

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD IN REMOTELY - VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON WEDNESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2022 AT 09:30

Present

Councillor KL Rowlands – Chairperson

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| JPD Blundell | M Jones | RL Penhale-Thomas | RMI Shaw |
| A Williams | AJ Williams | | |

Apologies for Absence

DG Howells

Officers:

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| Lucy Beard | Scrutiny Officer |
| Meryl Lawrence | Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny |

Invitees:

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| Councillor Stuart Baldwin | |
| Councillor Huw David | Leader |
| Deborah Exton | Deputy Head of Finance |
| Councillor Jane Gebbie | Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member Social Services and Early Help |
| Lindsay Harvey | Corporate Director Education and Family Support |
| Carys Lord | Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change |
| Claire Marchant | Corporate Director Social Services and Wellbeing |
| Janine Nightingale | Corporate Director - Communities |
| Councillor Dhanisha Patel | Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Future Generations |
| Mark Shephard | Chief Executive |
| Councillor Charles Smith | Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration |
| Nigel Smith | Finance Manager |
| Kelly Watson | Chief Officer Legal, HR and Regulatory Services |
| Councillor Hywel Williams | Cabinet Member Resources |

52. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Alex Williams declared a personal interest in the report on Council Performance against its commitments at Quarter 2, as a private landlord in the County Borough.

53. COUNCIL PERFORMANCE AGAINST ITS COMMITMENTS AT QUARTER 2 OF 2021-22

The Chief Executive introduced the report and advised that due to changing demands and priorities there were no longer the same baselines or the same opportunities for national comparisons. He advised that while rolling out business grants to local

businesses, test and trace, additional work in social care, assisting with the vaccination programme and ICT rollout would not appear in terms of those measurements, they had taken up a lot of resource, effort, and energy over the period. He reflected that one of the challenges had been to deliver those things in response to the global pandemic and public health crisis, as well as consistently run a good service set out within their planning mechanism.

The Chair thanked the Chief Executive for his introduction, following which Members of the Committee asked the following questions.

A Member asked how the Corporate Performance Assessment Panel operated and how performance was scored objectively. He noted the Panel invited Scrutiny Chairs and asked about the link between Scrutiny Chairs' views to the Panel and their Scrutiny Committees. With regard to the RAG status and narrative in the dashboards he thought there was an opportunity to emphasise that performance was assessed objectively.

The Chief Executive responded that the Corporate Performance Assessment process was a long-standing mechanism within the Authority and there had been various iterations. He advised it was about individual Directorates having their own sessions where they met up with Cabinet Members, Scrutiny Chairpersons with a challenge Member of Cabinet. He advised that its purpose was for each Director to take forward their dashboard and there was challenge and discussion to have a detailed explanation where something was not meeting its target, the reasons and the action being taken to improve things by the following quarter and year end. The process was supported by the Performance Team and information was presented consistently in the dashboards.

The Chairperson advised that she was content they had scrutinised performance throughout the year at the Panel and Committee and was aware that the other two Committee chairs received in-depth information on their Directorates to scrutinise the content.

The Chairperson of Subject Overview Scrutiny Committee 2 advised that she had attended Corporate Performance Assessment meetings to provide views on performance along with the other Scrutiny Chairs.

The Chairperson of Subject Overview Scrutiny Committee 3 advised that he had been invited to the Corporate Performance Assessment meetings which usually consisted of two Chairperson, two Cabinet Members and two Directors as well as the Chief Executive. He advised he had also had meetings with his Directorate to discuss any emerging issues for potential scrutiny by the Committee.

The Chief Executive clarified that the meetings for Quarter 2 were individual meetings focused on each Directorate and its performance rather than one large meeting for all the Council's Directorate performance at year end.

A Member referred to the original question of how do Scrutiny Chairs feed back to their Scrutiny Committee and seek views on the performance of the Directorates in their remits.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny advised that Scrutiny Chairs were invited to Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) meetings to challenge, following which the Directorate performance dashboards would be reported to the Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee providing those Committee Members with the opportunity to scrutinise performance. Scrutiny Chairpersons would then be mindful of outcomes and recommendations from Scrutiny to take back and provide challenge at the next Corporate Performance Assessment.

The Chairperson of Subject Overview Scrutiny Committee 3 added that following CPA and Scrutiny of Performance, something not performing well in a Directorate could be considered for adding to the Committee's Forward Work Programme as a future item for scrutiny, but that the timescales for requesting reports needed to be achievable.

