

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

EDUCATION, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**WEDNESDAY, 06 SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 10:00 HOURS
IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 3 & 4, COUNCIL HOUSE, VICTORIA
SQUARE, BIRMINGHAM, B1 1BB**

A G E N D A

1 NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Chair to advise/meeting to note that this meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Public-I microsite ([please click this link](#)) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

2 APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members are reminded they must declare all relevant pecuniary and other registerable interests arising from any business to be discussed at this meeting.

If a disclosable pecuniary interest is declared a Member must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless they have been granted a dispensation.

If other registerable interests are declared a Member may speak on the matter only if members of the public are allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless they have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', Members do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that they have an interest.

- 3 - 12**
- 4 **MINUTES**
- To confirm the minutes for the Education, Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 19 July 2023.
- 13 - 16**
- 5 **ACTION TRACKER**
- To note the action tracker
- 17 - 30**
- 6 **PERFORMANCE UPDATE (10.05 – 10.35)**
- Sue Harrison, Strategic Director, Children and Families, and David Fallows, Head of Service, Digital, Evidence and Performance (Children and Families) in attendance.
- 31 - 68**
- 7 **FINANCIAL CHALLENGES – SCRUTINY CONTRIBUTION TO THE BUDGET SAVINGS AND RECOVERY PLAN (10.35 – 11.50)**
- Sue Harrison, Strategic Director, Children and Families in attendance.
- 69 - 82**
- 8 **WORK PROGRAMME**
- To consider the work programme and agree updates / amendments.
- 9 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**
- To note the date of the next meeting is 18 October 2023 at 10am in committee rooms 3 & 4.
- 10 **REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)**
- To consider any request for call in/councillor call for action/petitions (if received).
- 11 **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**
- To consider any items of business by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) that in the opinion of the Chair are matters of urgency.
- 12 **AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS**
- Chair to move:-
- 'In an urgent situation between meetings, the Chair jointly with the relevant Chief Officer has authority to act on behalf of the Committee'.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

EDUCATION, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – PUBLIC MEETING

1000 hours on Wednesday, 19 July 2023, Committee Rooms 3 & 4,

Council House

Minutes

Present:

Councillor Kerry Jenkins (Chair)

Councillors: Debbie Clancy, Adam Higgs, Des Hughes, Morriam Jan, and Jane Jones

Other Representatives: Osamugi Ogbe, Parent Governor, and Sarah Smith, Church of England Diocese

Also Present:

Councillor Karen McCarthy, Cabinet Member, Children, Young People and Families

Fiona Bottrill, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager

Helen Ellis, Director, SEND and Inclusion

Sue Harrison, Strategic Director, Children and Young People

Kate Harvey, Head of SEND Resolution, Special Educational Needs Assessments & Reviews Service

Stephen Hughes, Interim Deputy Operations Manager

Zain Khan, Independent Travel Training User

Ashya Khan, Zain Khan's Mother

Marie Nicely, Travel Assist Supervisor

Amanda Simcox, Scrutiny Officer

Fayth Skeete, Head of Strategic Governance & Planning

Linda Sutton-Howard, IT Project Manager

Adrian Weissenbruch, AD, Children and Young People's Travel Service
John Wood, Change Manager

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Chair advised that this meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Public-I microsite and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items

2. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE

RESOLVED:

Noted the resolution of the City Council meeting on 11 July 2023 appointing Cllr. Morriam Jan in place of Cllr. Deborah Harries to serve on the Committee to the period ending with the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of City Council 2024.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Cllr. Jilly Bermingham, Justine Lomas, Roman Catholic Diocese and Rabia Shami, Parent Governor Representative.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded they must declare all relevant pecuniary and other registerable interests arising from any business to be discussed at this meeting, and none were declared.

5. MINUTES

(See document No 1)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the committee meeting held on 14 June 2023 were agreed.

6. ACTION TRACKER

(See document No 2)

RESOLVED:

That the action tracker was noted.

7. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S TRAVEL SERVICE

(See document No 3)

Adrian Weissenbruch, AD, Children and Young People's Travel Service, Stephen Hughes, Interim Deputy Operations Manager, Marie Nicely, Travel Assist Supervisor, John Wood, Change Manager, and Linda Sutton-Howard, IT Project Manager, were in attendance for this item.

The presentation was given, and this included an overview of the service, September 2023 mobilisation, key performance indicators, finance, the overspend and changes that will be taking place to assist with addressing this, policy development, pre-school and post-16 entitlement, and independent travel training.

Zain Khan and his mother, Ashya Khan, provided the Committee with information as to how the independent travel training has worked for them, the opportunities it has provided, and the need for it to be promoted so others could benefit. The Committee thanked Zain, his mother, and the other people that were part of the Independent Travel Training video.

During the discussion and in response to queries raised by Members, the main points included:

- The Committee thanked the officers for the improvements made to the service, and it was acknowledged that home to school transport was a massive logistical exercise.
- The 99% service delivery rate was to be congratulated. However, the impact on the 1% was not to be underestimated. The Committee were informed that there were a myriad of factors that could be influencing this, and there is commitment from a dedicated team to address these.
- The notification to parents and carers whether their transport has been approved is ongoing. There have been issues regarding contact via e-mail so they will be written to.

Finance

- Page 21 provides financial information, and the accuracy of the figures was questioned due to issues with Oracle. Officers assured the Committee that they

hold a lot of the contract data themselves and were not as reliant on Oracle as other services. There has been a lot of work underway to get a grip of costs.

- The introduction of the eligibility panels was the first step in making the service sustainable and ensuring they are adhering to the policy.

DfE revised Statutory Guidance 'Travel to School for Children of Compulsory School Age'

- The DfE published revised Statutory Guidance 'Travel to school for children of compulsory school age' on 29th June 2023. The new Statutory Guidance has a strong focus on sustainability and use of public transport. Officers are expecting there to be a lot of appeals due to a large cohort of parents and carers being expected to escort their child on public transport, rather than the Council providing a taxi.
- It was questioned whether a briefing note around the new statutory guidance and cultural change was needed so Members can get a better understanding should they receive complaints from residents. The Committee agreed for a workshop to be arranged for them.
- The new Application and Eligibility Review Panel will be included within the guidance notes available to parents, and the appeals information on the Local Offer website is correct as the process remains the same. More information on the Panel will be provided.
- The Council is compliant with the legislation, but it has not been effectively adhered to. A breakdown of discretionary and statutory spend will be provided to the Committee.
- The families' circumstances are considered when the decision is being made. However, this is not in line with the statutory guidance, and the use of discretionary powers needs to be more consistent.

Independent Travel Training

- The Cabinet Member confirmed she has sent the video to adult education, and the availability of wheelchair spaces on buses was raised. The Cabinet Member has undertaken to take this matter up on their behalf.
- Students can phone and get further support if needed, and the travel trainers are always in the schools.
- Each trainer has approximately 35 individuals to train each year and the average time taken is seven weeks.

Personal Transport Budgets

- Concerns have been raised regarding personal transport budgets being awarded, in particular for post 19 year olds. More information will be provided on this.

RESOLVED:

That:

- The presentation was noted.
- A workshop for cultural change and the statutory guidance for the Children's and Young People's Travel Service to be arranged.
- A breakdown of discretionary and statutory spend to be provided.
- More information on Personal Transport Budgets to be provided.
- More information on the new Application and Eligibility Review Panel to be provided.

8. SEND TRIBUNALS

(See document No. 4)

Helen Ellis, Director, SEND and Inclusion, and Kate Harvey, Head of SEND Resolution, Special Educational Needs Assessments & Reviews Service, were in attendance for this item.

Kate Harvey gave a high level overview, and this included the work they have done with the mediation team.

During the discussion and in response to queries raised by Members, the main points included:

- The terminology and process was discussed.
- There were a range of reasons for withdrawing an appeal, and some may be because the parent and Local Authority have reached an agreement.

The Mediation Team

- The Special Education Needs Assessment and Review (SENAR) service established the Mediation Team in June 2022 to collaborate with parents and assist with resolving disputes.
- The team are experienced and from a range of backgrounds. Their focus is on resolution. They use three mediation providers and feedback has been positive.
- The DfE are interested in the work of the Mediation Team and the Council has been asked to join their group. Mediation could become a statutory requirement.

Mainstream and Special Schools

- A lot of parents have a lack of confidence in mainstream schools, which may come from their child's own experience in mainstream.

- Mainstream schools need to be as inclusive as possible.
- Paragraph 3.4 refers to a draft strategy that has been developed to ensure there are sufficient specialist places for the needs of our children, in the right locations in the city. This is still in draft and will be added to the Committee's work programme.

Support for Families

- Overall, Tribunals are designed for young people and parents to represent themselves. On the whole, parents feel they have the confidence and ability to do this, and Tribunals are used to having parents representing themselves and will provide support.
- It was acknowledged that Tribunals can be stressful and daunting for families, and the Council wants to be as supportive as possible. This includes working with parents to reach a resolution, and signposting to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS), or other free agencies.
- It was questioned whether feedback was obtained from families going through the Tribunal process to understand the family experience and how learning from Tribunals is shared to improve services. Sue Harrison agreed to discuss this with the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) and SENDIASS. This could be reported back and could include looking at the wider impact, the resilience of families, and the support structures parents use, including SENDIASS.

Programme of Training/Briefings for all Members

- A briefing note to outline how high quality decisions are made when developing Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs), including how learning is shared and different ways of working, was requested. Alternatively, a workshop could be organised for the Committee.
- The Cabinet Member highlighted that they were working on a programme of training/briefings regarding SEND for all Members. She suggested this was launched first and then the Committee may want more in-depth information.

RESOLVED:

That:

- The update was noted.
- The draft SEND Sufficiency Strategy to be added to the Committee's Work Programme.
- Information on the programme of training/briefings being developed regarding SEND for all Members to be provided. If the following is not covered within this, then a workshop to be organised for the Committee:

- A regular update from families going through the Tribunal process to understand the family experience and highlight any issues that may inform service improvement.
- A briefing note outlining how high quality decisions are made when developing Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs), including how learning from Tribunals is shared to improve services.

9. PERFORMANCE UPDATE – IMPROVING SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES’ IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

(See document No. 5)

Sue Harrison, Strategic Director, Children and Families, and Fayth Skeete, Head of Strategic Governance & Planning, were in attendance for this item.

Sue Harrison presented the report and highlighted: recruitment regarding key positions and there being some churn because of the request that officers are visible and in the city three days a week; the listed actions and KPIs, early years is starting to improve; they were making slow progress on some of these – school attainment and attendance were the biggest risks - they were talking to different communities about barriers to school attendance, and they need to have attendance and attainment strategies for the city.

During the discussion and in response to queries raised by Members, the main points included:

School Attendance and Attendance Strategy

- Whether the absence targets for primary and secondary schools needed to be reviewed was queried (page 47). Officers continue to talk to schools about the target and this is a national issue. There was a need for an attendance strategy for the city, with each school being responsible, and this is about coming together as a city.
- It was suggested that the draft attendance strategy could be brought to the committee meeting in September when discussing the Hidden Children item. Tim Boyes, Chief Executive, Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP) and the Lead officer could be in attendance and go through the process.

Early Years

- Early Years has been included in the work programme as part of the ‘Menu of Issues for Consideration’ and is currently to be scheduled.

SEND Sufficiency Strategy

- There were 327 children and young people with an EHCP waiting more than 12 weeks and the maximum length of time waiting was queried (page 47). Helen Ellis stated the figures will be incorporated as part of the draft SEND sufficiency strategy.
- They were having conversations with head teachers regarding schemes to deliver additional places. This included working with mainstream schools regarding resource bases and satellite provision.
- They have more special schools places but not enough for this year and there will be two difficult years.
- There was a lot of capital work going on during the summer.
- Further information, including whether the new special schools were in the right place was requested. Officers will be able to share the process and timescales for the new special schools.

Follow up Workshop

- The Committee agreed for a workshop to be arranged regarding using data to inform scrutiny.

RESOLVED:

That:

- The update was noted.
- The draft attendance strategy to be brought to the committee meeting in September when discussing the Hidden Children item and the relevant officers to be in attendance for this.
- The Committee agreed for a workshop to be arranged regarding using data to inform scrutiny.

10. WORK PROGRAMME

(See document No. 6)

The Chair informed the Committee that:

- The Chair of the Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee had invited the Committee to their briefing session for the youth justice plan on the 9 August 2023 at 2pm. This previously came under the remit of this committee but is now under the remit of the Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- The Child Criminal Exploitation Inquiry: the dates for the evidence gathering sessions have been circulated to the T&F Group. Cllr. Debbie Clancy stated she

will be replacing Cllr. Simon Morrall on the T&F Group, and the dates of the evidence gathering sessions will be forwarded to her.

- The Children and Young People's Mental Health Inquiry: Cllr. Jilly Bermingham will feedback on how the inquiry is developing.
- Early Years is included in the work programme under 'Menu of Issues for Consideration' and Members agreed to e-mail details of items they wish to be added.
- Hidden Children is a big agenda item for the September committee meeting which could open up probable future work to be scheduled for November.

