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Policy & Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 21st December, 2020
6.00 pm

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AGENDA

- 1. Welcome and Apologies**
To welcome those present to the meeting and to receive any apologies for absence.

- 2. Minutes of the Previous Meetings held on 21st January 2020 and 23rd September 2019**
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 23rd September 2019 and 21st January 2020.

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- 3. Declaration of Interests**
To receive any declarations of interest on items on the agenda

- 4. Councils Budget and COVID 19**
To receive a presentation from the Executive Member on the effects on the Council's financial position due to the pressures of COVID 19

20201221 Covid-19 Budget Impact Costs and Income Update (002) **9 - 15**

- 5. Progress of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees**
To receive an update on the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

People and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee update **16 - 17**

Date Published-11th December 2020
Denise Park, Chief Executive

Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

23rd September 2019

Present- Councillor Harling, in the chair,

Councillors Afzal, Connor, Rigby, C., Floyd, Hussain, Maf, Hussain, S, Liddle, Slater N, and Whittle

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting and received apologies from Councillor Groves

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 24th June 2019.

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 24th June 2019 were submitted.

RESOLVED- that the minutes of the meeting held on 24th June 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

3. Work Programme.

The Committee were reminded that Members had agreed to focus on the Corporate Priorities as the work programme for the year with Members seeking to add value to the work of the Executive and work with them on the delivery of these. The work of the Executive Member for Finance and Governance underpinned the work on all of the Councils Key priorities.

RESOLVED- That the work programme be noted

4. The Budget

The Executive Member outlined the key issues relating to the Council's financial position and the budget going forward. The forecast overspend and the level of usable reserves were outlined and the discussions that are ongoing to consider remedial actions. The Committee was reminded that the Council could not present an unbalanced budget and the implications of the use of reserves for this year and on later years was outlined.

The Committee considered the work that was ongoing on the impact of the recent one year Spending Round which may have positive and negative impact on the Council's budget. These included-

- The potential impact of an Adult Social Care Precept of 2%
- Additional monies for Adult and Children Social Care £1bn (nationally)
- A small real terms increase in Public Health Grant
- Additional monies for SEND provision £700m (nationally)
- Uplift in Business Rates multiplier

BUT ALSO

- The ending of the Lancashire 75% business rate retention pool pilot
- Potential end to new 'New Homes Bonus' payments

Directors would continue to work with Executive Members to review all options to reduce costs and close the forecast budget gap.

The Committee discussed the implications of the pilot for retention of Business Rates and if taking this forward would be beneficial for the Council and in response it was informed that if the pilot was implemented in the way that it had run in Lancashire for the past year then it would be positive for Blackburn with Darwen.

RESOLVED- That the Committee be kept informed of the progress on the delivery of the budget throughout the year and the ways that are being examined to seek a reduction in the forecast deficit.

5. **Sickness Absence, Mental Health and Barriers to Employee Health and Wellbeing.**

The Committee were updated on the work ongoing on sickness absence, mental health and barriers to employee health and wellbeing. The report addressed the recommendation of the Committee held in March and examined what the Council does to support attendance and address barriers to health and wellbeing. The Committee looked at how the positive benefits of wellbeing initiatives were being delivered in terms of improved attendance and comparisons with other authorities. Information was shared on the support given to staff in terms of training and development to carry out their duties and team working.

RESOLVED- That further comparisons with other Unitary Authorities in the area be submitted to the Committee together with further information on the introduction of new technology and smarter/agile working. The absence targets and work place initiatives would be kept under review by the Committee.

6. **Removal of Call-in Provisions.**

The Committee were informed that the Chair and Vice Chair had been requested and had agreed to the suspension of the call-in provisions in respect of a decision relating to the Kerbside Recycling Contract. The Committee were informed that the issue had been the subject of a review by the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting.

RESOLVED- That the removal of the call-in provisions be noted.

Chair.....

Date of the meeting.....

POLICY & CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 21 January 2020

PRESENT – Councillors; Harling (In the Chair), Connor, Floyd, Harling, Hussain, Liddle, Slater and Whittle.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillor Mahmood

OFFICERS

David Fairclough (Director of HR, Legal and Governance), Louise Mattinson and Sian Roxborough – Head of Services, Legal Services

RESOLUTIONS

1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Councillors Afzal; Groves; Hussain and Rigby.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

3 Minutes of the previous meeting

David Fairclough, Director of HR, Legal and Governance advised that the minutes of the meeting held on 16th September 2019 would be circulated to members and submitted for approval at the next meeting.