The Chairperson of Subject Overview Scrutiny Committee 2 agreed that sometimes there was not enough time to change the agenda too close to a meeting and they needed to manage the timescales for additional reports.

The Chairperson agreed that it was about timing and the Forward Work Programme for the next round of meetings would focus on the Medium Term Financial Strategy and budget and advised that the outcome from CPA was the Dashboards reported to this Committee for scrutiny.

The Member responded that there was a lot of preparatory work that could be done before meetings. He welcomed the Corporate Performance Assessment Panel and thought that Scrutiny could look at the overall corporate performance of the Authority.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny advised that while it was sometimes too close to include a new topic report in the Forward Work Programme for the next meeting, generally there was an opportunity to reprioritise topics for future meetings. She advised, that although they were focussing on the scrutiny of the MTFs and draft budget proposals in the next round of meetings, there would be opportunity to reschedule or reprioritise topics early in the year or propose topics for consideration for the next forward work programme for the coming year.

A Member referred to Disabled Facilities grants (DFGs) and that it could take a year to process a grant for people with disabilities. He referred to the recently reported solution to bring the service in-house from its external position, which had not yet impacted on the wait for people receiving grants.

The Chief Executive responded that it was disappointing it had not improved but asked that judgement be reserved until the new process had been established and that it was a key priority moving forward. He advised that due to the pandemic it had been difficult to access people's homes, engage contractors and employ staff, but he hoped to see improvements from the changes made. He explained that there had been a reluctance from some homeowners to have people in their homes during that time. In terms of risk assessments, they had tried to keep their access to people's homes to essential work. It had been recognised that the service needed changing and the changes being made were a medium to long term solution.

A Member asked if the high number of days to deliver a DFG could be partially addressed by stopping the clock if awaiting information from another party, outside the Service's control.

The Chief Executive replied that some other authorities measured it differently but doing that was debatable as it improved how performance looked but would not change the amount of time for the resident or the outcome. He added that they had resisted doing that, for consistency and comparison purposes of performance over the years.

The Cabinet Member for Communities advised that while there had been no restrictions stopping them from going into people's homes, some of the people would have been vulnerable and shielding.

The Leader added that they had remodelled the DFG system and there would be an improvement to the indicator, but not straight away.

A Member asked as the offices had been closed during the pandemic and staff had been working from home, whether that had resulted in better and smarter use of resources.

The Chief Executive advised that the way the Council does business had changed, so in terms of smarter resources there had been savings, however there had been an increase in investment with people working from home in terms of IT kit for members of staff. It was an ongoing process, and the future service delivery model of the Council would change.

A Member referred to the percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days as in the previous quarters they had been achieving the targets and the impact on the public if invoices were not being paid as quickly as they hoped. She explained that during the pandemic they had heard of businesses closing and there being a shortage of money and asked whether the payment of invoices on time could be having an impact.

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change advised she did not have the information to hand but could provide it and shared the Member's concern regarding the potential impact of slow payment of invoices on businesses in the area.

A Member referred to the empty properties indicator and the target to get seven empty homes a year back into occupation and into use and was concerned that only two had been achieved.

The Cabinet Member for Future Generations and Wellbeing explained there was a lot of work involved especially with long term empty properties. She knew that the Officers had been working with properties and private property owners during the pandemic and the cases that had been taken forward had been successful.

A Member suggested that some comments could be included in the report where there were no performance comments and while she understood Covid had impacted upon indicators, there were few other comments included.

The Cabinet Member for Future Generations and Wellbeing advised they would look at that for the next quarter.

A Member asked about the potential ability and opportunity to build local authority housing as other local authorities were doing.

The Cabinet Member for Future Generations and Wellbeing advised that a review of the housing and homelessness position was currently underway and understood that there had been fifty interviews to date with different stakeholders and service users.

The Chief Executive advised there were several strategies required, of which building homes may be a part, but it was a medium-term solution and there were short term problems. He advised that the Housing and Homelessness agenda was huge, and that going forward it would require several initiatives to respond to it adequately.

A Member requested that the inclusion of some comments on the target setting would be helpful for future reports.

A Member asked the Chief Executive if he felt he had sufficient human resources to deal with the issue of bringing existing properties back into the housing market, as they

needed a robust system in place where they could benefit from those private landlords who did come forward and offer their properties.

