Finance. The

Interim Head of Finance introduced the report highlighting some key areas of interest including the unfavourable revenue variance of £0.336 million, which was mainly due to lower rental on certain operational properties, an increase in the environmental health spend and the funding of a post in transportation from the controlled parking zone reserve.

He explained that 88% of the revenue budget had been spent as against 83% expected. However, there was still scope to underspend on some projects; so there was a potential for some carry forwards in to the next financial year.

The Interim Head of Finance provided information on revenue reserves and staff vacancies. There were presently 25 vacancies in the council equating to 10% of the workforce. This was the first year that this element was being included in the digest and would provide an interesting comparison in relation to next year's data.

The Interim Head of Finance continued by discussing the capital budget, explaining that £16m from this financial year would be re-phased in to next year's budget. He emphasised that these were not new monies; rather a carrying forward process. The Interim Head of Finance concluded by advising the committee on issues in relation to budgetary risks and aged debt.

In response to questions from members, the Interim Head of Finance:

- Undertook to provide the committee with information on the impact to council business rates revenues resulting from measures announced in the government's budget.
- Explained, in relation to revenue reserves balances, how the economic impact reserve was maintained.
- Advised that strict criteria applied to revenue expenditure being capitalised and would need the Secretary of State's approval.
- Agreed, with regard to emerging budget risks, that the Demand Responsive Transport and Bike Share Project risks should be deleted from the table at Appendix 6 to the report.

RESOLVED –

1. that the 2019/20 Period 10 Finance Digest, as shown at Annex A to the report, was considered and the revenue and capital forecast outturn positions were noted.

2. that the action agreed be undertaken.

Chair
Finance Scrutiny Committee

The Meeting started at 7.00 pm
and finished at 8.05 pm