Fiona Bottrill highlighted that there were potentially three workshops to be arranged: Children's and Young People's Travel Service, SEND tribunals, and a data workshop. Also, being discussed at the Co-ordinating O&S Committee next Friday is that all scrutiny committees have a standing item regarding financial challenges and how those challenges are being considered.

RESOLVED:

That:

- Cllr. Debbie Clancy replaced Cllr. Simon Morrall on the CCE inquiry, and the dates of the evidence gathering sessions to be forwarded.
- Noted the information set out in Appendix 1 and identified if any further items need to be added to the menu of topics for the Committee to explore over the coming year.
 - Members agreed to e-mail details of items they wish to be added to the menu of topics/issues.
 - There were potentially three workshops to be arranged: Children and Young People's Travel Service, SEND tribunals, and the data workshop.
- Agreed, subject to further input from the Chair and Deputy Chair, the issues that the Committee will consider during September – October 2023, the proposed aims and objectives and the preferred method of scrutiny.
 - September 2023: Hidden Children, Performance Update, and Financial Challenges items.
 - October 2023 items:
 - Performance Update.
 - Financial Challenges.
 - The review of short breaks, and the Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Partnership items are to be confirmed.

- Noted, subject to further input from the Chair and Deputy Chair outside of the meeting, the proposed work programme will be submitted to Co-ordinating O&S to enable work to be planned and co-ordinated throughout the year.

11. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

Noted the date of the next meeting is 6 September 2023 at 10am in Committee Rooms 3 & 4.

12. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)

None.

13. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

14. AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS

RESOLVED:

In an urgent situation between meetings, the Chair jointly with the relevant Chief Officer has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

The meeting ended at 12.11 hours.

EDUCATION, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE O&S COMMITTEE
ACTION TRACKER 2023-24

| Date | Agenda Item | Action | Update / Notes |
|--------------|--|--|---|
| 22 Feb 2023 | School Attainment and School Improvement | The recruitment and retention rates of teachers in the city in comparison to other areas. | Awaiting information. |
| 5 April 2023 | Children's Trust | The Children's Trust to attend a future committee meeting to discuss the review of short breaks. | An update on the review of short breaks is currently earmarked for the November 2023 committee meeting. |
| 17 May 2023 | Action Tracker | The timeline for when the SEND Sufficiency Report would be available to be provided. | Awaiting information. |
| 17 May 2023 | Young People's Substance Use Service | Aquarius to provide the timeline for the Manchester Met University project. | Aquarius have met with the researchers, and they are preparing a slide deck of their initial findings. They are expecting the project to conclude by the end of the year. |
| 17 May 2023 | SEND | The following to be provided via e-mail: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The spend information for staffing within the SEND and Inclusion Service. • Information on the indicators in the APP on the Council's website that state, 'requires baseline.' | E-mailed the information on 25 August 2023. E-mailed the response on 12 June 2023. |
| | | The Committee to provide further questions in writing for officers to provide a written response. | |
| 14 Jun 2023 | Developing the Education, Children and Young People O&S Committee's Work Programme 2023/24 | Members of the Task and Finish Group for the Child Criminal Exploitation Inquiry and the Children and Young People's Mental Health Inquiry will be followed up. | Cllr. Debbie Clancy replaced Cllr. Simon Morrall on the CCE Inquiry T&F Group, and the Young People's Mental Health Inquiry T&F Group. |

EDUCATION, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE O&S COMMITTEE
ACTION TRACKER 2023-24

| Date | Agenda Item | Action | Update / Notes |
|--------------|--|--|--|
| 19 July 2023 | Children and Young People's Travel Service | A workshop for cultural change and the statutory guidance for the Children's and Young People's Travel Service to be arranged. | The Workshop is currently being arranged. |
| | | A breakdown of discretionary and statutory spend to be provided. | |
| | | More information on Personal Transport Budgets to be provided. | |
| | | More information on the new Application and Eligibility Review Panel to be provided. | |
| 19 July 2023 | SEND Tribunals | The draft SEND Sufficiency Strategy to be added to the Committee's Work Programme. | Added to the menu on the work programme. |
| | | Information on the programme of training/briefings being developed regarding SEND for all Members to be provided. If the following is not covered within this, then a workshop to be organised for the Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regular update from families going through the Tribunal process to understand the family experience and highlight any issues that may inform service improvement. A briefing note outlining how high quality decisions are made when developing Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs), including how learning from Tribunals is shared to improve services. | Workshops/Sessions for all Members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEND (this will include Tribunals). Schools (how Councillors can support local schools, e.g., admissions). Safeguarding (the Chair requested whether there could be a workshop for corporate parenting, and the Cabinet Member agreed to check whether the safeguarding workshop/session could include corporate parenting). |

EDUCATION, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE O&S COMMITTEE

ACTION TRACKER 2023-24

| Date | Agenda Item | Action | Update / Notes |
|-------------|--------------------|---|---|
| 19 Jul 2023 | Performance Update | The draft attendance strategy to be brought to the committee meeting in September when discussing the Hidden Children item, and the relevant officers to be in attendance for this. | Hidden Children will now be an item at the committee meeting in October. |
| 19 Jul 2023 | Work Programme | Cllr. Debbie Clancy to be sent the dates of the evidence gathering sessions for the CCE Inquiry. | Dates forwarded to Cllr. Debbie Clancy. |
| | | Members to e-mail details of items they wish to be added to the menu of topics/issues. | |
| | | There were potentially three workshops to be arranged: Children and Young People's Travel Service, SEND Tribunals, and the Data Workshop. | <p>The Children's and Young People's Travel Service Workshop is currently being arranged.</p> <p>The SEND Tribunals Workshop will not be needed as it will be covered in the workshop/sessions being arranged for all Members.</p> <p>The Data Workshop for the Committee will be arranged for later in the year.</p> |

Birmingham City Council

Education, Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 6th September 2023



Subject: Children and Families Performance Report
Report of: Sue Harrison, Director of Children and Families
Report author: David Fallows, Head of Service
 Digital, Evidence and Performance (Children and Families)

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide a summary of the Directorate's performance approach and progress. This will be the first Directorate led Performance update to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee following the appointment of the new permanent Head of Performance.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Overview and Scrutiny Committee note this report and provide feedback on content and presentation of information to inform future Performance reporting and a proposed workshop on performance data.

3 Background

- 3.1 **Performance Approach:** The directorate has introduced a new Performance Framework (in October 2022). The directorate collects, analyses, and reports on a range of performance indicators at service, directorate, and corporate level.
- 3.2 The Council has Key Performance Indicators in place to hold the Children and Families Directorate to account. Note that these indicators do not cover all the service areas within the Directorate. Appendix One provides Key Performance Indicators progress reporting for 2023/24 Quarter one. Headlines from Children and Families Directorate Workforce measures are also provided.
- 3.3 As part of our wider improvement plan, we are expanding an evidence and performance approach across the directorate through activities such as:

- 3.3.1 Data cleansing and mapping to improve the availability and accuracy of performance data.
- 3.3.2 Mapping and assessing all directorate digital tools and capabilities to ensure we have the right systems and skills in place.
- 3.3.3 Monthly performance reviews and a Quarterly Performance Board with Heads of Services and Senior Leadership to monitor performance, respond to collective issues and share good practice.
- 3.3.4 Developing a range of dynamic dashboards to present data and analysis for different users
- 3.3.5 Working with partners and the BCC Observatory to identify, collect and monitor outcome indicators on the health, safety and prosperity of Birmingham's Children and Young People

3.4 **Performance Update:** Figures 1 and 2 below provide an overview of the Children and Families Corporate performance indicators over time (Figure 1) and compared to targets, national and statistical benchmarks (Figure 2). Detailed figures are presented in the Performance annex and appendix.

3.5 Figure 1 below highlights some key trends overtime including:

- 3.5.1 We are broadly maintaining performance levels for SEND EHCP Assessments, Transport Services and NEET service areas.
- 3.5.2 While we are maintaining SEND Assessment performance, we have seen an increase in the number of 5- to 16-year-olds waiting more than 12 weeks for specialist placements (from 244 in April 2022 to 322 to June 2023). This is in part due to do rising need (with the number of 0 to 25 year olds with EHCPs increasing from 10,399 in April 2022 to 10, 766 in July 2023). We have identified additional capacity with schools for an additional 196 places for September and continue to work with special schools and schools with resource bases increase capacity to address this gap.
- 3.5.3 There are persistent challenges related to families take up of Early Years education. This is due to lower up take in harder to reach communities and families in temporary accommodation. Some families believe their children are too young to attend a childcare setting or perceive Early Education to be childcare which they do not require, as parents or extended family members look after young children. The majority of parents/carers of those eligible children in temporary accommodation do not access Early Education Entitlement places. We believe this is due to competing priorities in their lives with including prioritising their school age children to attend school.

3.5.4 In response to these issues, we have identified some new strategies to increase early years up take including using data and analysis in partnership with NESTA to identify and address low engagement. In addition we will be working with city-wide community engagement colleagues to develop strategies to raise awareness including the benefits of accessing an early education place and to demystify perceptions of parents and carers in communities who are not accessing early education places. We are also part of the Temporary Accommodation Strategy Group and will be starting to develop strategies to support parents of eligible children to access an early education place or at least be in a position to once out of Temporary Accommodation.

3.5.5 Attendance and absences remain areas of concern. The primary responsibility for attendance and absences remains with schools. The city councils' role is to offer support to co-produce and challenge to the sector. Co-produced attendance and exclusion strategies are being developed. These include workshops with parents/carers, schools and partner agencies next half term to help us identify the priorities. The Alternative Provision working group is working on more inclusive pathways for CYP to work towards equitable access to support for this cohort of children.

Figure 1: Overview of Children Families Corporate Indicators (Apr 2022 to Jun 2023)

| | | 2022-23 Q1 | 2022-23 Q2 | 2022-23 Q3 | 2022-23 Q4 | 2023-24 Q1 |
|-------------------------------|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Theme | Indicator | Apr - Jun (Q1) | Jul - Sep (Q2) | Oct - Dec (Q3) | Jan - Mar (Q4) | Apr - Jun (Q1) |
| | | 2022 | | | 2023 | |
| Early Years | % of 2-year-olds accessing Early Education Entitlement (EEE) | 67% | 67% | 69% | 67% | 67% |
| | % of 3 and 4-year-olds accessing 15 hours EEE | 86% | 86% | 91% | 90% | 89% |
| Holiday Activities | No of children attending the HAF Programme | 12,523 | | 19,576 | 13,104 | 16,090 |
| | Number of meals taken up by children through the HAF Programme | 50,092 | | 162,566 | 58,787 | |
| NEET | % of 16- and 17- year olds Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) | 3.50% | 3.80% | 2.20% | 2.70% | 5.90% |
| | No of NEET's (16 and 18) engaged in career/education support | 1112 | 1127 | 725 | 871 | |
| SEND | % of new EHCPs issued within 20 weeks | 69% | 63% | 65% | 67% | 68% |
| | No of 5 to 16 yr olds with an EHCP waiting >12 weeks for a specialist placement | | 244 | 278 | 327 | 322 |
| Travel Service | Proportion of eligible pupils transported to school | 100% | 99.90% | 100% | 99.5% | |
| | Number of students we provide with Transport | | | | | 5,377 |
| Absence and Exclusions | Absence Rate: Primary | | | | 6.9% | |
| | Absence Rate: Secondary | | | | 8.6% | |
| | Primary school exclusion rate | | | | 0.02% | |
| | Secondary school exclusions rate | | | | 0.12% | |
| | Special School Exclusion rate | | | | 0.07% | |

* Note there are different targets across Financial Years

** % of 16 to 17% NEETS Indicator, expanded target to include unknown status in 22/23 so can only compare RAG rating and not figures over financial years for this indicator

3.6 Figure 2 confirms those trends with comparisons to national values and statistical neighbours (where data is available).

- 3.6.1 We are comparable to national and statistical neighbours for NEETS and SEND assessments.
- 3.6.2 The challenges we are seeing around Early Years Entitlement uptake are mirrored nationally performance levels are comparable to national comparators.
- 3.6.3 Making national and statistical neighbour comparisons for Absence and exclusion rates is difficult as there is a significant time lag for published data. Where available they are included below.