The Chief Executive explained there were several parts of the organisation that could benefit from additional resource, but it came down to priorities and balance. Moving forward if he was asked to identify the areas of most significant pressure that would obviously include Social Care but also Housing and Homelessness and they may well need to consider and adapt their structures to respond to that. He advised there had been briefings to try to persuade private landlords to make their homes available but due to the market being buoyant people seemed keen on selling.

A Member referred to the performance indicator around Discretionary Housing Payments, he wondered if the increase in the time to deliver those payments had been a result of other performance indicators where comments had been made around self-isolation payments, the number of calls going into the Council to deal with other issues and the Warm Homes Payment from UK Government.

The Chief Executive advised that the staff had been under huge pressures as there were a plethora of other things they had been asked to deliver at short notice. He explained that they did not have additional staff or resources and during the year they had significant periods of staff sickness or isolating. It was a challenge he saw on a day-to-day basis as to how the Authority responded to all those challenges at a time when it faced significant issues, particularly workforce.

The Deputy Head of Finance responded that in terms of the Discretionary Housing Payments, they had been given additional funding that year so there had been more money to try and administer. They had also had several other additional grants to administer on behalf of Welsh Government; the Isolation Payments for example were complicated and needed a lot of information collected for each application so had taken up quite a lot of staff time and it was the same staff dealing with several different grants on top of their day jobs.

A Member referred to the target maintained at that level due to potential changes in the delivery mechanism and asked if they suspected it would move into a better position during the year.

The Deputy Head of Finance advised that in terms of the funding that they had available for the year, she could confirm they were targeting the people that they knew were eligible, and they wanted to maximise the use of the funding to those eligible.

A Member suggested the inclusion of a comment that staff were working on issuing payments for multiple other grants during the pandemic would be helpful, to explain why there had been an increase in the time to deliver payments over the past year.

The Chairperson referred to Appendix B - Communities Performance Dashboard and commented performance indicators were green but proposed that performance comments could be included as evidence.

The Corporate Director- Communities advised the dashboard was a line of sight overall to show where they were, what was more pertinent was when they got into the detail of the performance indicators behind those objectives where they should see a level of detail.

A Member referred to the green status rating, as for the number of vacant properties in town centres there was no target.

The Corporate Director - Communities explained that the economic impact in some areas had been quite severe for Bridgend town centre and when looking at the global retail position quite a lot of companies had folded. She advised they wanted to baseline how many empty commercial properties there were as a result at the end of the pandemic and then use that as their starting point to work forward and see if they can assist people in getting those properties back in use. She advised what they had been doing and had not stopped during the pandemic was using the Welsh Government transforming towns monies to give out grants in their town centres. Work had not stopped behind the scenes and there was a lot of narrative behind it, that they needed to find a way to capture, which was why it was rated as green.

A Member asked if the Corporate Director - Communities was expecting that to change in quarter three.

The Corporate Director- Communities advised she did not think they would see any change this year and the important thing would be to get the baseline information correct and then look again from quarter one next year where they were and what they would like to get to in terms of property numbers as well as seeing an improvement as part of their Economic Recovery Plan.

A Member asked if this was in line with other local authorities and were they going back to a benchmarking position due to Covid.

The Corporate Director - Communities responded that a lot would have to be benchmarked against, but for them the important part post pandemic was to ensure that they were measuring the things that were impactful.

The Cabinet Member for Communities explained that if they owned the properties, they would have greater control over them, but the Authority owned no retail property in Bridgend town centre, and they were often dealing with landlords who were nationally or internationally based.

A Member queried the red in DCO 16.9 – Realisation of capital receipts targets.

The Corporate Director - Communities advised that it was their capital receipts target so when disposing of those properties they would get a receipt, and whilst it was showing as red in quarter two, by quarter four it would be green.

The Member asked if there was a plan why the indicator was red and not amber.

The Corporate Director - Communities explained that if they were 10% below the target, they had to show it as red. She explained that compliance meant that all certification was in place, the property had been inspected and there were no faults on the system and that certification was uploaded. She explained the biggest areas of risks were electrical, gas, legionella, and fire risk so they would concentrate on those areas moving forward. She advised they were to introduce a new integrated work management system called Tech Forward which would give a global view of their system so they could see where each building was located and what equipment was in it. They would also be able to see what the compliance situation was, and contractors could also upload the certification to that source. She concluded that whilst it was categorised red it did not mean their buildings were not safe, but that their compliance was not where it needed to be.

The Member asked if it would be possible that safety also be included in the report so they could see the safety aspect in comparison to the compliance.

The Corporate Director - Communities responded that it would not be the appropriate place as safety would be part of Health and Safety meetings and regime which would be separate.

