

REPORT OF THE CABINET

The Cabinet met on 10 March 2015. Attendance:-

Councillor Glazier (Chair)

Councillors Bennett, Bentley, Chris Dowling, Elkin, Maynard, Simmons and Tidy

1. Council Monitoring – Quarter Three 2014/15

1.1 The Cabinet has considered a report on performance against the Council Plan, Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, Savings Plan and risks for the third quarter of 2014/15. Broad progress against the Council's four strategic priority outcomes is summarised below and an overview of performance and finance data is provided in the Corporate Summary at Appendix 1 of the report to the Cabinet, previously circulated to all members. Strategic risks were reported at Appendix 7 of the report to the Cabinet and a detailed report for each department was provided was provided in Appendices 2 to 6 of the Cabinet report.

Overview

1.2 The Council's investment in highways maintenance has led to improved conditions in our principal and unclassified roads. The proportion of roads that should be considered for structural maintenance are: principal roads 5% (down from 7%), non-principal roads 9% (unchanged), and unclassified roads 22% (down from 25%). The Council joined Troubled Families Two, in January 2015, as an 'Early Starter' having achieved 100% engagement and 70% payment by results by the end of October 2014. The Council will need to identify and work with 3,570 families over a five year period, starting 1 April 2015. Children's Services launched a new joint initiative between our Post Adoption Support Team and the NHS CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service), called AdCAMHS. The new service aims to improve the prevention of adoption placement breakdown. Our dedicated World War One website has been viewed 34,398 times, an increase of 87% on the previous quarter. Of the 76 Council Plan targets, 57 (75%) are rated green, 9 (12%) are rated amber, 10 (13%) are rated red.

1.3 At quarter 3 the gross projected year end overspend within service departments is £5.6m, this is an improvement of £0.8m from the £6.4m overspend reported at quarter 2. The main changes are within Adult Social Care and relate to agreement with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) delivering a refinement of operating principles for Continuing Health Care (CHC) which has resulted in costs of £2.4m being borne by CHC budgets within Health. However, the continuing challenge to manage reductions in care packages safely whilst meeting increasing demand has increased estimated costs by £1.2m partly offset by an increase in projected underspend across Directly Provided Services and Management and Support. There were also a number of changes within Communities, Economy and Transport which, increased expenditure by £0.5m. Departments continue to make progress towards achieving savings targets and mitigations and in the main the total value of 'green' and 'amber' rated savings remain the same.

1.4 It is anticipated that the service overspend can be managed within the unused general contingency of £3.5m and the remaining inflation provision for 2014/15; after the minimum wage increase was not as anticipated.

1.5 The forecast expenditure on the capital programme is £134.7m against a re-profiled budget of £165.3m, a total variation of £30.6m compared to £21m reported at Quarter 2. This is mainly due to slippage identified in the Schools Basic Need Programme of £9.8m which was explained in greater detail at Appendix 4 of the report to the Cabinet.

1.6 As reported at quarter 2, the Agile programme has become more complex as significant changes are being made in the way we deliver services and the planned £3m savings from Agile are not being made in 2014/15 in the way originally planned.

1.7 All strategic risks have been reviewed and seven have been amended. Risk 1 (Roads), risk 4 (Health), risk 5 (Resource), risk 6 (Local Economic Growth), risk 7 (Schools), risk 8 (Capital Programme), and risk 10 (Welfare Reform) all have amended risk control responses. There are no changes to any existing risk scores.

Progress against Council Priorities

Driving economic growth

1.8 The latest survey results for road condition have been calculated for the first year of the Council's four year £70m investment plan for roads. The percentage of roads that should be considered for structural maintenance are: principal roads 5% (down from 7%), non-principal roads 9% (unchanged), and unclassified roads 22% (down from 25%). This demonstrates the effect of investment in structural maintenance and the need for the continued work and investment the Council is making to ensure road condition improves on or is held at, current levels (Appendix 5 of the report to the Cabinet).

1.9 Delays to the opening of the Bexhill Hastings Link Road now seem likely as a consequence of the adverse summer and winter weather and archaeology work. The Met Office has confirmed that 2014 was the fourth wettest year since records began, the effects of which have taken its toll on the programme resulting in the contractor not being able to complete the earthworks this year as originally planned. To minimise any further delay and cost overrun the contractor has suspended earthmoving operations for the winter and will remobilise in the spring (Appendix 5 of the report to the Cabinet).

