

Decisions of the Financial Performance and Contracts Committee

7 October 2021

Members Present:-

Councillor Peter Zinkin (Chairman)

Councillor Julian Teare
Councillor Kathy Levine
Councillor Arjun Mitra

Councillor Barry Rawlings
Councillor Gabriel Rozenberg
Councillor Nick Mearing-Smith

Also in attendance:
Councillor Lisa Rutter (Substitute)

Apologies for Absence:
Councillor Alex Prager
Councillor Thomas Smith
Councillor Anthony Finn

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman of the Financial Performance and Contracts Committee Councillor Peter Zinkin welcomed all attendees to the meeting. The Chairman read out the Covid-secure arrangements which were in place throughout this meeting, to ensure the safety of all those in attendance.

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Financial Performance and Contracts Committee held on 8 June 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Councillor Alex Prager who was substituted by Councillor Lisa Rutter. Apologies were received from Councillor Anthony Finn and Councillor Thomas Smith.

3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

Councillor Mitra declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in relation to item 9 by virtue of being a Barnet Homes tenant.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)

The responses to the Public Questions were published and circulated to the Committee. There were no further supplementary questions.

6. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)

None.

7. CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER REPORT FORECAST FINANCIAL OUTTURN AT MONTH 4 (JULY 2021)

The Chairman welcomed Anisa Darr (Director of Finance), Ben Jay (Assistant Director Finance) and Ashley Hughes (Assistant Director Finance) to present and summarise the report.

The Committee noted the report which contained a summary of the Council's revenue, capital forecast outturn for the financial year 2021/22 as at Month 4 (31 July 2021) and information on the level of debt and the top 10 debtors as at 31 July 2021.

In relation to a query about Covid-related spending, Ben Jay noted that the position continues to be reviewed due to anticipated pressure as a result of the impact of Covid. It was noted that there remains uncertainty over the costs in the remainder of the year and it is expected that these funds will become fully committed as future cost estimates are updated.

Councillor Rutter requested that where the Council is circulating confirmation of Council Tax reduction letters to residents, this should also include information with regards to other benefits they may be entitled to.

Members referred to section 3.5 of the report and noted that currently only half of eligible businesses have applied for the 66% NNDR relief available from July. The Chairman asked Officers to consider encouraging uptake where support is available for businesses.

Following a query about the level of debt, Officers provided an update on debt settlement in relation to the top 10 debtors as set out in the report, table 13.

It was also noted that in addition to the table set out in the report, there is a significant class of debtors which relate to adult social care residential placements and homecare packages. Following a query from Members, Officers noted that a dedicated project is in place to maximise recovery of this debt and to further improve its active management. The Committee requested that an update be provided on this project at its meeting on 1 February 2022. **(Action: CFO reporting February 2022)**

It was RESOLVED that the Committee noted:

- 1. the current financial forecast outturn for 2021/22;**
- 2. the impact of the pandemic;**
- 3. the current forecast of use of reserves, and the outlook;**
- 4. the current position against ringfenced grant funding;**
- 5. the current forecast for capital expenditure in the year;**

6. the current debt position and related actions.

8. REVIEW OF CAPITA CONTRACTS

The Chairman invited Deborah Hinde, Commercial and Customer Services Director to present and summarise the report.

The Committee welcomed the report and noted the workstreams which will inform the recommendations on the future delivery arrangements for each service in due course. Members also noted that the outcomes would be reported to the November Committee meeting.

It was RESOLVED that the Financial Performance and Contracts Committee:

- 1. Noted the progress that has been made across all aspects of the Review, as set out in section 2 of the report; and**
- 2. Noted the anticipated reporting timelines, as set out in section 4 of the report.**

9. Q1 2021/22 CONTRACTS PERFORMANCE REPORT

Officers presented and summarised the report which provides an overview of Quarter 1 (Q1) 2021/22 performance for the contracted services delivered by the Customer and Support Group (Capita), Regional Enterprise (Capita), Barnet Homes (The Barnet Group) and HB Public Law.

The Committee noted the correction in relation to paragraph 1.11 of the report to read:

*“The total number of households in temporary accommodation reduced from **2,399** (~~2,999~~) in Q4 2020/21 to 2,371.”*

Members referred to the tables on p.45-46 and 63 of the agenda and requested that the indicator and result measures be clarified for the next update report.

Following concerns expressed by the Committee about the KPIs for Barnet Homes, the Chairman noted that an update on Barnet Homes will be reported to the Committee and a representative from BH be invited to the meeting in the new year. (**Action:** Forward Work Programme)

It was RESOLVED that the Committee noted the Quarter 1 (Q1) 2021/22 performance for the Customer and Support Group (Capita); Regional Enterprise (Capita); Barnet Homes (The Barnet Group); and HB Public Law.

10. BRENT CROSS UPDATE

The Chairman invited Karen Mercer, Programme Director to present the item which provides an update on the delivery and financial performance across the Brent Cross programme and emerging issues across the programme. The Committee noted the presentation and commended the delivery of the various workstreams across the programme.

It was RESOLVED that the Committee noted delivery progress across the Brent

Cross (BX) programme as set out in the presentation to the HM Government Assurance Board on 22 September 2021 and that the Programme Wide Anticipated Final Cost will conclude in October 2021.

11. COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted the standing item on the agenda which lists the future reports to the Committee.

It was RESOLVED that the Committee noted the Forward Work Programme for 2021.

12. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

None.

13. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chairman moved a motion, which was seconded and approved, to exclude the Press and Public on the basis that the exempt item will involve discussion of confidential information. The public gallery was cleared.

14. BRENT CROSS (EXEMPT)

It was RESOLVED that the Committee noted the exempt presentation and information as set out in the report.

15. ANY OTHER EXEMPT ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

None.

The meeting finished at 9.15 pm