4 Report on RIPA

The Committee was provided with an update on RIPA (Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act). The purpose of the report was to update Members of RIPA activity / applications, RIPA training delivered to officers, the outcome of a recent desktop inspection undertaken by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) and current plans to amend / update the RIPA procedural guide.

The Committee heard that whilst there had been no RIPA applications since the inspection in 2016, the Council had continually reviewed and updated its Procedural Guide and delivered training using external training companies.

On the 12th September 2019 the authority was informed that it was due for its next programmed inspection. As fewer RIPA applications had been granted in recent years, the IPCO were adopting a more flexible approach to inspections and this meant the inspection would be based on a remote assessment. The Council completed a pre-assessment questionnaire and submitted additional materials identified in the form

including any details of training that had been provided as well as a copy of the Procedural Guide.

The Committee heard that the outcome of the Desktop Inspection was that there was no need for a physical inspection at this stage, however the Commissioner did feedback the observations of his inspector. On the 18th December 2019 the Council wrote back to IPCO to update the Commissioner on the recent activity undertaken to address the issues raised in the desktop inspection.

The Committee was informed that the procedural guide would be completely re-drafted and it was anticipated that this be reported back to this Committee at its meeting in March, with a view to it being reported to Executive Board for approval thereafter.

RESOLVED –

- That the Committee note the update;
- That the Committee recommend a report be submitted to Executive Board explaining the outcome of the IPCO desktop inspection, recommending that any actions required from the observations within the inspection outcome letter should be implemented; and
- That once the re-drafted RIPA Procedural Guide has been completed, it be reported to the Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the next meeting in March 2020, for comments prior to Executive Board approval

5 Update on Key Priorities

Finance and Governance

The Committee heard that there were 4 performance measures with a red RAG rating during the period April to September 2019. These were as follows;

- ***Undisputed and valid supplier invoices paid within 30 days***

The Committee was informed that work was underway to identify those budget areas who only raised orders on receipt of invoices and / or, who hold invoices within their department, which therefore impacted on the Finance Team's ability to pay the invoices within 30 days from the date of the invoice. Civica automatically matched invoices to orders to facilitate smooth and quick payment.

A Member raised concerns over the Mosaic payment method not working as effectively and efficiently as it should and it was suggested that it would be more appropriate that this issue be taken to Audit Committee as payments relating to Social Care were dealt with on a different system and were not included in this performance measure.

Councillor Floyd agreed to raise this issue with the Executive Member for Adult Social Care.

- ***Current ratio of total useable reserves (excluding Public Health and schools) to net revenue expenditure; and***
- ***Percentage change in reserves over the past 3 years***

The Committee heard that reserve levels were very low and every effort was being made to contain spending within agreed budgets whilst also trying to increase reserves wherever possible.

- ***Achieve a breakeven or underspend against overall portfolio and corporate budgets***

The forecast outturn for 2019/20, based on information as at 30th September 2019, was for an overspend of £2.75 million across the portfolio budgets, of which £3.00 million related to Children's Services, due to increasing demand pressures and complexity of need, offset by a forecast underspend on the Digital and Customer Services portfolio of £0.25 million, largely due to vacancy savings following a restructure of the IT Team.

The Finance Team were currently working on the forecast based on the position as at 31st December and this would be presented to the Executive Board on 13th February.

Digital and Customer Services

Councillor Quesir Mahmood, Executive Member for Digital and Customer Services, attended the meeting to highlight some of the significant work that had been taking place. The Committee received updates on the following;

- **Digital Customer Portal**
The procurement process for the new Digital Customer Portal had concluded and had been approved at the Executive Board meeting in January 2020. Implementation would commence early 2020.
- **Business Intelligence**
Currently working with a supplier to develop a number of pilot areas including Children's Services, Customer Services and Council Tax.
- **Integrating Health and Social Care Systems**
Work was continuing to integrate Health and Social Care systems with a view to go live April 2020.
- **Council Website**

The new Council website went live last year and had continued to receive positive feedback from customers. In 2019, the last quarter had received 700,000 hits compared to the same quarter in 2018 which received 550,000.