Figure 2: Overview of Children Families Corporate Indicators (Targets and Comparisons)

| Theme | Indicator | Preferred Direction | 2022-23 Q1 | 2022-23 Q4 | 2023-24 Q1 | Target (Most Recent) | Latest National Value | Latest Stats Neighbours |
|------------------------|---|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| | | | Baseline Apr - Jun (2022 Q1) | Previous Jan - Mar (2023 Q4) | Most Recent Apr - Jun (2023 Q1) | | | |
| Early Years | % of 2-year-olds accessing Early Education Entitlement (EEE) | ▲ | 67% | 67% | 67% | 76% | 72% (Jan 2022) | 66% (Jan 2022) |
| | % of 3 and 4-year-olds accessing 15 hours EEE | ▲ | 86% | 90% | 89% | 96% | 92% (Jan 2022) | 87% (Jan 2022) |
| Holiday Activities | No of children attending the HAF Programme | ▲ | 12,523 | 13,104 | 16,090 | 15,524 | | |
| | Number of meals taken up by children through the HAF Programme | ▲ | 50,092 | 58,787 | | 60,000 | | |
| NEET | % of 16- and 17- year olds Not in or Not Known to be in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) | ▼ | 3.50% | | 5.90% | 7% | 5.50% | 4.46% |
| | No of NEET's (16 and 18) engaged in career/education support | ▲ | | 871 | | 1049 | | |
| SEND | % of new EHCPs issued within 20 weeks | ▲ | 69% | 67% | 68% | 65% | 49% | |
| | No of 5 to 16 yr olds with an EHCP waiting >12 weeks for a specialist placement | ▼ | | 327 | 322 | | | |
| Travel Service | Proportion of eligible pupils transported to school | ▲ | 100% | 99.5% | | 99.50% | | |
| | Number of students we provide with Transport | ▲ | | | 5,377 | | | |
| Absence and Exclusions | Absence Rate: Primary | ▼ | | 6.9% | | 4% | 6.3% (21/22) | 6.5% (21/22) |
| | Absence Rate: Secondary | ▼ | | 8.6% | | 6% | 9% (21/22) | 8.9%(21/22) |
| | Primary school exclusion rate | ▼ | | 0.02% | | 0.01% | | |
| | Secondary school exclusions rate | ▼ | | 0.12% | | 0.10% | | |
| | Special School Exclusion rate | ▼ | | 0.07% | | 0.05% | | |

3.7 As the first directorate led O & S performance update, we have provided a broad overview of Corporate Performance Indicators. For future updates we recommend additional deep dives into specific service areas' performance as guided by the Committee. We would suggest the following areas for further review (including topical areas such Transport September Mobilisation and Results and Attainment when official data is available):

- 3.7.1 Hidden Children is already scheduled as a topic for the October O&S Committee meeting.
- 3.7.2 Children and Young People's Travel Service (CYPTS) to provide an overview of transport applications and arrangements for the 23/24 Academic Year and give an overview of the September mobilisation. CYPTS ended the 22/23 Academic Year with 5150 students supported on transport contracts and have an estimated 4386 students that will be on contracts for the 23/24 Academic Year. They have currently received 1231 new SEN Transport applications for the 23/24 academic year. CYPTS are currently managing the September mobilisation with transport arrangement

letter sent to parents, meet and greets underway and communications and logistics plans in place.

- 3.7.3 Present an analysis of education results and attainment once official data is published in October 2023. Provisional high-level GCSE and A-level results information suggests West Midlands remains below the outcomes for England with the 2023 gap in attainment levels falling roughly to what they were in 2019.
- 3.7.4 Present an update on SEND Sufficiency Strategy to highlight plans, challenges, and choices to meet current and future demand for specialist placements.
- 3.7.5 Early Years to present their strategy and approach to addressing barriers to entitlement uptake.

3.8 **Workforce Update:** The headlines from Children and Families Directorate Workforce measures (as detailed in the Performance Appendix) are:

- 3.8.1 **Attrition and Retention:** Total headcount for Children and Families is 1476 employees, as of the 1st of August 2023. In July 2023, more employees left the council from Children and Families than joined the directorate. Six employees joined, with 36 leaving.
- 3.8.2 **Absence:** 2.6% of Children and Families employees were absent as of 1st August 2023, compared to the Council rate of 3.1%. Apart from a small spike of 4.3% in June, the percentage of employees' absence has steadily decreased from 5.5% in February to 2.6% in July

3.9 Agency staff have played an important role in our improvement journey since January 2022 in two main areas:

- 3.9.1 Operational staff: Particularly in the SENAR and Travel service areas fulfilling operational roles such as SENAR Case officer to maintain service delivery and allow the council to meet its statutory commitments.
- 3.9.2 Transformation and support roles: in areas such as project management, business analysis and digital and data roles. These roles have enabled the directorate to make progress against its improvement plan, achieving key strategic milestones such as re-establishing the Birmingham Childrens Partnership and launching Children, Young People's Plan and SEND and Inclusion strategies. These roles have also supported other areas of improvement such as setting up our performance framework and strengthening directorate governance and communications.

- 3.10 The directorate is committed to continue to reduce the number of agency staff we use having secured the necessary budget to recruit the right number of

permanent staff with the necessary skills to ensure our overall performance can continue to progress from poor to good. The directorate is making good progress in our redesign as summarised below. The new job evaluation process is taking significantly longer than when they were carried out by the internal job evaluation team and lengthy consultation and recruitment processes are prolonging our need for agency staff.

3.10.1 Travel Service: implementation stage with a high number of applications for advertised roles with an average of over 17 applications per advertised role (including 4 interim staff applying and 2 being appointed).

3.10.2 SENAR: in consultation phase with Trade Unions and aiming to start advertising roles by late September.

3.10.3 Strategy, Commissioning and Transformation: design complete and aiming to start consultation before the end of September

3.10.4 Thriving; work on the future model is progressing, aiming to finalise in September and then remaining pre-consultation activities will be progressed.

3.11 Strategic Risks and Challenges

| Risk/challenge | Mitigation |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Access to data and information | As systems develop, we will be able to report in more detail Focused work is being undertaken to develop reporting meanwhile existing reporting mechanisms are being maintained |

4 Any Finance Implications

4.1 There are no direct financial implications with this report.

5 Any Legal Implications

5.1 The report summarises the Council's performance in fulfilling some of its statutory duties.

6 Any Equalities Implications

6.1 There are no direct equalities implications with this report.

7 Appendices and Annex

7.1 Appendix 1: Children and Families Directorate Key Performance and Workforce Indicators

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DIRECTORATE

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2023/24 – PROGRESS UPDATE



Making a positive difference every day to people's lives



1. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

| | 22/23 | | | | | 23/24 | | |
|--|--------|------|------|------|------|--------|------|--|
| Measure | Target | Qtr1 | Qtr2 | Qtr3 | Qtr4 | Target | Qtr1 | Q1 Commentary |
| Early Years | | | | | | | | |
| Percentage of 2-year- olds accessing Early Education Entitlement (EEE) <i>These are snapshot figures as at quarter end. Our statistical neighbour average for 2022 was 65.7%.</i> | 72% | 67% | 67% | 69% | 67% | 76% | 67% | Despite previous improvements in take up rates, this has now plateaued during Q1 which is now showing as below target. New strategies are being identified to increase take up within hard-to-reach communities (due to cultural barriers) eg: families in temporary accommodation. |
| Percentage of 3 and 4-year-olds accessing 15 hours Early Education Entitlement (EEE) <i>These are snapshot figures as at quarter end. Our statistical neighbour average for 2022 was 88.7%</i> | 92% | 86% | 86% | 91% | 90% | 96% | 89% | Performance for 3 and 4 year olds is mirroring that of 2 year olds, this has also plateaued during Q1 which is now showing as below target. New strategies are being identified to increase take up within hard-to-reach communities (due to cultural barriers) e.g.: families in temporary accommodation. |

| | 22/23 | | | | | 23/24 | | |
|---|--------|------|------|------|------|--------|------|---|
| Measure | Target | Qtr1 | Qtr2 | Qtr3 | Qtr4 | Target | Qtr1 | Q1 commentary |
| SEND | | | | | | | | |
| Number of children and young people (aged 5-16) with an EHCP awaiting specialist placements for more than 12 weeks <i>These are snapshot figures as at quarter end.</i> | N/A | | 244 | 278 | 327 | N/A | 322 | While numbers have remained relatively constant, this is a slight increase on the May result. However, we have continued to work with schools to increase capacity and 136 of these Children/Young People have places secured for September 2023. |
| Percentage of new Education Health Care (EHC) plans issued within 20 weeks, excluding exceptions <i>The MBC benchmark is 60%.</i> | 65% | 69% | 63% | 65% | 67% | 65% | 68% | The latest data is for June 2022 to May 2023 it shows the newly embedded processes continue to work well and we continue to be above our target and the National Average of 49%. |
| Absence | | | | | | | | |
| Absence Rate: Primary <i>Absence for academic year 21/22. The Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) average for this period was 6.3%</i> | 4% | | | | 6.9% | N/A | | Not yet due |
| Absence Rate: Secondary <i>Absence for academic year 21/22. The MBC average for this period was 9.5%.</i> | 6% | | | | 8.6% | N/A | | Not yet due |

| | 22/23 | | | | | 23/24 | | |
|---|--------|------|------|------|-------|--------|------|---------------|
| Measure | Target | Qtr1 | Qtr2 | Qtr3 | Qtr4 | Target | Qtr1 | Q1 Commentary |
| Exclusions | | | | | | | | |
| Primary school exclusion rate <i>This is data for 20/21 academic year. The MBC average for this period was 0.01%</i> | 0.01% | | | | 0.02% | N/A | | Not yet due |
| Secondary school exclusions rate <i>This is data for 20/21 academic year. The MBC average for this period was 0.15%</i> | 0.1% | | | | 0.12% | N/A | | Not yet due |
| Special School Exclusion rate <i>This is data for 20/21 academic year. The MBC average for this period was 0.02%</i> | 0.05% | | | | 0.07% | N/A | | Not yet due |

| | 22/23 | | | | | 23/24 | | | |
|---|--------|------|-------|------|-------|--------|-------|---|--|
| Measure | Target | Qtr1 | Qtr2 | Qtr3 | Qtr4 | Target | Qtr1 | Q1 Commentary | |
| Travel Service | | | | | | | | | |
| Proportion of eligible pupils transported to school. <i>These are snapshot figures as at quarter end.</i> | 99.5% | 100% | 99.9% | 100% | 99.5% | | | | |
| Wording of KPI changed for 23/24 Number of students we provide transport for | | | | | | N/A | 5,377 | The number of students we support with transport in Q1 is 5377 of which 200 are personal transport budgets. A data dashboard is currently being developed to assist the service further. The data dashboard will be available for Q2 and will capture the overall number of applications against agreed and declined. | |

| | 22/23 | | | | | 23/24 | | |
|--|-------------|--------|------|---------|--------|--------------------|--------|---|
| Measure | Target | Qtr1 | Qtr2 | Qtr3 | Qtr4 | Target | Qtr1 | Q1 Commentary |
| Holiday Activities and Food Programme | | | | | | | | |
| Number of individual children attending the HAF programme <i>Q1 result is the spring programme, Q3 is summer and Q4 winter.</i> | 15,000 (Q4) | 12,523 | | 19,576 | 13,104 | 15,524 (Q1) | 16,090 | We overachieved the target for Spring 2023 by +566 children and our uptake of 86% Free School Meal (FSM) children. The holiday activity clubs have been successfully targeting schools and parents who may be eligible. |
| Number of meals taken up by children through the HAF <i>Q1 result is the spring programme, Q3 is summer and Q4 winter.</i> | 60,000 (Q4) | 50,092 | | 162,566 | 58,787 | No longer reported | | |
| Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training, | | | | | | | | |
| Percentage of 16 and 17 year olds that are Not in Education, Employment or Training' <i>These are snapshot figures as at quarter end. The All England average for March 2022 was 2.6%.</i> | 5% | 3.5% | 3.8% | 2.2% | 2.7% | | | |
| Wording of KPI changed for 23/24 Percentage of 16- and 17- year olds that are Not in or Not Known status, in terms of Education, Employment or Training | | | | | | 7% | 5.9% | Data is correct as of May 2023. Given the time in the academic calendar you will begin to see an increase in the NEET & Not Known figures whilst we are capturing data at key transition points. Currently with the DfE on 31 May 2023 we have confirmed the cohort to report against for this annual tracking cycle activity. Stage two of the process is to confirm the September Guarantee figures - offers of young people's participation. |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-----|-----|--------------------|-------|--|
| Number of NEET's aged between 16 and 18 engaged in support to help them into education, training, apprenticeships, and jobs <i>These are snapshot figures as at quarter end.</i> | 1,049 | 1,112 | 1,127 | 725 | 871 | No longer reported | | |
| Percentage of 16- and 17- year olds that are participating in Education, Employment or Training | | | | | | 93% | 93.1% | Data correct as of May 2023. You will start to see changes in the participation figures given the academic cycle on reporting activity. Year 11 & 12 figures will need to be reconfirmed with providers. This is a critical period for the annual tracking activities. |

2. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DIRECTORATE WORKFORCE MEASURES

| Measure | Narrative |
|------------------------|---|
| Attrition/retention | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total headcount for Children and Families is 1476 employees, as of the 1st of August 2023. In July 2023, more employees left the council from Children and Families than joined the directorate. Six employees joined, with 36 leaving. |
| Staff sickness absence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of absentees: 2.6% of Children and Families employees were absent as of 1st August 2023, compared to the Council rate of 3.1%. Apart from a small spike of 4.3% in June, the percentage of employees' absence has steadily decreased from 5.5% in February to 2.6% in July. Average number of days absent: 3.7 days per C&F employee as of the 1st of August 2023, compared to the Council rate of 2.5. Again, apart from a spike of 5.8 in June, this has progressively declined since March 2023 (5.4 average days). Types of absence: most common reason for absence, as of the 1st of August 2023, was tumour benign/malignant (27.78%), followed by Musculo-skeletal (20.23%), unknown (19.82%), and mental health (12.76%). Instances of tumour-related absences has increased by approximately ten percentage points from June to July. Musculo-skeletal cases are starting to rise again, despite the improvement seen in June. Mental health absences have remained well below the peak of 31.89% seen in April. |

Birmingham City Council

Education, Children and Young People

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6 September 2023



Subject: Scrutiny Contribution to Budget Savings and Recovery Plan

Report of: Christian Scade, Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services

Report author: Christian Scade, Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services
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1 Purpose

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), and for the Committee to consider the implications for the Committee's work programme.

