

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

10 June 2020

-: Present :-

Councillor Howgate (Chairman)

Councillors Barrand, Brown, Bye, Mandy Darling, Doggett, Foster, Kennedy (Vice-Chair) and Loxton

(Also in attendance: Councillors Brooks, Carter, Cowell, Steve Darling, Douglas-Dunbar, Hill, Kavanagh, Law, Chris Lewis, Long, Mills, Morey, Stockman, David Thomas and Jacqueline Thomas)

1. Economic Recovery

The Director of Economic Strategy, the Chairman of the Torbay Business Forum and the Chief Executive of the English Riviera BID Company attended the meeting to discuss the Post Covid-19 Economic Plan. The version of the Plan presented to the Board was draft and the Board was invited to share its views and to help identify gaps. It was also noted that, although a version would be presented to Cabinet in June 2020, it was likely that further iterations of the Plan would be needed over the summer as the impact of the pandemic and the associated impact on Torbay's economy becomes clearer.

In light of the above, the views of the Board as set out below are not specific recommendations for Cabinet, but are issues which the Board believe need to be addressed within this and future iterations of the Plan.

- There are opportunities as well as challenges presented as a result of Covid-19. This is a time when Torbay can be reinvented – building on the successful industries which we already have and have been developing recently. Promotion of start-up businesses, especially in the hi-tech sector, is important.
- As the tourism and hospitality trade re-opens, we need to make sure that Torbay is looking its best and that it lives up to our ambition of being the premier resort in the UK. To this end, the guidance on how community groups can be involved in place-based activities needs to be progressed.
- Consideration should also be given to:
 - How improving skills can be included as a key theme of the Plan.
 - How train travel to Torbay can be encouraged.
 - Introducing “buy local” campaigns.

2. Budget Monitoring Outturn 2019/20

The Board considered the report of the Head of Finance which provided a high level budget summary of the Council's revenue and capital expenditure for the 2019/2020 financial year.

Members noted that the Council reported an overspend on the Council's revenue budget of £3.08m for the 2019/2020 financial year, which was an improvement from the quarter three position due to savings in other areas but in the context of an overspend in Children's Services of £7m.

Resolved:

That staff across the Council be thanked for their efforts to identify savings over the course of the 2019/2020 financial year.

3. Call-in Co-operative Councils Innovation Network

The Board had before it details of a call-in by five Members of the Council of the decision of the Cabinet to join the Co-operative Council's Innovation Network. The Call-in Promoter explained his reasons for call-in to the Board and the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Community Services responded.

Resolved:

That no further action be taken in respect of the call-in.

4. Exclusion of press and public

Prior to consideration of the item in Minute 5 the press and public were formally excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the item involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

5. Call-In New Economic Growth Fund 20 05 20 b

The Board had before it details of a call-in by five Members of the Council of the decision of the Cabinet in respect of an exempt Economic Growth Fund investment. The Call-in Promoter explained her reasons for call-in to the Board and the Leader of the Council responded.

Resolved:

That no further action be taken in respect of the call-in.