

Corporate Scrutiny Committee Recommendation/Action Tracker 2024/2025

Dates/Deadlines	Recommendation/Action	Response
<p>Date of Meeting: 29 May 2024</p> <p>Date recommendations were issued: 31 May 2024</p> <p>Deadline for response: 31 July 2024</p>	<p><u>Workforce Analytics</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That when fully functional, the HR dashboard is shared with the Chairs of the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committees on an informal basis. (A) 2. That the Corporate Scrutiny Committee receives an update on workforce analytics annually as part of its work programme. (A) 3. That when available the Committee receives a report on the number of vacant posts within the Organisation. (A) 4. That the Committee receive further information on how the trends within the sickness absence data will be used to support staff who are experiencing high levels of sickness absence. (A) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HR dashboards for Q1 24/25 are currently being produced for each directorate. These will be shared with Scrutiny Chairs on an informal basis in October. 2. HR agree to bring back an annual workforce analytics update. 3. Establishment data is currently being reviewed by HR in conjunction with Finance and Budget Managers. A report will be shared with the Committee in October to provide an update on vacant posts in the Council. 4. Following completion of the Q1 HR analytics reports, information will be included on how staff are supported prior to and during periods of sickness absence. This information will also be included in the annual workforce analytics update to Corporate Scrutiny.
<p>Date of Meeting: 29 May 2024</p> <p>Date recommendations were issued: 31 May 2024</p> <p>Deadline for response: 31 July 2024</p>	<p><u>EDI Strategy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To share the draft EDI Strategy with staff networks and Trade Unions as soon as possible so that they can be involved in the development of the Strategy. (A) 2. That the action plan as part of the Council’s response to the Inclusive Employers Report be shared with the Committee. (A) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The EDI Strategy will be shared with Staff Networks and Trade Unions following Scrutiny Committee on 24/07/24 and then a subsequent discussion and endorsement from CLT 2. The response to the Inclusive Employers Report is included in the Culture Change Programme and the updated EDI Strategy and associated Action Plans, as shared with Scrutiny Committee on 24/07/24.