2 Recommendations

The Committee:

- 2.1 Notes the Medium-Term Financial Plan report agreed at Cabinet on 25 July 2023 (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 Considers the issues that are relevant to the Committee's terms of reference (outlined in the [Council's Constitution, Part B, section 11.5](#)) as set out in appendices 2 and 3 and agree any recommendations to Cabinet.

3 Any Finance Implications

- 3.1 The financial implications are set out in section 10.3 of the Cabinet report (appendix 1).

4 Any Legal Implications

- 4.1 The legal implications are set out in section 10.2 of the Cabinet Report (appendix 1).

5 Any Equalities Implications

- 5.1 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

5.2 The protected characteristics and groups outlined in the Equality Act are: Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion and Belief; Sex, and Sexual Orientation.

5.3 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them during work programme development, the scoping of work, evidence gathering and making recommendations. This should include considering: How policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share a relevant protected characteristic; Whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; Whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Birmingham; Whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people are being realised.

5.4 The Committee should ensure that equalities comments, and any recommendations, are based on evidence. This should include demographic and service level data and evidence of residents/service-users views gathered through consultation.

5.5 Section 10.6 in appendix 1 also provides specific information on equalities implications for the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

6 Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1: Medium Term Financial Plan, Q1 2023-24 – Report to Cabinet, 25 July 2023.

6.2 Appendix 2: Slides from Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee training session delivered by Fifield Training Ltd, 26 July 2023.

6.3 Appendix 3: Agreed Savings 2023-24, Q1.

Birmingham City Council

Report to Cabinet

25th July 2023



Subject: Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Refresh – update to Cabinet at Quarter 1 of the 2023/24 Financial Year

Report of: Fiona Greenway, Interim Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer

Relevant Cabinet Member: Councillor John Cotton, Leader
Councillor Sharon Thompson, Deputy Leader
Councillor Brigid Jones, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Relevant O &S Chair(s): Councillor Jack Deakin, Finance and Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Report author: Peter Sebastian
Head of Financial Planning (interim)
Email Address: peter.sebastian@birmingham.gov.uk

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Are specific wards affected? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected |
| If yes, name(s) of ward(s): | | |
| Is this a key decision? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference: 011384/2023 | | |
| Is the decision eligible for call-in? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 As part of the Council's approach to financial management, the Council provides updated forecasts across the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) period to Cabinet three times a year – at Quarter One (this report); Quarter Two (in October) and at

Quarter Three (December/January, in the run up to formal budget-setting for the next financial year).

- 1.2 This report shows forecast budget pressures and inflation forecasts over the current financial year (2023/24) and the remaining financial years that make up the MTFP. It is projected that there is in-year budget shortfall of £87.4m in 2023/24, rising to £164.8m in 2024/25, reflecting the extent to which the costs of current service provision exceed the funding levels. These projected budget shortfalls do not reflect any additional costs relating to Equal Pay, including potential future liabilities as well as the cost of implementing any scheme of job evaluation.
- 1.3 Across the country, many councils are facing significant and similar budget pressures – mainly due to increased demand for services from residents, higher than forecast inflation and difficulty with delivering existing savings programmes in this current economic climate. Therefore, the current MTFP forecasts for Birmingham City Council (BCC), while serious and requiring immediate attention, are not unique.
- 1.4 What is unique, in the BCC context, is the significant and additional forecast liability for Equal Pay claims of between £650m and £760m. The Council has engaged with its External Auditors and is having ongoing discussions with the Department of Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
- 1.5 It is for this reason that this report supports the implementation of mandatory spending controls to give the Council time to further review financial pressures (including finalising the details of the Equal Pay liability) and mitigations.
- 1.6 In addition, this report recommends the implementation of a Robust Budget Savings & Recovery Plan to tackle existing budget pressures and the financial implications of the additional Equal Pay liability. This Plan sets out a series of activities that need to be delivered over the next five years to achieve financial stability within the Council, reviewing all aspects of BCC's financial management systems, processes and capability. This Plan will also seek to tackle financial pressures and rebuild corporate reserves over the medium term.

2 Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the MTFP budget pressures (inflation, savings, directorate pressures, Collection Fund update), as well as the Quarter One 2023/24 position (which provides a high-level assessment of a budget gap for this financial year) (**Section 5 of this report**);
- 2.2 Note the wider financial position of the Council, in terms of capital expenditure and available corporate resources, which demonstrate that the additional Equal Pay liability, alongside MTFP budget pressures, cannot be found within existing BCC resources (**Section 5**);

- 2.3 Note the work carried out to date to assess the potential scale of additional Equal Pay liabilities **(Section 4)**;
- 2.4 Endorse the mandatory spending controls which came into effect from 5 July 2023 **(Section 6)**;
- 2.5 Endorse the robust Budget Savings & Recovery Plan – to close the forecast budget gaps in the current financial year and future financial years– as per the timetable included in this report **(Section 6)**; and
- 2.6 Agree the 2024/25 budget-setting timetable, including the dates for the implementation of the recommendations in this report **(Section 7)**

3 Background

- 3.1 Birmingham City Council (BCC) approved its 2023/24 annual budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) on 28 February 2023 as part of the annual budget setting cycle. Budgets were balanced up to 2023/24 (and across the MTFP period) on the assumption that:
 - a. £97.1m of savings were to be delivered over the next four years to 2026/27 (assuming no savings are brought forward undelivered from 2022/23);
 - b. Budget managers and budget holders are diligent in working within budgetary envelopes; and
 - c. Council tax was increased by 4.99% (including 2% for social care) with income levels largely returning to pre-Covid levels.
- 3.2 This paper:
 - a. Updates the assumptions (particularly inflation) that were used to set budgets for the 2023/24 financial year and provide an initial high-level

forecast (as at Period 3; Quarter One, April – June 2023) for the 2023/24 financial year;

- b. Updates the budget assessments over the MTFP period (from 2024/25 to 2027/28) based on the most recent forecasts (particularly with regard to inflation);
- c. Provides an update on Directorate spending to identify recent spending pressures, as well as progress against the agreed savings programme within the 2023/24 Financial Plan;
- d. Provides an outline of the Robust Budget Savings & Recovery Plan, including proposals for spending controls and key workstreams;
- e. Outlines the timetable and next steps required for the budget-setting process for the 2024/25 financial year, including budget consultation and engagement;
- f. Outlines the scale of the Council's existing capital programme – including a summary of existing borrowing (a full Capital and Treasury Management will come to Cabinet later this year); and
- g. Provides an initial assessment of potentially available corporate reserves that could be used to cover potential upcoming financial liabilities. It should be noted that these reserves are currently an estimate; a full review of reserves will be completed as part of the 2022/23 outturn report that will come to Cabinet in Autumn 2023.

3.3 This paper does not cover ringfenced revenue funding in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) or the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) – it solely focuses on General Fund revenue budgets. The HRA Business Plan is expected to come to Cabinet in September 2023 for review; the DSG budget position is covered as part of the usual cycle of quarterly reporting to Cabinet.

4 National & Local Financial Context

4.1 Cabinet should note that there are a significant range of challenges that this Authority, and all public bodies, are currently facing. Research by the Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities (SIGOMA) which represents 47 urban authorities, published on 19 June 2023, found that 55% of respondents were unsure whether they would be able to meet the budgets that were approved in March 2023 for the 2023/24 financial year. Based on the updated MTFP forecasts in Section Four of this report, without immediate and urgent action, BCC is in a similar position. The macroeconomic factors that are causing financial pressures include:

- a. **The impact of inflation** – compared to February 2023 when the budget for the 2023/24 financial year was agreed, inflation looks set to be higher than forecast. This manifests itself in a number of ways, from increased pay and materials budgets to rising energy costs; for example, the 2023/24 Financial Plan included an increased budget allocation of £18 million for the Council's energy bills and a £6 million increase for our schools. Further details on the impact of inflation are detailed in Section Five of this report;
- b. **Impact of Covid** – this continues to impact in a number of ways, from increased support needs for our residents (resulting in additional pressures on public services) to the income collection, as can be seen in the movement in the Collection Fund (most notably for business rates) that is described in Section Five;
- c. **Uncertain central government funding** – the Council's net revenue budget is funded from four main sources: Business Rates, Council Tax, government grants and fees & charges. (Where necessary, corporate reserves may also be used to cover specific expenditure or cover budget shortfalls.) Fees & charges are dependent on activity levels and residents' ability to pay. While Council Tax and Business Rates are also dependent on ratepayers' ability to pay, there are a number of uncertainties over these funding streams in future. Central Government has provided some clarity for the 2024/25 financial year only – namely that current Council Tax threshold levels (i.e., the amount that rates can be increased without the need for a referendum) will remain at 3% for Council tax and 2% for the Adult Social Care precept. Future reforms to the Business Rates system are currently delayed until 2025/26 at the earliest but may have a significant impact on BCC.

4.2 At present, there are also a number of challenges that are specific to BCC:

- a. Oracle finance system implementation – as approved by Cabinet on 27 June, this MTFP refresh includes £33.7m of costs from 2023/24 onwards to fix urgent issues, and to develop a plan that will deliver the Council's vision for an optimised Oracle. The total cost is £46.5m, including £12.8m of costs that had related to the 2022/23 financial year. In addition, the time taken to fix this Oracle system has delayed the completion of the 2022/23 outturn report and final reserves position, which means that this report cannot fully consider the impact on reserves of future cost pressures. This will be done at the Quarter Two MTFP refresh report due to come to Cabinet in October.
- b. Equal Pay challenges – the additional forecast Equal Pay liability is a key driver for the recommendations in this report. As noted above, initial estimates of the potential additional Equal Pay liability are between £650m and £760m.

4.3 Before the financial implications of this Equal Pay liability can be fully quantified for the MTFP, a more detailed calculation, using individual time-series data, to assess the full extent of the Equal Pay liability is being carried out. The results of this work are expected in August.

- 4.4 The overall scale of the liability needs to be quantified to assess total costs and enable BCC to explore all options for payment. A provision for Equal Pay liability will also need to be made within all accounts that are not currently signed off by auditors – this includes the 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years – to demonstrate the scale of the issue at that point in time. This provision cannot be made until a financial solution is agreed with national government and stakeholders. At that point, the accounts can be reviewed and signed off by auditors.

5 MTFP – updated forecasts

- 5.1 The key movements from the MTFP position since BCC approved the budget for 2023/24 (and forecasts for future years) in February 2023 are shown in the table below. The projections identify a significant in-year budget shortfall of £87.4m in 2023/24, rising to £164.8m in 24/25, reflecting the extent to which the costs of current service provision exceed the funding levels:

| | 2023/24 £'000 | 2024/25 £'000 | 2025/26 £'000 | 2026/27 £'000 | 2027/28 £'000 |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Total Net Expenditure (as per 2023/24 Financial Plan) | 925,078 | 1,018,314 | 1,035,612 | 1,049,934 | 1,083,206 |
| Total Resources (as per 2023/24 Financial Plan) | (925,078) | (1,018,314) | (1,035,612) | (1,049,934) | (1,079,093) |
| Budget gap as (as per 2023/24 Financial Plan) | - | - | - | - | 4,113 |
| Expenditure | | | | | |
| Budget Pressures | | | | | |
| Staffing | 3,844 | 3,973 | 4,070 | 4,170 | 4,273 |
| Demand/Complexity Growth | 55,586 | 37,736 | 44,027 | 42,240 | 39,840 |
| Statutory Requirement | - | - | - | - | - |
| Borrowing costs, investment etc | - | - | - | - | - |
| Budget Pressures Subtotal | 59,430 | 41,709 | 48,097 | 46,410 | 44,113 |
| Corporately Managed Budgets | (4,240) | (4,097) | (3,935) | (4,154) | (5,461) |
| Pay Inflation | - | - | (2,532) | (5,178) | (7,943) |
| Contract Inflation | 1,042 | 27,346 | 51,904 | 55,348 | 58,666 |
| Other Inflation | 19,875 | 28,352 | 35,367 | 42,593 | 50,063 |
| Fees and Charges Inflation | - | (357) | (365) | (372) | (378) |
| Inflation Sub-total | 20,917 | 55,341 | 84,374 | 92,391 | 100,408 |
| Savings | | | | | |
| High Risk Savings | 35,141 | 56,274 | 75,374 | 75,374 | 75,374 |
| Savings Subtotal | 35,141 | 56,274 | 75,374 | 75,374 | 75,374 |
| Total Net Expenditure Movements | 111,248 | 149,227 | 203,910 | 210,021 | 214,434 |
| Resources | | | | | |
| Business Rates | - | 14,100 | (27,677) | (40,165) | (41,052) |
| Council Tax | - | 2,019 | - | - | - |
| Other Grants Excl DSG & ABG | - | - | - | - | - |
| Top Up Grant | - | - | - | - | - |
| Other income | 5,044 | 2,589 | 2,589 | 2,589 | 2,589 |
| Net Payment to/(from) Reserves | (28,907) | (3,096) | (1,687) | - | - |
| Total Resources Movement | (23,863) | 15,612 | (26,775) | (37,576) | (38,463) |
| MTFP Budget Gap at July 2023 | 87,385 | 164,838 | 177,135 | 172,445 | 180,084 |

- 5.2 These projected budget shortfalls do not reflect any additional costs relating to Equal Pay, including potential future liabilities as well as the cost of implementing

any scheme of job evaluation. Full detail on these projections is included in paragraphs 5.3 – 5.15 below.

