

Nottingham City Council

Executive Board

Minutes of the meeting held at held remotely via Zoom -
<https://www.youtube.com/user/NottCityCouncil> on 22 September 2020 from
2.03 pm - 2.50 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor David Mellen (Chair)
Councillor Sally Longford (Vice Chair)
Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark
Councillor Neghat Khan
Councillor Dave Trimble
Councillor Adele Williams
Councillor Sam Webster

Absent

Councillor Rebecca Langton
Councillor Linda Woodings

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Councillor Kevin Clarke

Councillor Andrew Rule

Mel Barrett

Helen Blackman

Clive Chambers

Chris Henning

Laura Pattman

Malcolm Townroe

Catherine Underwood

Hugh White

Kate Morris

Chief Executive

Director of Children's Integrated Services

Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance

Corporate Director for Development and Growth

Strategic Director of Finance

Director of Legal and Governance

Corporate Director for People

Corporate Director for COVID Response and

Recovery

Governance Officer

Call-in

Unless stated otherwise, all decisions are subject to call-in. The last date for call-in is 1st October 2020. Decisions cannot be implemented until the working day after this date.

36 Apologies for absence

Councillor Rebecca Langton - Personal

Councillor Linda Woodings - Council Business

37 Declarations of interests

Councillors Neghat Khan and Cheryl Barnard declared a non pecuniary Interest in agenda item 7a Interim Budget 2020/21, Medium Term Financial Outlook and Draft Strategy 2021/22 to 2023/204 (minute reference number 42) because they are members of the Board of Robin Hood Energy. They did not participate in the discussion on this item.

38 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020 were confirmed as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

39 Ofsted Focussed Visit and Children's Services Improvement Programme

This item does not contain any decisions that are subject to the call in

The Board considered the report of the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People providing an update on the outcome of the Ofsted Focussed visit in February 2020 and activity on the Improvement programme undertaken to date. The following points were highlighted:

- (a) There Children at the Heart improvement Board is now well established and is attended by Partners and councillors offering a forum for support and challenge;
- (b) A major training programme has been rolled out across Microsoft Teams to engage frontline practitioners. There is a new pay and progression scheme in place for practitioners and work continues to create a stable workforce;
- (c) The Covid -19 pandemic has impacted progress of the improvement programme. Visits to children and young people have still taken place through lockdown, on doorsteps, through windows, into homes where necessary and this work has had to take priority;
- (d) Ofsted will be announcing their new visiting regime soon, and although a visit to Nottingham City would not be to provide a rating it would assess the progress of improvement on the two Priority Actions issued in February 2020, it would also determine how at what point a full inspection will take place;
- (e) The Authority is committed to its Corporate Parenting responsibilities and has been working hard to analyse service demand to allow continuous development and culture change;
- (f) A piece of work is being done with Small Steps Big Changes partners to become a Child friendly City as recognised by Unicef. This will create opportunities for children to flourish and achieve good outcomes in their childhood.

Resolved to:

- (1) Note the outcome of the Ofsted focussed visit;**
- (2) Note and support the actions being taken to address the two Priority actions; and**
- (3) Note Corporate Parenting responsibilities.**

Reasons for decision

Following a Focussed visit in February 2020 Ofsted issued two Priority Actions, previously reported to this Board. Nottingham City Council has a statutory requirement to provide services for Children and young people in Nottingham and to ensure that those services meet requirements

Other options considered.

This report is for noting the progress on addressing the Priority Actions. There are no alternative options to consider.

40 Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse Report Recommendations Update

This item does not contain any decisions that are subject to the call in

The Board considered the report of the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young people updating the Board on action taken since the publication of the report by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in July 2019 the following information was highlighted:

- (a) There has been significant progress on the action plan. Nottingham City Council has worked hard to ensure that victims and survivors have support in place both through internal and external services. There is now a dedicated Information Officer who helps survivors access and understand their record, and the Council now offers a written apology on settlement of claims along with the offer of a face to face meeting for a face to face apology if that is what the survivor wants. The Adult Sexual Violence Hub is due to go live in January 2021;
- (b) Not only has Nottingham City Council acted on the 2 recommendations made by IICSA it has taken the opportunity to reflect. Survivor services are being recommissioned in a sustainable and strengthened way. The Council continues to ask searching questions and is committed to listening to the voice of children and raise awareness of the risk of abuse. Additional training is in place for all practitioners and the Council continues to encourage professional curiosity and challenge of assumptions;

Resolved to note the progress undertaken since the publication of the report.

Reasons for decision

Following the publication of its findings, two recommendations were made for Nottingham City Council by IICSA and work has been ongoing to address them

Other options considered

This report is for noting the progress of work on the recommendations made by IICSA. There are no alternative options to consider.

41 Stonewall Campaign: Coming Out for Trans Equality

This item does not contain any decisions that are subject to the call in

The Board considered the report of the Portfolio Holder for Health Equalities and HR, seeking support and endorsement to sign public and private letters to the government

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to voice Nottingham City Council's concerns around the reform of the Gender Recognition Act and show support for trans equality.

The Board agreed that this was an important campaign to endorse, and that Nottingham City Council was pleased and proud to visibly support trans rights.

Resolved to endorse the following statement proposed at the Equality Board on 7 September 2020:

“Nottingham City Council values trans people as our employees, colleagues customers and supports trans rights as human rights”

And to submit it to Stonewall along with the Nottingham City Council logo.