RESOLVED – That the updates be noted and that the Executive Member for Digital and Customer Services be thanked for the good work that had already taken place.

Signed:

Date:

Chair of the meeting
at which the minutes were confirmed



REPORT TO: Policy and Corporate OSC

REPORT FROM: Executive Member Finance and Governance
Director of Finance

DATE: 21st December 2020

REPORT: Effects on the Council Budgets of Covid-19

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The P&CR OSC has requested an update from the Executive Member for Finance and Governance and the Director of Finance on the impact of Covid-19 on the Council's budget in 2020/21, with specific reference to the following questions;

- How has the council's expenditure on COVID affected the council budget?
- How has the council's income been effected?
- What funding has the council received from central government to meet the needs of the pandemic?
- Has the funding received met the anticipated expenditure on the virus?
- How has the council used its resources to meet the challenges faced?
- How will the council balance its budget in this year and coming years given the un-certainty caused by the virus now and in the future?
- How have the challenges the council has had to face affected corporate priorities such as the accommodation strategy?
- What support has been made available and how have staff coped with the demands placed on them by meeting the realignment of services?

The information provided below outlines the scope of the financial response to Covid-19 within the Council, focussing on the additional funding received, the areas where additional expenditure has been incurred and the extent of the losses of income.

2.0 KEY ISSUES

Members will be aware of the grave concerns expressed earlier in the year with regard to the significant increase in costs and losses of income that the Council was incurring in responding to the pandemic, i.e. through the first national lockdown, then coming out of the restrictions in June only to have further restrictions imposed in July.

Given the lack of government funding at the time, it was very apparent that unless further resources were forthcoming, the Council would not be able to contain these costs and losses within the existing budget for 2020/21, and due to the low level of reserves held, it was becoming more and more likely

that the Director of Finance, as the Section 151 Officer, would need to issue a Section 114 notice, which would effectively declare that the Council would not be able to balance its budget for the year, and in essence would be insolvent.

Fortunately, and in no small part due to the continuous lobbying by the Leader, Members, Officers, both of our MPs, together with other local authorities and their representative bodies across the country, further funding was provided and the risk of issuing a Section 114 notice has subsided; as you will no doubt have seen in the national press, this is not the case for several local authorities at this time.

In order to respond to the questions posed by the P&CR OSC, the information has been provided below;

1. first to look at the funding received (the various streams, the amounts and the purposes for which it must or can be utilised), and then
2. to review the additional costs incurred and income losses,

before summarising the impact of Covid-19 on the Budget for 2020/21.

2.1 FUNDING RECEIVED

The tables below outline the funding received at 11th December.

- for some funding streams such as the Business Rate schemes, the Council acts as a conduit, administering the payments on behalf of government,
- some that are listed are the maximum amount of funding earmarked for BwD, which can only be accessed retrospectively on submission of a claim detailing the costs incurred
- some are paid in advance but are subject to a reconciliation and evidence of payments made with recovery by government for unspent funds
- some relate to general funding provided to address additional costs incurred and income lost as a result of the pandemic

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES - RINGFENCED		
£'Mill	Funding	Details
16.325	Business Rate Relief	Additional relief for businesses in Retail, Leisure and Hospitality sector – 0% business rates payable in 2020/21 – April 2020
46.448	Business Rate Grants	Support for small businesses (<£51k Rateable value) and those in the Leisure and hospitality sector – April 2020
2.250	Discretionary Business Support Grants	Support to those businesses with ongoing premises costs but who are not business rate payers – April 2020
2.994	Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG)	Discretionary fund to be distributed by LAs to support businesses that have their trade affected by restrictions – received November 2020 for use by 31 st March 2022.

2.812	Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSB) – Closed (Addendum)	Businesses with a rateable value in the non-essential retail, leisure, personal care, sports sectors who were closed for the period of the 2 nd national lockdown 5 th Nov – 2 nd Dec
TBC	Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSB) – Closed	Businesses with a rateable value in the non-essential retail, leisure, personal care, sports sectors who were closed during the period of Tier 3 local restrictions – 17 th October to 4 th Nov
1.353	Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSB) – Open	Businesses severely impacted by local restrictions but who remained open during the period the area was in Tier 2 or Tier 3 – applicable from 1 st August to 2 nd Nov
TBC	Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSB) – Sector	Businesses with a rateable value who operate in the nightclubs, dancehalls, sexual entertainment venues and hostess bars sectors who have remained closed since 24 th March – scheme covers payment for the period 1 st Nov to 4 th Nov and is not retrospective, - superseded by LRSB (Closed) Addendum for period of national lockdown
72.182	TOTAL SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES	

Note: the LRSB schemes will run until April 2021, with a review point in 2021.