5.3 **Budget Pressures & Policy Choices** – this is made up of two elements:

- a. **Staffing** – this includes the correction of a previous budget issue that relates to the 1.25% planned increase in National Insurance contributions (and therefore pay costs) which was subsequently scrapped in September 2022. This planned increase was removed from base budgets, leaving a shortfall (£3.4m in 2023/24) to cover the forecast pay award.
- b. **Demand / Complexity** – this covers a range of directorate-specific spending pressures. The four largest areas of cost pressures are:
 - i. Oracle costs (assumed £33m from 2023/24 to 2025/26);
 - ii. Temporary Accommodation (assumed pressure of £8.6m in 2023/24, rising to £18.2m in 2024/25; based on the recent proposal to June Cabinet to purchase additional temporary accommodation which was approved);
 - iii. Children & Families pressures (£6.7m in 2023/24 and £3.9m in 2024/25), driven by demographic pressures requiring care (particularly in Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) and home-to-school transport support, as well as an additional liability relating to Birmingham's Children's Trust pension liabilities for 2023/24 only (all of which will be further reviewed at Quarter Two); and
 - iv. Adult Social Care demand pressures (forecast £6.2m in 2023/24 and £8.9m in 2024/25) relating to increased numbers seeking care and increased placement costs (i.e. additional demand for more expensive residential care).

5.4 **Corporately Managed Budgets** – this includes a forecast reduction in borrowing costs of £3.9m in 2023/24 and £2.3m in 2024/25, as delays in the capital programme have led to lower than forecast loan debt (and therefore lower Treasury costs).

Inflation

5.5 **Other inflation** – this line covers General Price inflation on premises, transport, and supplies and services costs. The assumptions used in the 2023/24 Financial Plan have been reviewed in light of the latest Bank of England Consumer Price Index (CPI) forecasts from May 2023. The updated forecasts are based on the following assumptions:

| | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Apr-Jun | 8.2% | 3.4% | 1.1% |
| Jul-Sep | 7.0% | 2.9% | 1.0% |
| Oct-Dec | 5.1% | 2.3% | 1.0% |
| Jan-Mar | 4.4% | 1.5% | 1.1% |
| Average CPI Inflation | 6.2% | 2.5% | 1.1% |
| MTFP refresh assumptions used: | 6.2% | 2.5% | 2.0% |
| Assumptions used in 2023/24 Financial Plan: | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |

Source for MTFP refresh assumptions: Bank of England CPI forecasts, May 2023

Note: for the 2025/26 financial year and future financial years, MTFP forecasts are assumed to be 2.0% - a slight increase from Bank of England forecasts to ensure the MTFP is calculated on a prudent basis

5.6 As noted above, the increase in forecast inflation is due to the increase compared to the 2023/24 Financial Plan, in which assumptions were made that Directorates would not receive any inflationary uplift for premises, transport and supplies & services costs and would need to manage pressures within existing budgets.

5.7 **Contract inflation** – this relates to areas of spend which are tied to specific contracts, and so require specific inflation assumptions. The largest area of spend – and therefore the largest impact on the MTFP – relates to Adult Social Care (packages of care; estimated £18.6m increase in inflation forecasts in 2024/25) and Children's Social Care (third party payments to the Birmingham Children's Trust for care packages; estimated £7.3m increase in inflation forecasts in 2024/25). This is based on the following assumptions:

| | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <u>Adult Social Care packages</u> | | | |
| Assumptions used in the 2023/24 Financial Plan: | 7.5% | 0.6% | 0.0% |
| MTFP refresh assumptions used: | 8.7% | 6.5% | 4.9% |
| <u>Children's Social Care third party payments</u> | | | |
| Assumptions used in the 2023/24 Financial Plan: | 7.4% | 0.6% | 0.0% |
| MTFP refresh assumptions used: | 7.4% | 6.5% | 4.9% |

Source for MTFP refresh assumptions: Analysis of future ASC care package costs as at end of May 2023

Note: for Children's third-party payments, it is assumed that they will track ASC inflation movements in 2024/25 and 2025/26. The 2023/24 figures have not yet been updated and will form part of the next MTFP Refresh paper to Cabinet in October

5.8 **Pay inflation** – at present, pay inflation budgets look broadly accurate. The Financial Plan 2023/24 assumed 5.0% increase in 2023/24, 2.5% in 2024/25 and in future years. Based on Bank of England forecasts, this update revises this forecast to 2.0% from 2025/26 onwards.

5.9 **Savings** – progress against the savings agreed in the 2023/24 Financial Plan has been reviewed. Based on the table below, it is estimated that a total of £35.1m of savings are at high risk (i.e., assessed as unlikely to deliver). These are described in paragraphs 5.10-5.11 (£33.2m of savings at risk within the agreed corporate savings programme) and 5.12 (an additional £1.9m of savings that had been incorrectly applied).

- 5.10 From the agreed corporate savings programme, as laid out in the 2023/24 Financial Plan approved by Cabinet in February, the Financial Sustainability Programme Board is currently forecasting that £33.2m of savings are at high risk (i.e., assessed as unlikely to deliver) in 2023/24 with a further £21.1m unlikely to be delivered in 2024/25:

| £'000 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | Total | % of Target |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------|
| MTFP Target 23/24 to 25/26 | (55,165) | (28,137) | (19,544) | (102,846) | 92% |
| Previous Undelivered Savings | (9,454) | | | (9,454) | 8% |
| Total Target | (64,619) | (28,137) | (19,544) | (112,300) | 100% |
| Delivered | | | | | |
| Low Risk | (2,623) | (1,116) | (84) | (3,823) | 3% |
| Medium Risk | (28,517) | (5,888) | (360) | (34,765) | 31% |
| High Risk | (33,479) | (21,133) | (19,100) | (73,712) | 66% |
| To Be Confirmed | | | | | |
| Potential Write-Off | | | | | |
| Total Forecast | (64,619) | (28,137) | (19,544) | (112,300) | 100% |

- 5.11 The following points should be noted about this savings forecast:
- This assumes that, in addition to the £55.2m of budgeted savings in the MTFP for 2023/24, there will be £9.5m of undelivered savings in 2022/23 that will need to be rolled forward for a total savings target of £64.9m in 2023/24. This will need to be confirmed as part of the outturn report for 2022/23 (and the number of undelivered savings could rise or fall).
 - The projects that are not expected to deliver target savings in 2022/23 include: Workforce savings (£2m); Traded Services (£1.6m); Council Admin Buildings Premises (£1.3m); Automation (£0.85m); Fieldworker / new ways of working (£0.8m); and Customer Services (£0.4m).
 - An initial high-level review of savings projects by the Financial Sustainability Programme Board, as at mid-May, suggests that approximately £33m (50%) of the total £64.9m required in 2023/24 is currently at risk of slippage/non-delivery. Key projects currently at high risk of slippage/non-delivery include: Children's Trust Savings - £6m; Reducing Bed and Breakfast spend - £5.5m; Commercial Investment/Property - £4.7m; Workforce Savings - £4m; CAB Premises - £3.7m; Traded Services - £3.1m; EIP/Localities Hub - £2.5m; Automation - £1.850m; Centres of Excellence - £1.8m; Customer Services - £0.990m; and Fieldworker - £0.8m
 - Work is currently progressing to review the risk levels and options for mitigation. Further information will be provided in subsequent reports to Cabinet on the 2022/23 outturn and the Quarter Two MTFP Refresh in October.
- 5.12 In addition to the savings above, this MTFP includes an additional £1.95m of vacancy factor savings (i.e., holding staff positions vacant as people leave) that

had been incorrectly applied to Children & Families and City Operations. These had been applied on top of existing 3% savings across all Directorates.

5.13 **Resources** – this paper also considers a range of factors affecting future income. These include:

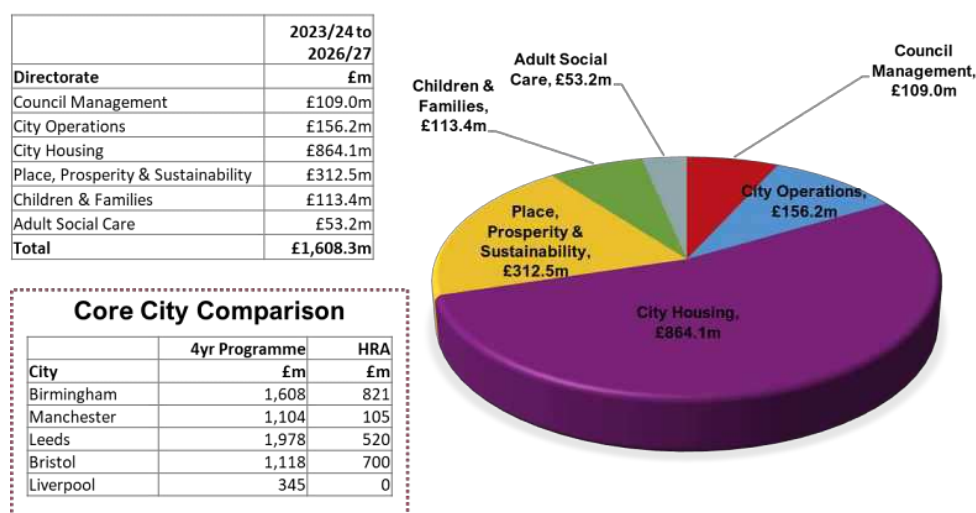
- a. **Business rates** – based on the draft 2022/23 outturn position for the Collection Fund, it is forecast that there is a deficit in business rates income of £27.8m due to a challenging economic environment for businesses (resulting in lower than forecast collection rates), a delay in enforcement activity (due to Oracle implementation issues) and an increase in business rates appeals (as this is the last year of the six year period in which businesses can query the latest set of rateable valuations (i.e. tax due) which were carried out in 2017).
- b. Under statutory guidance, the 2022/23 Collection Fund deficit will be charged to the General Fund for the next financial year (i.e. in 2024/25). However, this is offset by additional forecast income from business rates of £13.8m in 2024/25 and in subsequent years. Business rates are calculated by multiplying the rateable value of the property by the “non-domestic multiplier” which is adjusted to reflect the Consumer Price Index inflation figure for the September prior to the billing year. As Bank of England forecasts for CPI are expected to be higher than the forecasts used in the Financial Plan for 2023/24, this could result in additional income for the Council in future years.
- c. **Council tax** – as with Business Rates, there is projected to be a £2.0m deficit for 2022/23 in Council Tax income due to a reduction in collection rates. This will also be charged to the General Fund for 2024/25. It is worth noting that collection rates across Council Tax and Business rates fell in 2022/23, relative to 2021/22. For Council Tax, in year collection fell from 92.9% to 90.2%; for Business Rates, in year collection fell from 95.8% to 90.1%.
- d. **Grants** – there are two main categories of grant: 1) those used to fund wider Council services (e.g., Top Up Grant, Business-rates related Section 31 grants); and 2) those ringfenced to fund specific services (e.g., the Social Care Grant). At present, there is not sufficient information from central government to update forecasts for grant funding in 2024/25 and beyond. Further information is expected later in the 2023/24 financial year.
- e. **Other income** – this includes a range of pressures including a pressure of £1.5m on parking income (due to reduced demand with the city) and £1.5m on business waste collection income (again likely due to reduced office usage across the city).
- f. **Reserves** – at present, the only use of reserves assumed is to cover the additional expenditure required to support the remediation of the Oracle

finance system. A further review of reserves will be provided to Cabinet as part of the 2022/23 outturn report in the Autumn.

- 5.14 **Additional risks** – there are a range of other possible service pressures that are being reviewed by officers. For the purposes of this paper, only pressures that are 1) viewed as more than 50% likely to take place and 2) can be quantified are included in this report. Others will be reviewed and may be quantified as part of the Quarter Two refresh of the MTFP for Cabinet in October. This could include the potential cost implications relating to the current Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract between the Council and Birmingham Highways Limited – a procurement exercise for a new sub-contractor is currently ongoing, so it is not possible to quantify any additional costs at this stage.
- 5.15 **Equal Pay** – further to the description in Section Four of this report, and for the purposes of this paper, a high level estimate of the potential financing costs has been made for information purposes. It is not yet included in the MTFP forecasts in this paper, as the work to finalise the figures is ongoing.