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. That the distinctions in the Strategy between what the Council is doing currently and what actions it plans to take in the future are refined. (R) 4. That the metrics outlining the equalities data in the Strategy be expanded, including a breakdown of staff pay bands. (R) 5. That the Committee views the action plans that underpin the Strategy at its July meeting. (A) 6. That the references to poverty are cross referenced and expanded on within the Strategy. (R) 7. That 'culture development' is included as part of the Strategy, and specific interventions are included. (R) 8. That a specific officer has responsibility for developing good organisational culture in regards to equality, diversity and inclusion to ensure accountability. (R) 9. That inclusive employers conduct a follow up report 12 months after the Strategy has been implemented. (R) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The EDI Strategy has now been updated and refined to ensure that all actions under the four respective outcomes are future focused. 4. Having explored the option to expand the equalities data to include a breakdown of staff pay bands, it was established that this would create a risk to individuals being identified, a potential GDPR breach, therefore is not feasible at this time. The Pay Gap Reports present this information in a way that does not identify individuals, by using four pay quartiles, so we recommend this is used instead. 5. All draft Action Plans were made available to review and scrutinise at the Scrutiny Committee held on 24/07/24. 6. The EDI Strategy has now been updated and expanded to include references to poverty on pages 3, 11 and 15. The Action Plans will also be updated accordingly. 7. A dedicated section on culture development has now been included in the EDI Strategy on page 5 and 6, including a list of specific interventions as recommended. 8. Accountable officer is Lee Mann (HR & EDI Director) and responsible officers reporting to Lee are Gareth Sayers (D&C Manager) and Rebecca Dennis (Interim EDI Lead). 9. Options for independent review, including the use of external specialist resource, will be taken at the time including best value considerations.
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	<p><u>Recommendations re-issued from the November meeting:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Council combine the EDI and HR portfolios under one strand/directorate to ensure consistency in approach and easier accountability. (R) 2. That the equalities board is included in the Council's constitutional arrangements so that it has more formal footing in regards to governance and accountability. (R) 3. That the committee views the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and figures on grievances be broken down by protected characteristics. (R) 4. That the committee views the draft workforce strategy and HR improvement strategy. (A) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The current portfolio arrangements for HR and internal EDI sit with the Executive Member for Finance and Resources. External focus for sits with the Executive Member for Communities, Waste and Equalities. There are currently no plans to review these arrangements. 2. Following the wider review of Committee arrangements arising from the saving proposal relating to Committee Administration, there is currently no capacity to stand up an additional committee. It is instead proposed to bring regular progress reviews through to Corporate Scrutiny Committee. 3. The Whistleblowing Policy is available to review on the intranet and was circulated to Committee Members via email on 01/10/24. As part of the review of HR data and reporting, employee relations case data will be included in reports to ensure transparency and accountability of actions to address any identified disproportionate impacts. 4. Both the Workforce Strategy and the HR Improvement Plan are currently under review in line with Duties and Powers savings proposals and the new corporate Improvement Plan. This will ensure they are still viable and deliverable, and they will be shared once that review has taken place.
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<p>Date of meeting: 24 July 2024</p> <p>Date recommendations were issued: 25 July 2024</p> <p>Deadline for response: 25 September 2024</p>	<p><u>Budget Strategy</u></p> <p>1. That a more detailed and methodical approach to the budget strategy be developed so that progress can be monitored throughout the year. Alternatively, the Committee request that assurance is provided in writing that the strategy is sufficient enough to balance the budget and forecast accurately. (R)</p>	<p>The Budget Strategy approved by the Executive in July 2024 provides the framework including objectives underpinned by budget principles the Council will undertake in addressing the budget gap.</p> <p>The Budget Strategy approved by the Executive in July 2024 is a key part of the Council’s policy and budget framework and financial planning process. The purpose of the Budget Strategy is to provide a strategic framework to meet corporate priorities within councils’ financial resources.</p> <p>It is important to understand that the Budget Strategy does not constitute a formal budget. It provides the framework within which budget and service planning should take place, to ensure the council sets a balanced budget. The main reasons for why a Council is unable to set a balanced budget are detailed in Appendix 1 and Appendix 3 (sections 3 and 4) of the 2024/25 Budget report to City Council in March 2024.</p> <p>The 2025/26 budget strategy include the key elements that aim to provide a robust framework for financial planning and monitoring:</p> <p>a) Medium Term Financial Plan (Section 6) provides previously latest estimate MTFP (as at March 2024) and associated assumptions that form the basis of the budget gap.</p> <p>b) Budget Strategy Objectives and Principles (paragraph 4.4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategy is built around seven key objectives, including setting and delivering a balanced budget, establishing financial resilience, and ensuring
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		<p>effective early intervention and prevention across all service areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Five principles underpin these objectives, such as minimal reliance on Exceptional Financial Support, adopting a longer-term view, and prioritising resources appropriately. <p>c) Budget Themes and Tools (Section 5 and Appendix 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The strategy focuses on several budget themes, including service redesign, income and debt management, asset utilisation, and transformation and change.• Various budget tools will support these themes, such as organizational redesign, benchmarking, zero-based budgeting, and business process reengineering. <p>d) Monitoring and Reporting (Section 7)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The budget strategy includes a detailed timetable for budget preparation and monitoring, with regular updates to the Executive Board and engagement with key stakeholders.• The strategy emphasizes the need for continuous review and adjustment to reflect changing circumstances and updated financial assumptions. <p>Given these elements, Scrutiny can be assured that the current budget strategy is designed to balance the budget over the MTFP. However, to further enhance transparency and accountability, the budget timetable reflects an update to the Committee in at two additional points prior to Council approving the budget and updated MTFP in March 2025.</p>
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	<p>2. That a long term decision is taken on annual council tax increases and that it be incorporated it into the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). (R)</p>	<p>The government has not yet published any policy with regards to Local Government Finance including increases to council tax/social care precept which is expected to be published alongside the provisional settlement in December 2024.</p> <p>The impact of proposed council tax increases is detailed in paragraph 6.5 of the report to the Executive in June 2024, illustrating the financial implications of a 1%, 4.99%, or 9.99% increase.</p> <p>As confirmed at the last Scrutiny meeting, the Council does not incorporate council tax increases into the MTFP for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council cannot determine the permissible increase for council tax and the adult social care precept until the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement is published. • The decision to increase council tax is made by Members, not Officers, and is typically decided by Full Council alongside the approval of the Annual Budget in March 2024. <p>Therefore, Officers will continue to exclude council tax increases from the overall MTFP and will provide the potential impact of any increase on the cumulative budget gap.</p>
<p>Date of meeting: 24 July 2024</p> <p>Date recommendations were issued:</p>	<p><u>EDI Strategy – Action Plans</u></p> <p>1. That as part of the consultation process the public are consulted on the Strategy. (R)</p>	

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<p>25 July 2024</p> <p>Deadline for response: 25 September 2024</p>	<p>2. That prior to publication, assurance is provided from services in the City that they can meet the needs of Nottingham residents and that expectations from those service provisions align with the Strategy. (R)</p>	
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