SUPPORT FOR RESIDENTS		
£'Mill	Funding	Details
2.194	Hardship Grant Funding	To provide further Council Tax relief – each working age LCTS recipient to receive a further discount of up to £150
0.239	Emergency Food and Essential Supplies	To help those struggling to afford food and other essentials due to Covid-19
0.082	Funding to support Clinically Vulnerable residents	Support over the 2 nd national lockdown period to cover setting up and managing the support system, contacting CEV individuals and assessing the food and basic support needs and facilitating delivery of support where necessary.
0.646	Winter Grant Scheme	To support those in most need with the cost of food energy and water bills and other associated costs over the winter period
0.138*	Test and Trace Isolation Support payment	£500 payment to those residents on low income/benefits who are directed to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace due to having had a positive Covid test result or who have been in close contact with a positive Covid case
3.299	TOTAL SUPPORT FOR RESIDENTS	

*administration funding also provided below

SPECIFIC SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC AREAS		
£'Mill	Funding	Details
2.795	Infection Control Funding	To tackle the spread of Covid-19 in care homes
0.414	Support for Housing Rough Sleepers and Rough Sleepers Initiative	To assist in providing accommodation and support to people who are at high risk of, or who have been diagnosed with Covid-19. Targeted at those who are rough sleeping or where bedrooms are in dormitory style provision
0.200	School fund payment	
0.131	Reopening the High Street safely	Support to reopen town centres after the first national lockdown
0.024	Support for Business Improvement Districts (BIDS)	To support town centre reopening and BID activities
0.103	Compliance and Enforcement Grant	Available to LAs and the police to support additional enforcement activities
0.385	Emergency Active Travel Fund	Revenue and capital funding
0.267	School and college transport	Funding to support additional measures for Covid-19 compliant transport
0.364	Culture Recovery Fund	Funding to support KGH and Darwen Library Theatre to assist in trying to ensure their sustainable future
0.026	Dept for Transport – bus operators support	To help maintain bus services
4.709	TOTAL SPECIFIC SUPPORT PROVIDED	

FUNDING TO SUPPORT CONTAINMENT OF THE VIRUS		
£'Mill	Funding	Details
0.540	BwD specific funding to address rising rates in July/August	Specific support given to the borough to support deployment of our containment strategies
0.406	Contain Outbreak Management Funding	For the period when BwD was in Tier 3 - 17 th October to 5 th November – based on £4 per head of population
1.197	Contain Outbreak Management funding	General payment to Tier 3 areas based on £8 per head of population
1.367	Test and Trace Service (1 st tranche)	Funding to help authorities to develop and implement action plans to reduce the spread of Covid in their areas
3.510	TOTAL SUPPORT FOR CONTAINMENT AND OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT	

NON-RINGFENCED FUNDING TO SUPPORT INCREASED COSTS AND LOSSES OF INCOME DUE TO COVID-19		
£'Mill	Funding	Details
5.212	1st Tranche	Received
4.085	2nd Tranche	Received
1.633	3rd Tranche	Received
4.102	4th Tranche	Received
TBC	5 th Tranche	
1.762	Sales, Fees and Charges compensation – to 30 th September	75% of losses on certain SF&Cs covered by govt, over and above the first 5% loss made against budgeted income
TBC	Sales, Fees and Charges compensation – to 30 th Nov	
TBC	Sales, Fees and Charges compensation – to 31 st Mar	
16.794	TOTAL SUPPORT FOR GENERAL COSTS AND LOSS OF INCOME	

FUNDING TO SUPPORT NEW BURDENS ADMIN OF COVID-19		
£'Mill	Funding	Details
0.170	Administration of support to businesses	
0.038*	Administration of support for self-isolation payments	
0.208	TOTAL SUPPORT FOR ADMINISTRATION	