Capital Programme

- 5.16 **Size** – a review of the Capital programme is needed in light of the current financial situation with a view to add, reprioritise, accelerate, defer and descope the programme. This will need to be looked at across all Directorates within scope of the Capital Programme.
- 5.17 The current approved capital programme is for £1.6 billion of spending over this MTFP period:



- 5.18 The capital spend by Directorate includes:
- City Housing includes £820m for the Housing Revenue Account: investment in current housing stock as well as new social housing;
 - Council Management includes £54m transformation projects and £30m Corporate Contingency over four years;

- c. The above figures do not include the proposed £400m investment in the Council's Temporary Accommodation strategy, approved by Cabinet on 25 June; and
- d. Place, Prosperity & Sustainability includes £52.9m Enterprise Zone funded by borrowing to be repaid by the retention of future Enterprise Zone business rates.

Corporate Reserves

- 5.19 At present, officers are reviewing corporate reserves to finalise the outturn position for the 2022/23 financial year. These will need to be compared to the MTFP budget gap included in this paper and additional costs as a result of additional Equal Pay claims.
- 5.20 Using corporate reserves will, of course, significantly reduce the financial resilience of the council against future pressures. Once reserves have been used, they need to be rebuilt from existing budgets (i.e., through future savings that can be contributed to reserves). Once reserves have been spent, they are no longer available. That is why it is worth pursuing a savings programme first and retaining reserves to enable the authority to have some protection against future budget pressures. The method for pursuing these savings will be the Robust Budget Savings & Recovery Plan – outlined in the next Section of this report.

6 Robust Budget Savings & Recovery Plan

Background

- 6.1 The financial challenges being faced by the Council are of a sufficient size that they require immediate and sustained action to control. There is no doubting the scale of the financial challenge. There is a significant budgetary challenge arising, which includes:
 - a. The sizeable MTFP budget gaps identified in Section Five of this report; and
 - b. Additional financing costs for any future Equal Pay costs.
- 6.2 The Robust **Budget Savings & Recovery Plan** is made up of:
 - a. **Mandatory spending controls** – to enable the Authority to pause non-essential spending and to enable time to tackle the budget gap; and
 - b. **Detailed workstreams** – including Oracle Remediation, MTFP and Budget, and Workforce.

Mandatory Spending Controls

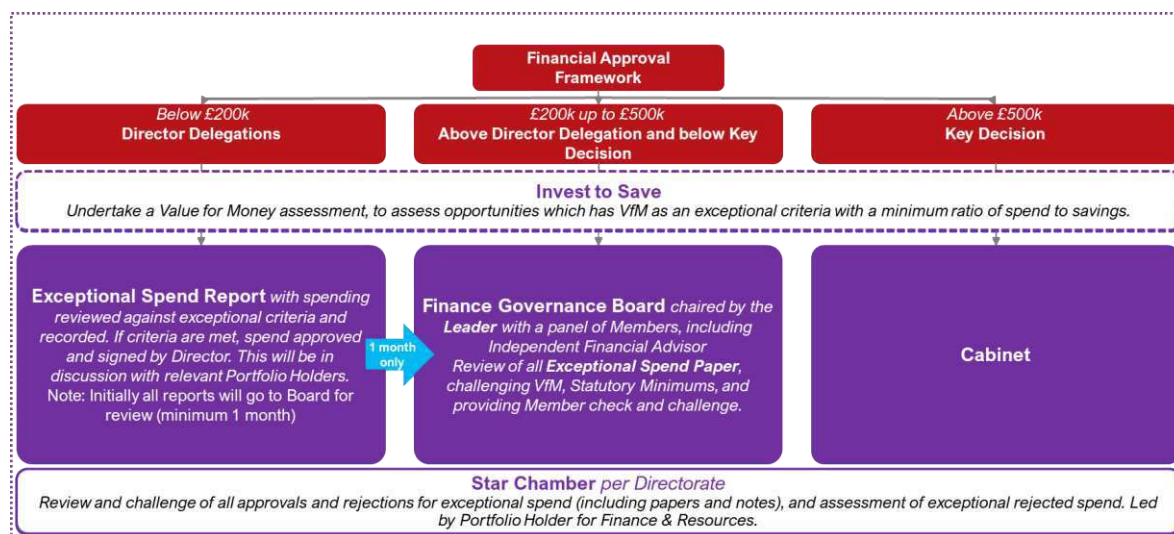
- 6.3 Based on the rationale in this report, **Mandatory Spending Controls** were implemented on 5 July.

- 6.4 **Mandatory spending controls mean that:**
- a. ***No new agreements or commitments for expenditure can be made, without engagement with the three statutory officers.***
 - b. Temporary measures will be brought in to ensure all **new** non-essential expenditure will stop with immediate effect.
- 6.5 **The only allowable expenditure permitted under an emergency protocol includes the following categories:**
- a. Existing staff **payroll** and **pension** costs
 - b. Expenditure required through **existing legal agreements and contracts**
 - c. Expenditure on **goods and services** which have **already been received**
 - d. Expenditure required to deliver the council's **provision of statutory services**
 - e. Urgent expenditure required to **safeguard vulnerable citizens**
 - f. Expenditure to address **services** which are **under regulation**
 - g. Expenditure funded through **ring-fenced grants**
 - h. Expenditure necessary to achieve **value for money** and / or **mitigate additional in year costs**
 - i. Expenditure necessary to achieve **value for money** and / or **mitigate additional in year costs**
 - i. *Robust business case with short payback period required, i.e., less than 24 months;*
 - ii. *Value-for-Money Framework to be developed; and*
 - iii. *Business Cases to be reviewed by a group (to be established by Chief Executive)*

Robust Budget Savings & Recovery Plan

- 6.6 **Governance Arrangements – *three governance forums will be used to challenge spend within the Council:***
- a. **Director Delegations with Exceptional Spend Report** – To review spend against exceptional criteria and take delegated decisions against spend thresholds. In discussion with relevant Portfolio Holder.
 - b. **Finance Governance Board** – To review spend above certain thresholds based on exceptional criteria, utilising senior stakeholders to challenge spend, and regularly review Director delegated decisions.
 - c. **Star Chamber** – To review and challenge all approved exceptional spend (including papers and notes) and an assessment of exceptional rejected spend.

- 6.7 This will be implemented in line with a temporary scheme of delegation, aligned to the Finance, Procurement and Contract Governance Rules in Part D of the constitution:



*Notes: All forums will occur on a weekly basis to ensure spend is agile and responses to Directorate needs. This will apply to all spend over £500 as a de-minimus level. All spend must adhere to Council Procurement Governance. This includes spend and call-offs from frameworks. This includes **Capital and Ring-Fenced Grant Spend**. Consideration will be given to the volume of reports, needs to split by General Fund and Housing Revenue Account spend, and the timeliness of reporting and governance. This covers increase in spend **and** decrease in income.*

- 6.8 **Work plan** – this plan will inform the roadmap of activities that need to be delivered over the next five years to achieve financial stability within the Council.
- 6.9 There are nine activities which form this plan, split into Strategic and Operational Activities. The Strategic work streams are:
- Organisational Spending Review** – Review all spending for Value for Money and Outcome Focus across all services and budgets, including General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, Capital and external funding, Companies, Traded Services (i.e. Schools);
 - Equal Pay Resolution** – Roadmap of activities to understand and resolve the Equal Pay challenges, including detailing the potential costs over the next 5 years;
 - MTFP and Budget** – Quantification and remediation of the budget gap, revising the MTFP (next four financial years, Long-Term Financial Plan (next ten financial years), and Budget setting process. This will include the identification and delivery of savings, to be owned by the Corporate Leadership Team and Cabinet; and

- d. **Workforce** – Ensuring recruitment and retention is not at risk within the workforce, and developing contingency, creating capacity and flexibility, and exploring staff and people costs, including agency and interim costs.

6.10 The Operational work streams are:

- a. **Mandatory Spend Controls** – Implementation of mandatory spend controls, as outlined above, and the delivery of in-year spending savings through these controls, including Collection/Recovery of Income, balance sheet controls and use of Minimum Revenue Provision;
- b. **Oracle Remediation** – Activities to achieve Safe and Compliant, Stabilisation, and Optimisation of the Oracle Fusion implementation;
- c. **Governance and Controls Framework** – Review and remediation of governance and key financial controls, including but not limited to Internal Audit, Procurement, Value-for-money, Risk Management, Annual Governance Statement;
- d. **Closure of the Accounts** – Activities to deliver accounts for the Council across all financial years that remain open with External Auditors, including any further investigations and assessments; and
- e. **Finance and Governance Capacity and Capability** – Strengthened finance and governance knowledge, capability and capacity to deliver the planned improvements, including development of a Service Improvement Programme.

6.11 Work is already underway against a number of these areas. Each of the nine pillars above has a detailed plan of activities with responsible owners, risks, timelines, and allocated resources against each step.

6.12 The Robust Budget Savings & Recovery Plan will be reported to, and monitored by, the Finance Governance Board.

7 Next Steps

7.1 Significant work is required over the next few weeks to deliver on the proposed Budget Savings & Recovery Plan. A further update will come to Cabinet in October to update the MTFP position and assumptions over the medium term, in advance of the formal budget-setting process for 2024/25.

7.2 The timetable for the 2024/25 budget-setting process is as follows:

| Activities | Date |
|--|-----------------|
| Spending Controls implementation | 5 July 2023 |
| Implementation of Budget Savings & Recovery Plan | 25 July 2023 |
| Quarter Two Update on MTFP assumptions, budget position to Cabinet | 10 October 2023 |

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Budget engagement on resource prioritisation | Mid October – December 2023 |
| Scrutiny of budget development proposals and Scrutiny review of Budget Savings & Recovery Plan for 2024/25 budget | November/December 2023 |
| Provisional Local Government Settlement | Mid December 2023 (TBC) |
| Cabinet – setting of council tax and business rate tax base | 16 January 2024 |
| Final Local Government Settlement | January/February 2024 (TBC) |
| Cabinet consideration of the 2023/24 budget and Financial Plan | 13 February 2024 |
| Full Council approval of 2023/24 budget and setting of Council tax | 28 February 2024 |

8 Next Steps

- 8.1 The Council believes that it is important that it engages with citizens and business when planning activity and the financial implications of those plans. An engagement plan is currently in development, focusing on gathering the views of Council Tax and Business Rates payers to feed into the 2024/25 budget setting process.

9 Risk Management

- 9.1 There remains significant uncertainty in respect of public spending levels and the level of funding for local government and therefore the assumptions outlined in this report will be subject to continual review over the coming months to ensure that the Council's short term and medium term financial stability can be protected and critical services delivered.

10 Compliance Issues:

10.1 How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?

- a. The Robust Budget Savings and Recovery Plan is an essential part of the Medium Term financial planning process. This will be informed by the priorities that led to its implementation, namely to provide a stable footing for the future financial position of the Council. In doing so, the Robust Budget Savings and Recovery Plan will seek to support the delivery of the Council's priorities, as laid out in the Council Plan, wherever possible within current and potential financial constraints. The

MTFP must remain focused on social justice, frontline services and the needs of residents and communities of the city.

10.2 Legal Implications

- a. A local authority is required under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to produce a balanced budget.

10.3 Financial Implications

- a. The detailed financial implications have been covered throughout the report.

10.4 Procurement Implications (if required)

- a. There are no procurement issues arising directly from the contents of this report. Any procurement implications will be identified as specific budgets are developed.

10.5 Human Resources Implications (if required)

- a. There are no specific human resources implications arising from this report. Any Human resource implication will be identified as specific budgets are developed.

10.6 Public Sector Equality Duty

- a. In compliance with the Council's duties on equality, changes in the budget that impact on the provision of services will need to be properly assessed. An Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken on proposals as they are developed where this is considered necessary to do so.