The Cabinet Member for Communities added where they had buildings that were closed there would be no staff or public access. He advised they had extensive discussions about how they were monitoring and reporting on compliance and safety.

A Member asked how long it would take to get closed premises set up and running again e.g. Newbridge Fields changing rooms.

The Corporate Director - Communities explained that any facility that had water in it had to be Legionella tested and this could not be done until seven days prior to opening a facility and although they had a company to do the testing for them, they had to look at a priority order. She expressed what they could not do was be reticent when it came to health and safety and were not going to open the facilities until they knew they were safe, but she appreciated that might have been frustrating in some cases.

A Member referred to the Community Asset Transfers indicator which was green and queried why Coity Higher Community Council were on the list as she did not believe there were any outstanding. She also queried why there was no mention regarding the play parks as the importance and investment in play parks had been raised in a previous meeting, but it was not in the report to show how they were doing. Lastly, she referred to the high number of Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD), including back and neck sickness days lost which she raised her concerns due to there being a lot of manual handling in Communities, and the potential for claims from a work-related injury.

The Corporate Director - Communities advised that the Community Asset Transfers should be green as things had moved on since the quarter one report. She praised the Community Asset Transfer Officer and his team for doing a wonderful job on having processed a significant number of transfers that year.

The Leader echoed the Corporate Director – Communities' comments and advised that a report was being prepared and there was a lot of interest and strong partnerships with Community Councils and Sports Clubs.

The Corporate Director - Communities advised regarding the sickness days and work-related injury question, they had a lot of manual workers and frontline services within the Communities Directorate, so they did have back and neck injuries and in the main these may be due to working circumstances, but they may not be due to work practices. In Health and Safety, they were looking at measures which would reduce the number of injuries and would ensure that their work methods were safe e.g., the use of monitors on mowing equipment to stop use at a set point due to vibration time and length. It was important to mitigate risk as far as possible.

The Corporate Director - Communities explained that this year they had made a concerted effort to have a capital programme for playground improvement. One of the ambitions was to refresh and renew all play areas across the borough within the next five years. She advised that they needed a rolling programme of capital investment which was what they were working on now and a programme indicator so they could say how many they would like to target in that particular year and monitor the progress. At present they were working on that programme going out to tender.

A Member referred to PAM/010 on the report and the definition, which stated that the percentage of highways inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness was at an admirable rate of 98.6% and asked what was that standard.

The Corporate Director- Communities advised she could not provide the exact definition but would ask the Group Manager of Highways and Green Spaces to respond to the Member with the detailed criteria.

The Member responded that although he had admiration for the team that worked in the Valley, however their street cleaning remit did not include removing things like leaves which then had a knock-on effect on the drains team when drains became blocked. He suggested that sweepers might be useful to clear the streets on his and other wards.

The Corporate Director - Communities responded that they had started recycling street waste litter collection, so the operatives were picking items that could be used for their recycling targets. That did not mean they could not clear those streets of other materials and she would speak to her team.

The Chair referred to Appendix C – Education and Family Support Performance Dashboard.

A Member asked what a 21st Century school would look like.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support advised Guidance had been issued from Welsh Government which specified the requirements around all new builds, regarding ecological developments and requirements for teaching and learning and availability to play areas, all specified by legislation. There were several key areas, to make sure environments were safe for users and sustainable and not just from decarbonisation and other aspects but financially sustainable for the Council.

The Member asked if the 21st Century School needed to be a new build as that would incur a long delay and could school money be used to improve the environment of existing schools rather than waiting to have to rebuild every time.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support explained that they had a School Modernisation Board which also benefited from representation from Communities Directorate, Central South Consortium and Health and Safety. Through that Board they make strategic decisions, then in consultation with elected Members of the Capital Improvement Programme that went to Council and then they deploy that at top need. He explained there are three tiers, first tier being Health and Safety requirements, the next level the Strategic Requirement and the third level additional teacher learning facilities within the schools. He concluded it went through a rigorous approach and it was not just the 21st Century Schools and colleges programme that the schools could benefit from.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration advised that that yes it would have to be a new building and follow certain specifications, but it was more complex than that and providing a new school did not necessarily provide a better school. What was important was that the staff, the pupils, the parents, and the governors worked together within that building.

The Leader advised that it was possible for the 21st Century School Modernisation Programme to redevelop existing schools but admitted one of the challenges with existing sites was that they were constrained and did not have the outdoor space which was fundamental.