Reasons for decision

Nottingham city Council is a forward thinking authority that puts citizens and employees first. The authority is committed to improving the lives of people living and working in Nottingham and is working hard to ensure that everyone has fair and equitable access to both opportunities and services.

Other options considered

The other option considered was to not participate in the campaign. This was rejected as, as an organisation striving to become inclusive of the LGBT community, it is important for Nottingham City Council to act in a responsive way to campaign activities coordinated by Stonewall.

42 Interim Budget 2020/21, Medium Term Financial Outlook and Draft Strategy 2021/22 to 2022/24

The Chair of the Board agreed that this item, although not on the agenda, could be considered as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, because the business cannot be deferred as it requires approval by Full Council on 5 October 2020. The Interim Budget includes a number of new in year savings that have required a period of statutory consultation as detailed within the July Exec Board report titled Council Financial Position – 2020/21 Budget Update.

The Board considered the urgent report of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Growth and City Centre providing an update on the 2020/21 budget and the financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The report sets out the latest budget monitoring, release of reserves, funding assumptions and in year savings of £12.505million.

The Portfolio Holder thanked staff and other Portfolio Holders for the hard and difficult work done at pace to ensure a balanced budget could be presented for recommendation to Council.

The following points were highlighted in discussion:

- (a) The gross impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is £78.408 million, confirmed government funding is £23.545 million and the estimated funding from the income compensation scheme is £16.277 million leaving a shortfall in funding of £38.585 million;

- (b) £38.718 million of reserves will be permanently released and not replenished to close the budget gap. This will have an impact on the Council's ability to deliver services and mitigate future risk;
- (c) The annexes published alongside the report detail the budget consultation and a judgement of robustness of the overall budget;

Resolved to:

(1) 2020/21 Forecast Outturn

a. Note:

- i. Period 4 forecast outturn for the 2020/21 General Fund as set out in Tables 1 & 2 and Appendix 1
- ii. Qtr1 forecast monitoring for HRA revenue budget and capital programmes as set out in Sections 5 and 6

b. To approve budget virements as set out in Appendix 3

(2) Interim Budget

a. To note, endorse and recommend to City Council:

- i. New savings totalling £12.505m for 2020/21 as set out in the July Council Financial Position - 2020/21 Budget Update Executive Board report
- ii. Use of £94.440m of reserves within 2020/21, includes £70.022m to mitigate in year issues, £10.678m tranche 1 Covid-19 grant, £4.482m IT commitments, £3.930m to support in year savings
- iii. Amendments to 2020/21 original savings which are now assessed to be unachievable
- iv. Allocation of Covid-19 related grants to service budgets
- v. One off changes to Portfolio Budgets, including the redistribution of budgets for services with underspends
- vi. The continuation of existing monitoring arrangements, spending controls and vacancy freeze
- vii. Any underspends resulting from spending controls and vacancy freeze are to be used to replenish reserves
- viii. Delegation of approval to the S151 Officer to reset 2020/21 budget in accordance with principles set out in paragraph 4.24 and Appendix 7

(3) 2020/21 budget proposals

- a. To note the outcomes of the budget consultation as detailed in Annex 1 for the new 2020/21 proposals previously reported in the July Executive Board report

(4) Robustness of the Interim Budget

- a. To note, endorse and recommend to City Council the recommendations of the Strategic Director of Finance (S151 Officer) in respect of the estimates within the interim budget and the adequacy of reserves as detailed in Annex 2

(5) Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) (incorporating the Medium Term Financial Outlook (MTFO))

- a. To note the draft MTFS including the updated MTFO
- b. To note that a detailed revised MTFS will be brought back for consideration at December Executive Board.

c. To note a detailed review of the Capital Programme and Capital Investment Strategy will be undertaken and the outcomes will be reflected in the MTFS.

Reasons for decision

The Council has had to make cumulative savings of £271.4million since 2010/11 to 2019/20. The budget presented to Council in March 2020 included new savings of £15.623million and pressures of £17.911million. Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic the increased expenditure, lost income and impact on existing budget savings has meant that a new balanced budget needed to be produced.

Other options considered

Throughout the review period a number of individual cost reductions, income and investment opportunities are considered. These in turn impact on the level of reserves. These decisions represent the final package of detailed proposals having considered all of the options available

43 Customer Experience and Local Government Ombudsman Annual Assurance Report 2020

This item does not contain any decisions that are subject to the call in

The Board considered the report of the Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and Democratic services reflecting on the annual Local Government Ombudsman review 2019/20 and complaints made to the City Council.

The City council received a total of 5,163 complaints. 5,064 were dealt with by the first stage of the complaints process. Of the 99 that progressed to the second stage 86 then went onto be reviewed by the Ombudsman with 12 being upheld.

Resolved to note the contents of the report

Reasons for decision

Nottingham City Council will always be vigilant in dealing with complaints. The report is positive and shows that the Council responds efficiently, and appropriately to complaints.

Other options considered

This report is for noting the outcome of the Local Government Annual Review. There are no alternative options to consider.

44 Exclusion of the public

The Board decided to exclude the public from the meeting to discuss the exempt minutes of the last meeting held on 21 July 2020 in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, as defined in Paragraph(s) 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

45 Exempt minutes

The Board confirmed the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020 as a true record and they were signed by the Chair.