

Commenced: 6.00pm  
Concluded: 8.40pm

**Corporate Scrutiny and Governance Board  
23 February 2015**

Present Councillor Lisa Eldret (Chair)  
Councillors Carr, Davis, Dhindsa, Pegg, Stanton & Whitby

**25/14 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors Ingall and Stanton

**26/14 Late items introduced by the Chair**

There were no late items.

**27/14 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**28/14 Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2014 and 15  
December 2014**

The minutes of the Corporate Scrutiny and Governance Board meeting held on 13 October 2014 and 15 December 2015 were approved and accepted as an accurate record.

**29/14 Presentation by Grant Thornton on the 2020 Vision - future  
of Local Government Finance and Policy**

The Board received a presentation from Guy Clifton of Grant Thornton the Council's external auditor and University of Birmingham who had jointly produced a paper on how local authorities may respond to the unprecedented challenges, including those relating to austerity and central government funding reductions, demographic pressures and technological change.

The paper was published in October 2014 and explored the finance and policy issues for English local government. The paper looked at challenges which were likely to be faced by local government over the next ten years. It made suggestions on how the public sector might respond to them.

The report of the presentation could be found at Appendix 2 which stated on page 12 that "the Local Government Association predicts a £14.4bn shortfall in the funding required in 2019/20, and 60% of councils no longer able to meet the budget challenge through efficiency improvements".

Members and attendees participated in an electronic voting exercise relating to six scenarios detailed on page 3 of the report and outlined below:

- Adaptive innovation
- Running to stand still
- Nostril above the waterline
- Wither on the vine
- Just local administration
- Imposed disruption

The Grant Thornton 2020 vision concluded with four clear recommendations:

- 1) **Political parties** – to consider wholesale change, so that whichever party forms the next government is ready for a serious discussion with the sector directly after the 2015 general election about what the local/national deal should be
- 2) **Whitehall and the rest of the public sector** – to participate in constructive dialogue about what the future could look like, leading to real change
- 3) **Local government and its private and voluntary sector partners** – to agree that fundamental change is needed and to begin to plan for a transition to a more sustainable long-term framework
- 4) **Individual councils** – to understand which scenario they would currently place themselves in, the context in which they are working and what they need to do next.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## 30/14 Demand Management Programme

A report was presented to the Board on behalf of the Acting Chief Executive which updated members on the Demand Management Programme. The Council commissioned iMPower to progress four projects which aimed to either save money or reduce demand pressures as part of the work which supported the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) savings for 2015/16.

It was reported that Demand Management was one of the tools being used to ensure that the Council maximises its opportunities for reducing cost pressures in support of the MTFP.

The four key areas were:

- 1) Special Educational Needs Out of Area Placements
- 2) Fostering and Adoption
- 3) Nursing and Residential Care Placements
- 4) Environmental Standards

Members discussed the various challenges faced in the four aforementioned areas and how they were currently being addressed. Members particularly focussed on the comparative costs involved between independent foster carers and in house foster carers and also raised concerns around fly tipping in Normanton and Arboretum wards. The Acting Director of Specialist Services responded by saying that people were being encouraged to volunteer as foster carers by the refer a friend scheme and that current foster carers were the greatest advocates for communication about Derby City Council's foster carers scheme.

The Director of Partnerships and Streetpride responded to concerns about fly tipping and said that clarity was needed when communicating the service Derby City Council offers and educating people about their responsibilities' when they dispose of their unwanted items and household waste.

In response to a query raised by the Chair on the cost of employing external consultants, the iMPOWER consultant responded by saying the test will be in the months after they have gone and if the recommendations will be carried out. The toolset Derby City Council will be left with will certainly be bigger than when they (iMPOWER) arrived.

**Resolved to recommend:**

- 1) That the Council continues to look at the learning from Demand Management principles across the organisation and report back with an overview when there is more information available to evaluate the performance of this programme.**
- 2) Promote the cleaning and removal scheme amongst landlords and letting agents and offering to clear up each time there is a change of tenancies. This would not only provide good effective scheme for residents to help keep streets clean but also generate income for the council.**

**31/14 Big Conversation Budget Simulator 'Your Council, Your Money, Your Views'**

The Corporate Scrutiny and Governance Board considered a report on the Big Conversation and Budget Consultation Paper presented by the Head of Performance and Improvement on behalf of the Acting Chief Executive. The Leader of the Council launched the Big Conversation in 2014 to give everyone in Derby the opportunity to influence decision making. The Big Conversation aimed to raise awareness regarding the cuts being made by the Government and the impact of reductions on our local services. This was one of the biggest budget consultations ever undertaken by the Council, over 10,000 people had so far been asked for feedback through a large number of community, business and service user events, on street promotion, member surgeries and through our website.