The Member referred to DCH 2.1, point 11.1 and 2 and the percentage of surplus capacity in both primary and secondary schools which was important as it influenced school budgets and asked what the delay was in reconfiguring the catchment areas. He

advocated giving secondary school and college children bus passes, so they have the freedom of travel.

Another Member asked for clarification on whether the indicators were red due to the number of spaces in their schools and questioned where these surpluses were.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support advised that regarding the catchment areas one of the challenges they had was parental choice. As far as surplus places were concerned there were certain areas within the local authority where they were pressed for places in certain year groups and other year groups had surplus places. Some schools had significant surplus places, especially in the secondary sector. They had looked at the Local Development Plan scanning for additional places. Additional work was ongoing through the School Modernisation Board to look at potential increases. There was a lot of work going on in the background, and subject to some Welsh Government funding.

Regarding the bus passes they were very keen especially with post sixteen learners to give young people the flexibility to attend courses where they needed to and increase their future life chances. A report was awaited from Welsh Government on the home to school transport position, as it made sense to align their long-term priorities with policy from Welsh Government.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration responded that it was a complex situation and there were a series of challenges. The longer-term key being to look at their Local Development Plan, and the Education Department of the Council were communicating with the Planning Department from the very beginning of the local development planning process. Regarding the 16 plus bus pass they had a wider ambition for a more general bus pass for young people, which they had been talking to First Cymru about, but legislation would need to come from Government about commissioning transport services.

A Member asked for reassurance on WBO3 point 2.5 with the adapting ways of using technology, she commented that although equipment had been rolled out to schools and the situation was ongoing, she had seen it reported to Childline that there had been a 40% increase in online abuse and whether that fell within remit of this indicator.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support advised it was not as the indicator related more to the deployment of technological systems. He expressed that the question raised was an important one and safeguarding was within all aspects of what they do. He explained they had 23,000 users plus 3000 staff in schools, and they needed to make sure they followed the appropriate policies.

A Member questioned the 'additional sickness absence by reasons' and asked if that included all staff, as they had said they had differentiated between school staff and the service area, and did the final table include all staff. She also wondered if when looking at the sickness absence reasons, if one of the main reasons was musculoskeletal injuries where they work related and accidents in schools, as it was a high number and there was not much manual handling in schools.

The Corporate Director - Education and Family Support advised he would need to check with Human Resources regarding the last two tables and figures. The first table had on the left-hand side their officers and the next one the 3000 school staff. As far as the cases and whether they related to the industrial injury, there seemed to be incongruent as they were reporting low instances of industrial injury and higher with muscular skeletal issues, but he would check with HR.

The Chairperson referred to Appendix D - Social Services and Wellbeing performance dashboard.

A Member referred to care leavers and issues regarding accommodation and ensuring everyone was working together and asked for an update on the working group set up to close that gap.

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing advised there would be a detailed workshop taking place between Housing and Social Services colleagues where they would be working through the baseline assessment which would be good practice around accommodation, care leavers and care experienced children. It had been developed a couple of years previous by Barnardo's and a report would be presented to the next Cabinet Corporate Parenting Committee to set out where they were, where their areas of good practice were, if there were any gaps and their priorities moving forward. She advised that most important was that care experienced children were getting the priority that they should for accommodation, but also that there were no perverse incentives for children and young people to declare themselves as homeless to get the support, and the detail would be worked through in the workshop.

A Member referred to the staffing structure and asked if there was an update.

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing explained the workforce was a significant issue and a top priority. She explained there were two key areas of challenge in terms of workforce, one being the domiciliary care workforce, in which there were several actions in place. The other key area for them in terms of workforce was around children's social work, she advised they had been through two restructures within their children social work teams which had resulted in a different structure in terms of pay, where experienced children social workers sit within their job of valuation, and where to place adverts at those higher grades. If they were not successful, they would look at a range of other support mechanisms for their social workers and may need to consider an application through the market supplement policy which had been approved by Council.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services and Early Help advised they advertise all their social work and care posts through recruitment drives across the County Borough and would appreciate all Members sharing this information and encouraging people to take up these roles.

A Member asked whether there was an indicator for the number of statutory home visits for children.

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing responded that it was one of their key performance measures and one of the national measures in terms of statutory visits to children on the child protection register. She explained at the start of the pandemic they worked in a risk assessed way but for some time and in accordance with Welsh Government operating model the visits had been face to face, the risk of not visiting having been considered higher. She advised the challenges they faced on performance against statutory visits and those performance measures were looked at on a weekly basis within the Children Services Management Team and monthly basis within the Directorate Management Team.

