



Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

27 November 2013

-: Present :-

Councillor Thomas (J) (Chairman)

Councillors Bent, Darling (Vice-Chair), Davies, Hytche, Kingscote, McPhail, Pentney and Stockman

(Also in attendance: The Mayor and Councillors James, Parrott, Pritchard and Thomas (D))

33. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 9 October 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

34. Re-modelling of accommodation services for victims of domestic abuse

At previous meetings, Board members had considered the proposal to change the accommodation model from a refuge to one of emergency accommodation. They had also heard from a range of organisations, including the current provider of the refuge, about the range of services provided in Torbay to support victims of domestic abuse.

The Director of Adult Services attended the meeting and presented her report which provided an update on the current position for re-commissioning domestic abuse services in Torbay. The report included the results of the recent public consultation on the proposal to change the accommodation model together with the latest Equality Impact Assessment of the proposal.

It was noted that, as a result of the consultation, a collaborative approach would now be pursued to design future domestic abuse services, including accommodation and outreach support. The membership of the Domestic Abuse Steering Group had been reviewed to ensure all relevant stakeholders were represented and the Group would be reviewing the Domestic Abuse Strategy. The Group would then prioritise the appropriate involvement of stakeholders in the planning and design of future domestic abuse services and the allocation of funding including seeking partner contributions for those services.

35. Review of Youth Unemployment

The Overview and Scrutiny Board had completed its review of youth unemployment and published its report in June 2013. The Board requested that

the Mayor attend the meeting to discuss his response to the report which members of the Board had recently received.

The recommendations from the Board's report highlighted that Torbay Council must lead by example and use its influence to ensure that young people in Torbay have access to the:

- Right careers education, information, advice and guidance
- Right skills
- Right employment opportunities.

However, in agreeing its report, the Board recognised that many of the issues surrounding employment skills were beyond the control of the Council, as commissioning and funding comes via other agencies in Torbay. The Board had therefore held an Inquiry Day on 13 November 2013 to discuss with a range of stakeholders how the whole community could work together to address the skills gap within Torbay, both now and in the future, to ensure a thriving and sustainable economy.

The Mayor, the Executive Director – Operations and Finance and the Director of Children's Services attended the meeting and reassured the Board that the Council was "leading by example" and that a report would be submitted to the Senior Leadership Team in January 2014 on targets for the number of apprenticeships within the Council with the new approach being launched during National Apprenticeship Week in 2014. It was also hoped that the Council's procurement policies could be broadened to encourage the use of apprenticeships.

The Board and the Director of Children's Services discussed the role that schools should play in ensuring young people were equipped for the world of work. This had been a clear theme which had emerged from the Board's Inquiry Day. The Director offered to co-ordinate a meeting between members of the Board, schools and Careers South West to provide an opportunity for further debate about these issues.

36. Revenue Budget Monitoring (Quarter 2)

The Board considered a report which set out the projected outturn of the Revenue Budget as at the end of Quarter 2 of 2013/2014. The Board noted that the Council was still subject to ongoing demand pressures, particularly within Children's Safeguarding and Wellbeing. The Council was projecting an overspend of £1.411 million, compared to a projected overspend of £2.415 million at the end of the first quarter.

During their consideration of the report, Members were advised that the Council had approved a Budget Pressures Contingency as part of the 2013/14 budget setting to support and address specific pressures identified within the year. Due to the ongoing pressures faced within Children's Services all of this reserve (£1 million) had been released to offset the increased costs within Safeguarding and Wellbeing. However, the projected outturn position for the Children, Schools and Families revenue budget remained overspent by £3 million. As part of the

corporate approach to addressing the overall overspend, all services had been asked to deliver in-year savings and a number of services had made significant savings which were detailed in the report.

Resolved: that the Board remain concerned at the level of overspend, especially in relation to Children's Safeguarding, and would wish to see inroads into this overspend within the current financial year.

37. Capital Budget Monitoring (Quarter 2)

The Board noted a report which provided high level information on the Council's capital expenditure and funding for 2013/2014 compared with the position as reported in July 2013.

38. Review of Reserves 2014/2015

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

Chairman