FINANCE SCRUTINY WORKSHOP

Birmingham City Council
26th July 2023

Ian Fifield

Objectives



- To ensure that everyone understands the nature and depth of the financial challenge faced by the Council
- To plan Scrutiny's approach and contribution to the Council's overall approach in meeting the challenge
- To develop a timetable and action plan for Scrutiny, especially over the autumn period

| | 2023/24 £'000 | 2024/25 £'000 | 2025/26 £'000 | 2026/27 £'000 | 2027/28 £'000 |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Total Net Expenditure (as per 2023/24 Financial Plan) | 925,078 | 1,018,314 | 1,035,612 | 1,049,934 | 1,083,206 |
| Total Resources (as per 2023/24 Financial Plan) | (925,078) | (1,018,314) | (1,035,612) | (1,049,934) | (1,079,093) |
| Budget gap as (as per 2023/24 Financial Plan) | - | - | - | - | 4,113 |
| Expenditure | | | | | |
| Budget Pressures | | | | | |
| Staffing | 3,844 | 3,973 | 4,070 | 4,170 | 4,273 |
| Demand/Complexity Growth | 55,586 | 37,736 | 44,027 | 42,240 | 39,840 |
| Statutory Requirement | - | - | - | - | - |
| Borrowing costs, investment etc | - | - | - | - | - |
| Budget Pressures Subtotal | 59,430 | 41,709 | 48,097 | 46,410 | 44,113 |
| Corporately Managed Budgets | (4,240) | (4,097) | (3,935) | (4,154) | (5,461) |
| Pay Inflation | - | - | (2,532) | (5,178) | (7,943) |
| Contract Inflation | 1,042 | 27,346 | 51,904 | 55,348 | 58,666 |
| Other Inflation | 19,875 | 28,352 | 35,367 | 42,593 | 50,063 |
| Fees and Charges Inflation | - | (357) | (365) | (372) | (378) |
| Inflation Sub-total | 20,917 | 55,341 | 84,374 | 92,391 | 100,408 |
| Savings | | | | | |
| High Risk Savings | 35,141 | 56,274 | 75,374 | 75,374 | 75,374 |
| Savings Subtotal | 35,141 | 56,274 | 75,374 | 75,374 | 75,374 |
| Total Net Expenditure Movements | 111,248 | 149,227 | 203,910 | 210,021 | 214,434 |
| Resources | | | | | |
| Business Rates | - | 14,100 | (27,677) | (40,165) | (41,052) |
| Council Tax | - | 2,019 | - | - | - |
| Other Grants Excl DSG & ABG | - | - | - | - | - |
| Top Up Grant | - | - | - | - | - |
| Other income | 5,044 | 2,589 | 2,589 | 2,589 | 2,589 |
| Net Payment to/(from) Reserves | (28,907) | (3,096) | (1,687) | - | - |
| Total Resources Movement | (23,863) | 15,612 | (26,775) | (37,576) | (38,463) |
| MTFP Budget Gap at July 2023 | 87,385 | 164,838 | 177,135 | 172,445 | 180,084 |

Additional issues

- 2023/24 agreed budget savings - £33.479m out of £64.619m are “high risk” (i.e. unlikely to be delivered)
- Equal pay - £650 - £760m not currently included in the MTFS
- Oracle implementation – impact on reserves

My thoughts.....

- Both capital and revenue budgets require fundamental review to generate savings
- Work to be done on the deliverability of savings
- Much work is underway – including a “star chamber” process
- The end point is a scrutiny review of the Budget Savings and Recovery Plan for the 24/25 budget – November/December 2023

But....

- Should Scrutiny just wait for the results of the review and scrutinize the saving list?
- How can Scrutiny engage with the star chamber process?

How can Scrutiny be proactive and add value to this process, avoiding duplication?

Workshop

Generating Scrutiny Questions

“The important and most difficult job is never to find the right answers, it is to find the right questions” (Peter Drucker)

The Challenge

What questions can scrutiny ask and explore in order to make a positive contribution to the savings identification process?

Questions and Key Lines of Enquiry Discussed at the Workshop

- All scrutiny committees need to review their work programme and identify what can be delayed to give space to this work.
- Information required on:
 - What and who the “star chamber process” is, including what they will be reviewing to ensure there is no duplication.
- Are there any previous scrutiny recommendations that suggested ways that savings / efficiency could be achieved that have not yet been implemented? Can these be taken forward?

Cont'd

- Officers to be asked for the current list of agreed savings to be broken down per committee so that scrutiny committees can;
 - Undertake a reality check of how / when / how much can now be delivered.
 - Understand why these savings were put forward and agreed as part of the budget process but are now considered high and medium risk.
 - Ensure that all further savings proposals can be implemented on time and that they deliver the savings identified.
- Resources scrutiny committee to:
 - Review the various assumptions in the MTFP
 - Request other scrutiny committees review the assumptions made in lines such as “demand and complex growth”

Cont'd

- Potential more detailed reviews:
 - Duplication between departments.
 - Income generation possibilities e.g. commercial rental income
 - Invest to save possibilities in the capital programme
- Timescale
 - Much work needs to be completed over the next few weeks to ensure that recommendations are formally discussed and approved in the September scrutiny meetings
 - Scrutiny review of the Budget Savings & Recovery Plan need to be timetabled for later in the autumn (November/December)

23/24 Savings Q1 Position by O&S Committee

Summary

| Savings by OSC Portfolio | Delivered | Low Risk | Medium Risk | High Risk | TOTAL |
|--|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Co-ordinating OSC | | | | (14,851) | (14,851) |
| Economy and Skills OSC | | (133) | (816) | (9,595) | (10,544) |
| Education, Children and Young People OSC | | | (4,465) | (6,000) | (10,465) |
| Finance and Resources OSC | | (1,269) | (8,799) | 1,457 | (8,611) |
| Health and Adult Social Care OSC | | (700) | (9,008) | 2,000 | (7,708) |
| Homes OSC | | (502) | (592) | (5,500) | (6,594) |
| Neighbourhoods OSC | | (19) | (4,837) | (990) | (5,846) |
| Sustainability and Transport OSC | | | | | |
| TOTAL | | (2,623) | (28,517) | (33,479) | (64,619) |

List of Savings Projects

| Directorate | O&S Committee | Savings Description | 2023/24 (Saving) £'000 |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Adult Social Care | Health and Adult Social Care OSC | Adults Transformation Programme. | (3,700) |
| Adult Social Care | Health and Adult Social Care OSC | Adult Packages of Care (Reversal of previous year one-off savings) | 1,000 |
| Adult Social Care | Health and Adult Social Care OSC | Income Collection (Reversal of previous year one-off savings) | 1,000 |
| Adult Social Care | Health and Adult Social Care OSC | 3% Turnover factor (Vacancy management) | (2,850) |
| Adult Social Care | Health and Adult Social Care OSC | Special Impact team (SIT) complex case review accelerated and expanded to cover high cost packages | (500) |
| Adult Social Care | Health and Adult Social Care OSC | Case load packages Review | (200) |
| Adult Social Care | Health and Adult Social Care OSC | Looking at ways to enhance ICS/CCG partnership to harness pooled resources more efficiently eg BCF Inflation | (1,000) |
| BCT | Education, Children and Young People | Children's Trust - Family and Friends Cars | (2,000) |
| BCT | Education, Children and Young People | Children's Trust - Stronger Families Programme | (3,000) |
| BCT | Education, Children and Young People | Children's Trust - Tackling Domestic Abuse to Support Families | (1,000) |
| Children & Families | Education, Children and Young People | Schools Balances | (328) |
| Children & Families | Education, Children and Young People | Education and Skill Early Retirement | (210) |

| | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---------|
| Children & Families | Education, Children and Young People | 3% Turnover factor (Vacancy management) | (1,921) |
| City Housing | Homes OSC | Reducing / Eradicating B&B Accommodation | (5,500) |
| City Housing | Homes OSC | 3% Turnover factor (Vacancy management) | (502) |
| City Ops | Sustainability and Transport OSC | Street Work Permits | (100) |
| City Ops | Neighbourhoods OSC | Removal of Universal Superloos | (19) |
| City Ops | Co-ordinating OSC | Capitalise Salaries of Alexander Stadium Build (Reversal of previous year one-off savings) | 40 |
| City Ops | Co-ordinating OSC | Revenue Benefit from Capitalising the Cost of Indoor Track at Arena (Reversal of previous year one-off savings) | 150 |
| City Ops | Neighbourhoods OSC | 3% Turnover factor (Vacancy management) | (3,307) |
| Corporate Items | Co-ordinating OSC | Localities / Public Hub (Savings from implementation of EIP Model) | (2,500) |
| Corporate Items | Co-ordinating OSC | BCC Target Operating Model Design Principles - Voluntary Workforce Savings Programme | (2,000) |
| Corporate Items | Co-ordinating OSC | B/F_BCC Target Operating Model Design Principles - Voluntary Workforce Savings Programme | (2,000) |
| Corporate Items | Finance and Resources OSC | Maximise the Use of Grant Funding – Identifying opportunities to use grant funding to fund existing GF spend releasing GF budgets for savings. | (1,000) |
| Corporate Items | Finance and Resources OSC | B/F_Maximise the Use of Grant Funding - Identifying opportunities to use grant funding to fund existing GF spend releasing GF budgets for savings. | (1,000) |
| Corporate Items | Finance and Resources OSC | Improvements in Debt Management – Review Debt Management Process with a view to improving collection and reducing bad debt. | (900) |
| Corporate Items | Finance and Resources OSC | B/F_Improvements in Debt Management – Review Debt Management Process with a view to improving collection and reducing bad debt. | (1,000) |
| Corporate Items | Co-ordinating OSC | Traded Services – Review of traded services with a view to greater commercialisation and reduced GF subsidy) | (1,500) |
| Corporate Items | Co-ordinating OSC | B/F_Traded Services - Review of traded services with a view to greater commercialisation and reduced GF subsidy) | (1,600) |
| Corporate Items | Finance and Resources OSC | Repayment of Borrowing Following Asset Disposal Resulting in Reduced Debt Management Costs (Reversal of one-off savings from previous years) | 4,500 |
| Corporate Items | Finance and Resources OSC | Release Highways policy contingency for one year – Accounting Adjustment (Reversal of one-off savings from previous years) | 800 |
| Corporate Items | Economy and Skills OSC | B/F_Corporate Landlord (Efficiencies in Asset Management through Consolidation and Rationalisation of Council Assets/ Buildings) | (500) |
| Corporate Items | Co-ordinating OSC | Automation – Use of Robotic Process Automation Technology to automate manual processes and reduce manual handling, leading to efficiencies in process and savings on time/resource required to deliver services. | (1,000) |
| Corporate Items | Co-ordinating OSC | B/F_Automation - Use of Robotic Process Automation Technology to automate manual processes and reduce manual handling, leading to efficiencies in process and savings on time/resource required to deliver services. | (850) |
| Corporate Items | Co-ordinating OSC | Reducing Workforce (Centres of Excellence) – Consolidation of similar roles and teams to reduce duplication of effort and achieve efficiency in resource/process | (1,791) |

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|---|---------|
| Corporate Items | Co-ordinating OSC | Automation (Voice Automation) – Use of voice automation technology to reduce volume of manual call handling, leading efficiencies and better customer services. | (1,000) |
| Corporate Items | Finance and Resources OSC | Automation (Oracle Optimisation) – Use of new oracle system to generate process efficiencies | (500) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | Digital advertising on key assets to generate additional income | (200) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | Operational Hub Programme – rationalisation of assets. | (161) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | Application platform modernisation. | (11) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | 3% Turnover factor (Vacancy management) | (4,265) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | Review all BCC leased properties and reduce cost of lease payments for assets | (460) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | System Efficiencies | (600) |
| Council Management | Neighbourhoods OSC | Customer Services – Bereavement. Improvements in service design to deliver efficiencies | (460) |
| Council Management | Neighbourhoods OSC | B/F_Customer Services - Bereavement. Improvements in service design to deliver efficiencies | (250) |
| Council Management | Neighbourhoods OSC | Customer Services - Garden Waste. Introduce autorenewal and other process improvements to maximise levels of annual subscriptions. | (40) |
| Council Management | Neighbourhoods OSC | B/F_Customer Services - Garden Waste. Introduce autorenewal and other process improvements to maximise levels of annual subscriptions. | (40) |
| Council Management | Neighbourhoods OSC | Customer Services - Markets | (50) |
| Council Management | Neighbourhoods OSC | B/F_Customer Services - Markets | (50) |
| Council Management | Neighbourhoods OSC | Customer Services - Pest Control | (50) |
| Council Management | Neighbourhoods OSC | B/F_Customer Services - Pest Control | (50) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | Development & Commercial - Digital advertising income and offer up of growth | (60) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | Procurement - 2020/21 Expenditure Budget covered by funding | (106) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | Audit - increase trading opportunities with Police, Housing Associations and Acivico | (60) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | Finance - refinancing legacy systems | (700) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | Personal Assistant Allocation - review use of Personal Assistant Support | (200) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | Business Support Efficiencies | (50) |