The Your Council, Your Money, Your Views Budget Simulator was launched on 21 July 2014 and challenged participants to manage and balance the Council Budget using an innovative online Simulator. The Simulator allowed for those living, working or visiting Derby to give a real indication of where their personal priorities lie as well as allowing the Council to gain a real insight into the views of the public. In order to submit their response participants had to make the required savings.

During the consultation period the Big Conversation team attended events across the city to promote and encourage participation. At these events people were able to complete the Simulator using iPads or provide overall comments and feedback about Council Services.

As of 20 November 2014 there had been 902 submissions with 6,840 visits made to the Budget Simulator Pages. The Simulator would be open to receive feedback until the end of March 2015, however the Big Conversation itself would remain as a continuous dialogue with local residents and stakeholders.

Data from the Simulator had been analysed to identify respondents' relative priorities in funding services (for example, services receiving highest or lowest % reductions). 1,390 comments had also been evaluated to draw out key themes including difficulty in balancing the budget, the need to focus on 'must dos' and maintaining minimum levels of services in accordance with statutory requirements. In some cases, there was acceptance that fees and charges would need to increase as well as changes in service delivery to achieve the scale of savings required (£60 million).

On 3 December 2014 the Council launched a formal public consultation on its 15 year Vision and Budget proposals 2015-18. By the close of the consultation period, the Council had received 425 individual comments on the budget proposals.

The most common themes arising from the comments made by respondents to the consultation were:

- Proposals to close Moorways Swimming Pool
- Budgets should be spent on the most vulnerable
- Front-line services should be protected from reductions
- Cuts to funding for voluntary sector organisations
- The Council needs to be more efficient and minimise wasting money.

The report brought together the feedback from both exercises to inform Council Cabinet decision making.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## 32/14 Cabinet Council Plan 2015-18

The Members considered the report on the Council Plan 2015-18 which was presented by the Head of Performance and Improvement on behalf of the Leader of the Council. The report informed the Board that the current Derby Plan and Council Plan would end in March 2015. The report presented a draft Council Plan based on the new 15 year vision and priorities consulted on as part of the Council's budget proposals. The draft Plan was shown in Appendix 2 of the report.

The new Council Plan would cover three years from 2015 - 2018 and would align with the latest Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) as launched on 3 December 2014. Subject to Council Cabinet approval, the Council Plan would be presented to Council alongside the Council's budget on 4 March 2015.

It was proposed to underpin the Council Plan with new thematic and risk-based delivery plans. These would replace the existing service planning model currently in place. It was expected these would be published by the end of June 2015.

**Resolved to note the report.**

## 33/14 Report of the Inspection of Rotherham

The Scrutiny and Civic Services Manager presented a report on behalf of the Acting Chief Executive to the Board which invited the members to consider and comment on the findings of an inspection of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's governance arrangements and possible lessons Derby City Council could learn from it.

The inspection was conducted over winter and the final report published in January 2015. The report found that although on paper Rotherham MBC had reasonable governance arrangements, overall it lacked shared strategic vision, strong political and managerial leadership to tackle failings and lead the transformation of the borough. In effect the Council was failing and did not have the capacity to address past weaknesses.

**Resolved to recommend:**

- 1) The report should be presented to the Audit and Accounts Committee.**
- 2) Any Governance issues arising from the report being presented to Audit and Accounts to be referred back to the Corporate Scrutiny and Governance Board for further investigation and consideration.**

## 34/14 Work Programme Report

The Board were informed of the following:

- 1) The Review of Electoral Turnout undertaken for the Board and presented at the meeting on 13 October 2014 would be re-presented at the next meeting on 20 April 2015.
- 2) Work had commenced on the four yearly cycle review had commenced and the Board would assess where they were at the next meeting.
- 3) The Overview and Scrutiny Officer to define the Terms of Reference for the four yearly cycle review and would circulate them in advance of the next meeting.

Minutes End