A Member referred to the number of people aged 65 plus referred to the Community Resource Team and given the context they had been working in the last two years, it had been much lower. There had been a lot of conversation around workforce, and he assumed that those referrals would increase, possibly in quarter three, in quarter four and into next year, and asked if they had the capacity to deal with what could be a significant influx.

The Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing advised the concern was that their whole system was under pressure which meant they had numbers of people who had delays in their transfer of care in the Community Resource Team and there would be people who had their care needs met and benefit from long-term domiciliary care packages but without having had that opportunity to be reenabled. Supporting people to retain and regain independence took more of their long-term care which was a very scarce and valued resource, so it was significant concern and something which they were to pick up around planning for the needs coming through working with their colleagues in the Health Board.

The Chairperson advised that there were no further questions from Members of the Committee for the Invitees for this report, thanked the Invitees for their attendance and advised that any Invitees not requested to attend for the next report may leave the meeting.

RESOLVED: That having regard to consideration of the content of the report and the responses to the questions asked, the Committee endorsed the report.

54. **CORPORATE PLAN 2018-2023 REVIEWED FOR 2022-23**

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change introduced the report, upon the Corporate Plan which had been updated for 2022-23. She explained the process had included Chief Officers and Management Teams, enabling them to look at what priorities there were going forward. She advised what they saw in the updated programme was the revised plan for the coming year and performance against the Plan would be monitored by this Committee as well as some aspects being monitored by the Governance and Audit Committee, so there would be opportunities for Members to look at progress against the Corporate Plan.

A Member asked the Leader if he believed the Corporate Plan would be ambitious enough going forward as they moved out of the pandemic.

The Leader responded that it had been difficult with the pandemic to be as ambitious as they would have liked but it had not gone away and was still the biggest challenge they faced. However, they would be looking to review the Corporate Plan and make it as ambitious as possible. He wished to make a point though that some of these challenges were long standing and not simply going to go away when the pandemic became an endemic.

The Chief Executive wished to add that it was the last review of the five-year Corporate Plan and one of the things that they would be doing post-election, whilst many of the challenges and priorities may remain the same, there may be a different focus which would feed into the new Corporate Plan. He explained that in some respects you would not expect the last year of a plan to deviate too far from what they had been doing over the last few years and agreed with the Leader that Covid had created a level of uncertainty which made it difficult to move forward. He advised they had additional pressures and changes to the way that they delivered some services which would need to be reflected on and become part of the assessment for the development of the new Corporate Plan moving forward.

The Chairperson advised that there were no further questions from Members of the Committee for the Invitees for this report, thanked the Invitees for their attendance and advised that any Invitees not requested to attend for the next report may leave the meeting.

RESOLVED: That having regard to consideration of the content of the report and the responses to the questions asked, the Committee endorsed the report.

55. **CAPITAL STRATEGY 2022-23 TO 2031-32**

The Chief Officer - Finance, Performance and Change introduced the report and explained the capital expenditure and investment undertaken by local authorities was governed by legislation. One requirement was that all local authorities had to have a Capital Strategy in place, and it should evidence that the plans were both affordable and sustainable. The Capital Strategy was updated on an annual basis to take account of change in plans and changing guidance and then the strategy had to be approved by full Council.

The Chairperson asked the Members to consider the recommendations and add any suggestions or comments on the report itself. As there were no comments or questions, she thanked the Invitees for their attendance and advised that they may leave the meeting.

RESOLVED: That having regard to consideration of the content of the report and the responses to the questions asked, the Committee endorsed the report.

56. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Senior Democratic Services Officer, Scrutiny advised that following on from the Committee's consideration of the Forward Programme at the previous meeting, the updated Forward Programme for this Committee was attached as Appendix A. The Forward Work Programme for Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees 1, 2 and 3 were also attached as Appendices B, C and D, she explained as the Committee had responsibility for coordination and oversight of the overall Forward Work Programme.

The Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations from previous meetings was attached as Appendix E.

There were no requests to include specific information in items for upcoming meetings and there were no further items identified for consideration on the Forward Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal calendar of meetings.

RESOLVED: That the Committee considered and approved its Forward Work Programme in Appendix A; noted the Forward Work Programmes for the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees following consideration in the respective Meetings in Appendices B, C & D and noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at the previous meetings in Appendix E.

57. **URGENT ITEMS**

None

The meeting closed at 11:43