1.10 In quarter 3, we approved 34 applications worth £885,000 from the Regional Growth Fund. The total number approved since the start of the programme in October 2013 is 92 and £3.45m of the £4m fund has now been allocated. These are projected to create or safeguard 479.5 jobs of which 85 have been achieved (Appendix 5 of the report to the Cabinet).

1.11 44% (£131m) of procurement spend was with local suppliers in the 8 month period to end November 2014 (this is an improvement on the 42% for Q2). We plan to enhance engagement with local businesses through introduction of 'Supply to East Sussex' at the end of March 2015. This is a web based resource for access to information about contract opportunities, apprenticeships and training, business events, procurement advice, and support and advice services in East Sussex (Appendix 3 of the report to the Cabinet).

1.12 Locate East Sussex continues to raise the profile of the county as a business location and has recruited 93 influential public and business figures to provide advocacy for the county as a place for business. In the three months of Quarter 3, Locate has facilitated 4 inward investments to the county that have created 20 jobs. This represents a 43% increase on the 14 jobs created in the previous six months April – September; a total of 34 jobs this year (Appendix 5 of the report to the Cabinet).

Keeping vulnerable people safe

1.13 Between January and September 2014 there were 301 people killed or seriously injured on the roads of East Sussex, including 12 fatalities. The last three months (July to September) saw a significant increase in the average number of KSI related crashes to 40 per month over the previous average of 30 per month. There is no obvious reason for this change in KSI figures other than the usual summer increase. In January the Health and Wellbeing Board's main topic for discussion was KSI, feedback from the Board will be considered ahead of a future update on the issue. We are waiting for more detailed analysis being undertaken by the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership to identify emerging trends and to give direction to future interventions (Appendix 5 of the report to the Cabinet).

1.14 A further three comprehensive team based audits of adult social care safeguarding activity have taken place in Quarter 3. Strengths have been identified in evidence-based decision making and partnership working, with areas of development identified as enhancing safeguarding planning and increasing involvement of advocates, where appropriate (Appendix 2 of the report to the Cabinet).

Helping people help themselves

1.15 At the end of Quarter 2 11.4% (19,003) of those eligible have been offered a health check, a 40% increase on the same period in the previous year (13,494). We continue to work with practices to improve the health check offer to those eligible with point of care testing, which enables patients to have the full health check in one attendance at the GP practice rather than sending blood tests to a laboratory which requires a follow-up visit, and all practices now offer a health check service. This performance of 11.4% is better than both the average for Kent, Surrey Sussex (KSS) 10.7% and England average 10.1%. At the end of Quarter 2, 5.8% (9,607) of those eligible received a Health Check a 26% increase on the same period in the previous year (Appendix 2 of the report to the Cabinet).

1.16 Between October and December a total of 10,178 visits were made to the 1Space website for adult social care services. 73% were new visitors and 27% were repeat visitors (Appendix 2 of the report to the Cabinet).

1.17 A members' reference group has been established to look at how we can work across the Council to help local people to help themselves, building on community assets to tackle issues such as loneliness which can affect people across all demographics.

Making best use of resources

1.18 The increase in dry waste recycling tonnages remains at 15% for the first 7 months compared to the same period last year and we are still on track to meet or exceed the target that we set earlier this year. However, we think there is still room for improvement, and this quarter we did some plastics recycling publicity for the winter edition of Your County. While recycling tonnages have increased, residual waste has also increased by 4% and total household waste by 5% (Appendix 5 of the report to the Cabinet).

1.19 We aimed to reduce the number of core office buildings the Council occupies from five to four buildings during 2014/15; however this target will not be achieved in 2014/15 because the Council will need to retain five buildings in occupation until at least 2016 to support the delivery of Agile. The opportunity to vacate Sackville House and potentially one of two other buildings in Eastbourne from 2016 onwards will depend on future space needs and efficiencies achieved through Agile roll out (Appendix 3 of the report to the Cabinet).

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1.20 The outturn (April – December) for the whole authority (including schools) is 5.88 days lost per FTE employee and represents an increase of 6.7% on the same period in 2013/14 when 5.51 days were lost per FTE. The end of year forecast is 8.34 days lost per FTE employee against a target of 6.95 days lost per FTE employee. Stress continues to be the primary driver of absences across the organisation (Appendix 3 of the report to the Cabinet).

10 March 2015

KEITH GLAZIER
(Chair)