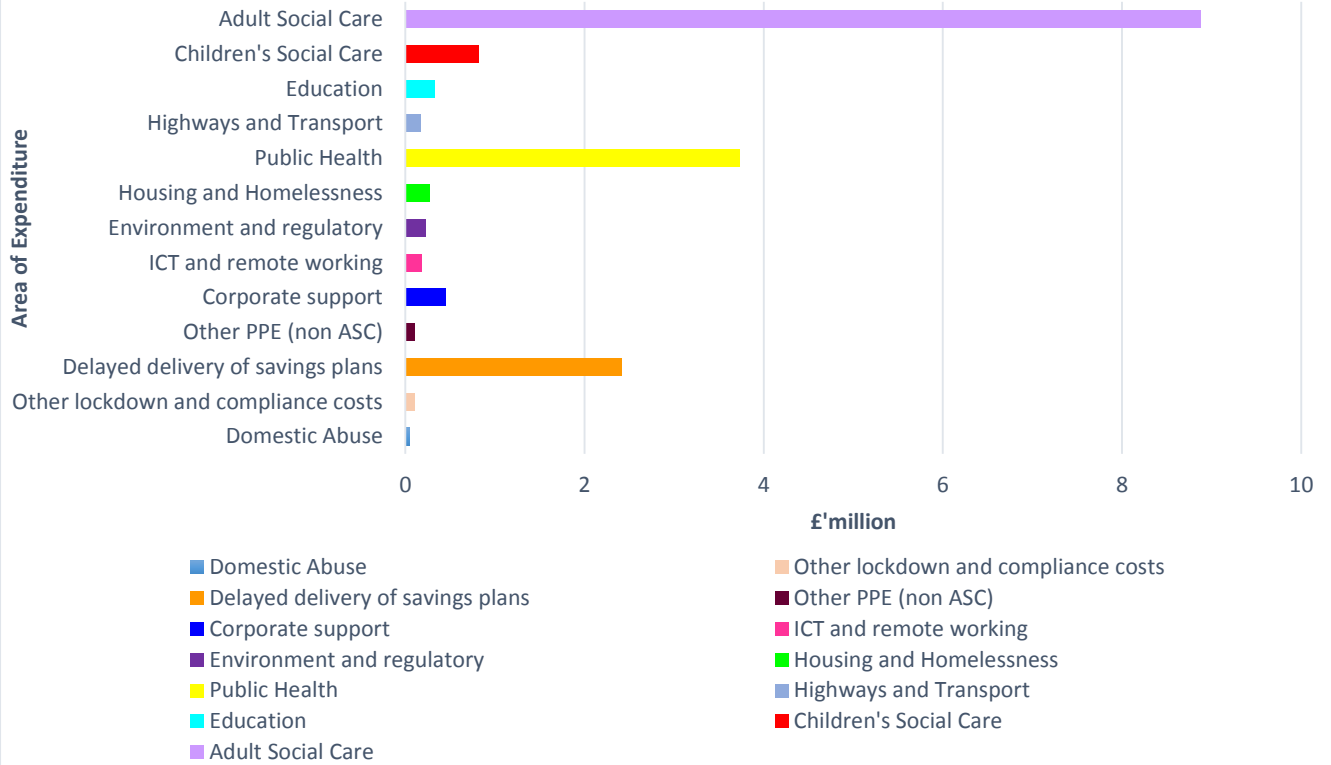
£100.677 million	TOTAL AT 11th DECEMBER 2020
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2.2 EXPENDITURE

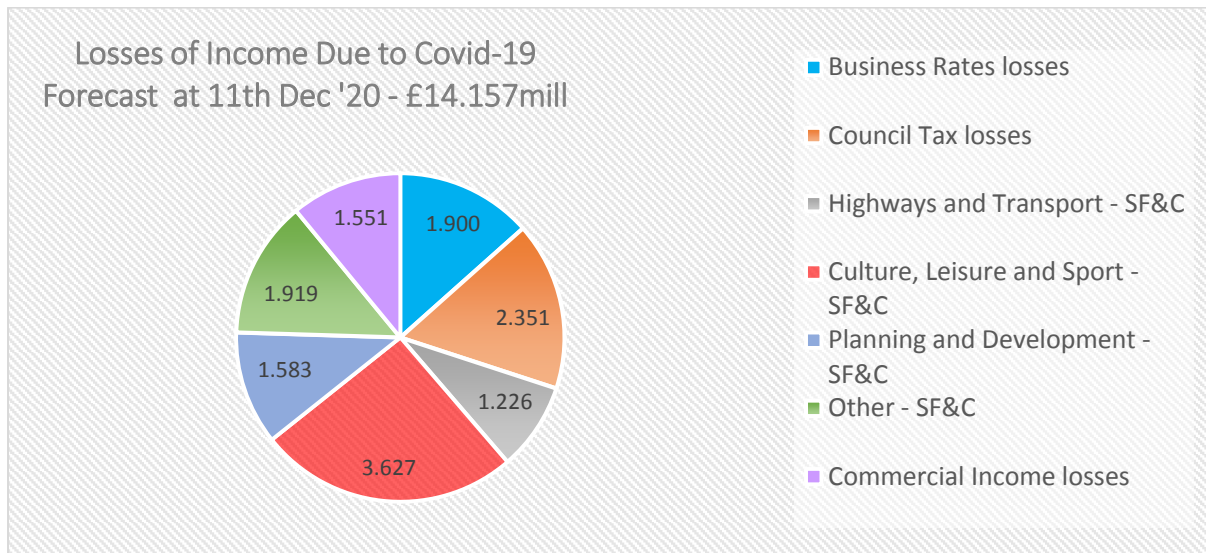
The Council must account to MHCLG for the additional expenditure and income losses incurred as a result of Covid-19 each month – to-date we have had to submit 8 returns.

The scope of the returns has been tweaked as the exercise has progressed, and the forecast for the full year impact has been revised as further information has emerged, as our response has progressed and as our assumptions have been updated for new information available on the course of the virus; for the purposes of this report, we will focus on the last return submitted on 11th December for the period to 30th November and the forecast based on the assumptions made, and information available, at that time.

Covid-19 related Expenditure - £17.752 mill



2.3 LOSSES OF INCOME



For the total forecast additional expenditure we expect to incur of £17.752 mill, and the income losses we expect to make of £9.906 mill, excluding those on business rates and council tax, i.e. total £27.712mill, we expect that the government funding at this point in time is sufficient to cover our costs. This is based on;

- £16.794mill - funding for general costs expenditure and losses of income as at 11th December
- £3.988mill – additional funding for lost sales, fees and charges income for the period 1st Oct – 31st Mar
- £3.510mill – contain outbreak Management
- Further funding to cover costs referred to by the Chancellor in the Spending Review

With regard to Business Rates and Council Tax, the government has given an undertaking to fund 75% of 'irrecoverable losses' incurred on these in 2020/21, with further information to be provided on the definition of irrecoverable loss, and for any resulting deficit on the Collection Fund in 2020/21, legislation has been amended to provide for recovery of this by the council over a 3 year period rather than the normal 1 year process.

3.0 CHALLENGES

With regard to the Committee's specific questions;

- How have the challenges the council has had to face affected corporate priorities such as the accommodation strategy?
- What support has been made available and how have staff coped with the demands placed on them by meeting the realignment of services?

As can be seen in the analysis of expenditure incurred on Covid, one of the categories that MHCLG have asked to be included is the delay in delivery of planned savings programmes – clearly although work was in train to deliver the savings programme, several areas have been deferred as the response to the pandemic has had to be prioritised. That said however, non-recurring savings have been generated as some activities/services have been curtailed as it has simply not been possible to undertake them.

Priorities such as the accommodation strategy and delivery of elements of the IT digital programme have continued and indeed have been accelerated during the pandemic;

As staff have been working from home, our Corporate Building Team have been able to successfully complete Phase 1 of the Accommodation Strategy and the 3rd and 4th floor of the Old Town Hall have been refurbished and are now in use. Work has now begun on Phase 2 which includes the 1st and 2nd floors and the Council Chamber.

The need to work from home has meant that plans to implement the technology to facilitate mobile working had to be scaled up at speed and the introduction of alternative ways of working using Microsoft Teams and Cloud technology have been implemented far more quickly than had been intended with huge benefit and success.

Staff have been flexible and have been redeployed in many instances to meet the demands arising in the pandemic; from establishing and running the Food Hub and the Help Hub, to providing a 7 day-a-week service in social care, to supporting the national Test and Trace Service. Staff have demonstrated their versatility and commitment in ensuring the needs of the residents of the borough are put first and have worked tirelessly to provide a first class service, in whatever service area they have worked. We are mindful of their efforts and of the need to ensure their own health and wellbeing and so have in place, and continue to develop, various schemes, mechanisms and ways in which we can provide support.

People Overview and Scrutiny Committee 7th December 2020.

Schools and COVID19

The Committee met on 7th December 2020 and continued to look at the way that the Council had responded to the services provided to children through schools and children's services. The Committee looked at the way that schools had worked to open and continue to stay open safely for both children and staff. The Committee also looked at the support that schools had received from the department and the guidance on interpretation of the government changing rules. The Committee looked at how the education response team had worked with schools and to keep people safe and would continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

Test and Trace and the Vaccine

The Committee received an update on the test and trace system and how this was working in the Borough. Blackburn with Darwen had been one of the first Councils in the country to start tracing cases locally as it had been recognised that the sooner a positive case has been identified and contacted the sooner their contacts can be identified and supported to self-isolate. The aim was to break the chain of transmission and support people in isolation. The Council will continue to work closely with the Government and Public Health England to secure additional resources and testing pilots to maximise capacity and value of test and trace at a local level.

The Committee looked at the way that the vaccine was proposed to be rolled out for inoculations and the priority order that would be used. The logistics of the actual delivery was examined and the sites that would be used as delivery centres.

Ofsted Children in Our Care Focused Visit update on Practice Improvement.

The Committee looked at the findings of the focused visit that had taken place in February 2020 which would be followed up in the near future. The focused visit had found that-

- Senior leaders understand the strengths and areas for development within the service. While there have been improvements in some areas of service, progress remains slow in key areas of weakness that were identified at previous inspections.
- When children are at immediate or significant risk, decisions to bring them into care are made promptly and appropriately. However, decision-making when children are suffering neglect is too slow. This means that some children are left in harmful situations and plans for their future are delayed.
- Social work caseloads are too high in the assessment and support teams, which impacts on social workers' ability to build relationships with children and understand their experiences. Although leaders have acted to try and reduce demand for social work services, this has not had any impact on workloads in these social work teams. At the point of this visit, effective interim plans to address workload pressures were not addressed.

The improvements that were highlighted in the area of social work were outlined and the Committee were informed that the department had taken steps to meet these and improvements made which included updating the service development plan, implementing and embedding the quality assurance and practice improvement framework and implementing a workforce strategy which has seen social work caseloads reduced by 25%. All newly qualified social workers would have caseloads under 15

children each. A number of areas of practice improvement were outlined together with the next steps that included Ofsted focused visits in January and peer challenge in February. The Committee were supportive of the actions taken by the Department and the Council and would look to receive further reports back to the Committee on the outcome of the review to improve services delivery and outcomes for children in the Borough.

Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 14th December 2020

The Committee met on 14th December and continued its work programme of looking at the Councils response to the challenges of the Corona Virus and how service areas within its remit continued to deliver services to meet the needs of residents of the Borough.

Waste Collection, Disposal, Recycling and The Blue Bin Service.

The meeting looked at two key areas in particular this time. The first of these was the waste collection, disposal and recycling. The Committee had previously been informed that the contract for the collection of waste and recycling had been brought back in house and had looked at how this was to be achieved. The Committee were also aware that the blue bin service was to start in the summer and how this was expected to increase recycling rates.

The Committee were informed that the transfer had taken place as proposed and the services had continued. The staff had been transferred and the new fleet of vehicles commenced service delivery on time with a seamless transfer. The Committee looked at-

- How the service transition had taken place
- How the household recycling centres had changed work practices and allotted times for use
- The ways that fly tipping was being tackled
- The introduction of the blue bins and how this had affected recycling of paper and card
- How operatives were kept safe and safer working practices were introduced
- The way that services were maintained throughout the period and continue to be delivered.

The Committee were informed that no collection times had been missed and that the service maintained throughout lockdown periods.

Public Protection service.

The Committee also looked at the Public Protection Service and how this had been meeting the challenges that were presented due to the pandemic. The Committee looked at how the role of the service had changed to include test and trace roles and ensuring that lockdown restrictions were being maintained. The Committee were informed that the service had also given information and advice to businesses in the borough about safe practices and restrictions and had where necessary issued restriction notices where rules were being broken or safe practices not followed.

The Committee congratulated the department on the way they had responded to the multiple challenges that had been presented by the COVID19 pandemic and the positive way that they had done this whilst recognising the difficulties that had been faced by such an outreaching service.