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | Customer Services Efficiencies | (50) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | Review Human Resources Target Operating Model - reduce posts that are vacant | (170) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | Human Resources reduce growth request in Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) | (113) |
| Place, Prosperity & Sustainability | Economy and Skills OSC | B/F_CAB Premises - excluding Council House. Reduced costs associated with Council Admin Buildings | (1,314) |
| Place, Prosperity & Sustainability | Economy and Skills OSC | CAB Premises - excluding Council House. Reduced costs associated with Council Admin Buildings | (2,431) |
| Place, Prosperity & Sustainability | Economy and Skills OSC | CAB Premises - Council House Commercialisation Income generation through improved commercial offer including banqueting and events. | (50) |
| Place, Prosperity & Sustainability | Economy and Skills OSC | Commercial Property - Lease Event Opportunities Review of commercial property leases – includes rent reviews and extension options | (600) |
| Place, Prosperity & Sustainability | Economy and Skills OSC | Commercial Property - Active Investment Additional income through investment in Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) compliant commercial property | (2,250) |
| Place, Prosperity & Sustainability | Economy and Skills OSC | Commercial Property - Blended Approach Investment and Lease Events Additional income generated through a combination of lease reviews and investment | (2,500) |
| Place, Prosperity & Sustainability | Sustainability and Transport OSC | Street Work Permits - moved directorate | 100 |
| Place, Prosperity & Sustainability | Economy and Skills OSC | 3% Turnover factor (Vacancy management) | (666) |
| Place, Prosperity & Sustainability | Economy and Skills OSC | Review all £5-10k leases – with a view to optimising lease income. | (150) |
| Strategic Equals & Partnership | Finance and Resources OSC | 3% Turnover factor (Vacancy management) | (116) |
| Strategic Equals & Partnership | Finance and Resources OSC | Efficiencies amongst non-staffing budgets | (116) |
| Corporate Items | Co-ordinating OSC | B/F_New Ways of Working_Fieldworker. Rolling out field worker module to allow staff working in the field to update host systems directly rather than returning to office to update | (800) |
| Adult Social Care | Health and Adult Social Care OSC | Fees & Charges 5% | (1,458) |
| Children & Families | Education, Children and Young People | Fees & Charges 5% | (2,006) |
| Council Management | Finance and Resources OSC | Fees & Charges 5% | (2,073) |
| City Ops | Neighbourhoods OSC | Fees & Charges 5% | (1,530) |
| City Housing | Homes OSC | Fees & Charges 5% | (592) |
| Place, Prosperity & Sustainability | Economy and Skills OSC | Fees & Charges 5% | (83) |
| | | Total | (64,619) |

Caveats:

- Many targets fit into multiple O&S portfolio, such as Fees & Charges, vacancy factor, thus for simplicity we have allocated to the O&S Committee where most of the target is more likely to fall.
- Some services also fall into more than one O&S portfolio – we have allocated the full target for these to the committee of higher alignment rather than split amounts.
- The total savings that need to be delivered in the 23/24 financial year may increase. Finance is currently working to close the 22/23 financial year accounts – this includes final assessment of savings delivery for the last financial year. Any further undelivered savings in 22/23 will need to be brought forward and found in 23/24 thereby increasing the overall target for 23/24.

Criteria for determining the RAG status of savings

| Assessment Criteria | Delivered | Low Risk | Medium Risk | High Risk |
|---------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Savings RAG | Saving or income realised and evidence provided that costs have been reduced or income increased. | Saving or income detail documented and robust plan in place to deliver agreed targets, showing when and who is responsible. - and / or - Saving / income will be delivered within agreed timeframes. | Saving or income lacks some clarity and / or not detailed at an adequately granular level, or at risk, but agreed plan in place to resolve and being actively managed. - and / or - Some risk of not delivering saving within agreed timeframe, leading to cost of slippage. | Limited confidence in agreed saving / income being delivered - and / or - Saving / income unclear and / or not specified at adequate granular level. - and / or - Inadequate plan / no plan agreed. - and / or - <i>Saving not yet agreed by Directorate / Service Manager</i> - and / or - Major risk of not delivering saving / income within agreed timeframe, leading to cost of slippage. |
| Headcount Example | Officer has departed, budget has been reduced and posts have been deleted from the approved establishment. | Timescales and the specific posts to be vacated / deleted have been agreed. | Budget Manager has confirmed that posts (to agreed value and timing) will be vacated and deleted from budget. | Headcount saving proposed, but no clarity RE timescales/ posts. |

Birmingham City Council

Education, Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6 September 2023



Subject: Education, Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme

Report of: Christian Scade, Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services

Report author: Fiona Bottrill, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager
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1 Purpose

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed work programme for the Education, Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2023-24, based on the Committee's meeting in June 2023. Appendix 1 outlines the topics identified, aims and objectives and the preferred method of scrutiny to achieve these objectives.
- 1.2 The report also refers to other topics, which the Committee has identified, for future consideration, and this will be continuously updated during the year.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee:
 - Notes the information set out in Appendix 1 and identifies if any further topics need to be added to the menu of topics for the Committee to explore over the coming year.
 - Agrees, subject to further input from the Chair and Deputy Chair, the issues that the Committee will consider during October – November 2023, the proposed aims and objectives and the preferred method of scrutiny.
 - Identifies, subject to further input from the Chair and Deputy Chair, the issues that the Committee will consider in January 2024, the proposed aims and objectives and the preferred method of scrutiny.
 - Notes, subject to further input from the Chair and Deputy Chair outside of the meeting, its proposed work programme will be submitted to Co-ordinating O&S to enable work to be planned and co-ordinated throughout the year.

- Notes the update on the Child Criminal Exploitation Inquiry

3 Background

- 3.1 The [statutory guidance for local government overview and scrutiny](#) sets out the role it can play in holding an authority's decision makers to account. This makes it fundamentally important to the successful functioning of local democracy.
- 3.2 Effective Overview and Scrutiny should:
- Provide constructive 'critical friend' challenge.
 - Amplify the voices and concerns of the public.
 - Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role.
 - Drive improvements in public services.
- 3.3 The role and functions of Overview and Scrutiny Committees are outlined in [The City Council's Constitution | Birmingham City Council](#) They will:
- Make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council, the Executive and/or other organisations in connection with the discharge of the functions specified in their terms of reference.
 - Consider any matter covered in their terms of reference that may affect or be likely to have an effect on the citizens of Birmingham; relevant to the Council's strategic objectives; relevant to major issues faced by officers in managing a function of the Council; and likely to make contribution to moving the Council forward and achieving key performance targets.
- 3.4 Effective scrutiny needs to add value. A well planned and timely work programme enables Overview and Scrutiny Committees to be involved at the right time and in the right way, and ensure their involvement is meaningful and can influence the outcome.
- 3.5 Members often have a number of topics suggested to them and are therefore required to **prioritise** matters for consideration. The Scrutiny Framework sets out the following factors to be considered:
- Public interest: concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen.
 - Ability to change: priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence.
 - Performance: priority should be given to areas in which the Council and Partners are not performing well.
 - Extent: priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or a large part of the city.
 - Replication: work programme must take account of what else is happening to avoid duplication.

Looking Ahead

- 3.6 Overview and Scrutiny Committees will identify a 'menu' of issues (including policy development, policy review, issues of accountability and statutory functions) at the start of the year. Each Committee should then regularly review their 'menu' and decide which issues need to be examined further, and how that work would be undertaken. Scrutiny activities should be thorough and undertaken in a timely manner.

Scrutiny Methods

- 3.7 There are a range of ways to undertake scrutiny. The approach for 2023-24 enables flexible scrutiny and outlines a shift from monthly formal meetings to a combination of approaches. The Committee will choose the most effective scrutiny method to achieve the desired aims and objectives for each topic.
- 3.8 Based on Statutory Guidance published in 2019, different scrutiny methods include (but are not limited to):
- A single item, or items, on a committee agenda – this method fits more closely with the “overview” aspect of the Scrutiny function and provides limited opportunity for effective scrutiny. It is most appropriate for specific issues where the committee wants to maintain a watching brief.
 - A single item meeting, either as the committee or a more limited number of Members. It has the capacity to enhance the previous option by taking evidence from a number of witnesses.
 - A task and finish day - provided that these are properly focused, they ensure Councillors can swiftly reach conclusions and make recommendations and are effective even for complex topics.
 - A task and finish review – this is an enhancement of the previous option being held over four or six meetings spread over a limited number of months.

Education, Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 3.9 The Committee's Terms of Reference is to fulfil its functions as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning:
- Education and children's social care.
 - The safety and wellbeing of children, including safeguarding with statutory partners.
 - The needs of all children and young people, families and carers (children's services).
 - Oversight of the Children's Trust.
 - Early years health and wellbeing.

- Looked after children, corporate parenting.
- Special Education Needs and Disability.
- School improvement, school places and travel to and from school.
- Youth engagement and youth services.
- Development of 14-19 career pathways, enterprise and entrepreneurship in Birmingham schools.

3.10 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee dealing with education matters shall include in its membership the following voting representatives:

- a) Church of England diocese representative (one).
- b) Roman Catholic diocese representative (one).
- c) Parent Governor representatives (two).

3.11 The Committee is chaired by Cllr Kerry Jenkins, and its membership comprises Cllrs: Jilly Bermingham, Debbie Clancy, Adam Higgs, Des Hughes, Morriam Jan, Jane Jones, and Shehla Moledina, and statutory co-optees: Sarah Smith, Justine Lomas, Osamugi Ogbe and Rabia Shami.

4 Work Programme 2023-24

4.1 Appendix 1 sets out the topics the Committee will consider over the next few months, and also outlines future items for consideration.

4.2 The Committee may decide to add further items to the work programme during the course of the year. When considering this, the Committee is advised to consider where it can best add value through scrutiny, and how it can prioritise topics for consideration based on the Scrutiny Framework referred to in 3.5.

4.3 The Council's latest [Forward Plan](#) may assist Members in identifying future topics. The following reports are of particular relevance to this Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

| ID Number | Title | Proposed Date of Decision |
|------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| | None at present. | |

4.4 Overview and Scrutiny Chairs are advised to maintain regular engagement with Cabinet Members to enable flexibility to be built into the Overview and Scrutiny work programme, so as to respond to the Council's policy priorities in a timely way.

4.5 The Task and Finish Group undertaking the Child Criminal Exploitation Inquiry has gathered evidence from the Children's Trust, Police and Crime Commissioner, Violence Reduction Partnership, Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust, West Midlands Police, and the Community Safety Partnership.

5 Any Finance Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

6 Any Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report.

7 Any Equalities Implications

- 7.1 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2 The protected characteristics and groups outlined in the Equality Act are Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage and Civil Partnership; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion and Belief; Sex, and Sexual Orientation.
- 7.3 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them during work programme development, the scoping of work, evidence gathering and making recommendations. This should include considering how policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share a relevant protected characteristic; whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate; whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Birmingham; and whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people are being realised.
- 7.4 The Committee should ensure that equalities comments, and any recommendations, are based on evidence. This should include demographic and service level data and evidence of residents/service-users views gathered through consultation.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1: Education, Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme 2023-24.

9 Background Papers

- 9.1 [Birmingham City Council Constitution](#)

Birmingham City Council Overview and Scrutiny Framework April 2021

Education, Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023/24

| Month | Item/Topic | Aims and Objectives | Scrutiny Method | Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer | Other Witnesses | Additional Information and Outcome* |
|-------|---|---|---|---|--|---|
| July | Children and Young People's Travel Service Corporate Priorities: 8 | Assurance to the Committee and public that everything is on track for September. Overview of KPIs, performance and finance. Policy development including travel services for under statutory school age and over 16 year olds, including how decisions are made and what criteria is used. Independent travel training, including the views of young people, and how this has been informed and received by the children, parents and carers. Concerns that have been identified and how these will be addressed. The Committee to agree any comments / recommendations. | Committee Meeting single item: 19 July 2023 at 10am Venue: Committee Rooms 3 and 4, Council House Paper/Presentation Deadline: 10 July 2023 | Adrian Weissenbruch, AD, Children and Young People's Travel Service | Stephen Hughes, Interim Deputy Operations Manager Marie Nicely, Travel Assist Supervisor Abdulahdi Mehraj, PMO Manager John Wood, Change Manager Linda Sutton-Howard, IT Project Manager | Outcome Update / Assurance: The Committee were updated on the preparation for the Children and Young People's Travel Service for start of the 2023/24 academic year and independent travel training. It was agreed that a workshop will be held for members. |
| July | SEND Tribunals Corporate Priorities: 8 | To update members to on the process for SEND tribunals including data. | Committee meeting single item: 19 July 2023 at 10am | Helen Ellis, Director, SEND and Inclusion | Kate Harvey, Head of SEND Resolution, SENAR | Agreed at Committee meeting October 2022 (CMIS Link). |

| Month | Item/Topic | Aims and Objectives | Scrutiny Method | Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer | Other Witnesses | Additional Information and Outcome* |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | The Committee to agree any comments / recommendations. | Venue: Committee Rooms 3 and 4, Council House Paper/Presentation Deadline: 10 July 2023 | | | Update: The Committee were updated on the SEND tribunal process. It was agreed that a workshop will be held for all members. |
| July | Performance Update Corporate Priorities: 8 | Report on Children's Services Improvement Plan and data. The Committee to agree any comments / recommendations. | Committee meeting standing item: 19 July 2023 at 10am. Venue: Committee Rooms 3 and 4, Council House. Paper/Presentation Deadline: 10 July 2023 | Sue Harrison, Strategic Director, Children and Families | Fayth Skeete, Head of Strategic Governance & Planning | |
| September | Performance Update (10.05 – 10.35) Corporate Priorities: 8 | The report will include statutory and non-statutory services, and how performance contributes to efficiencies, such as interims and permanent appointments. The Committee to agree any comments / recommendations. | Committee meeting – standing item: 6 Sep 2023 at 10am Venue: Committee Rooms 3 and 4, Council House | Sue Harrison, Strategic Director, Children and Families | David Fallows, Head of Performance, Business and Commissioning Intelligence | |

| Month | Item/Topic | Aims and Objectives | Scrutiny Method | Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer | Other Witnesses | Additional Information and Outcome* |
|-----------|---|---|--|--|--|---|
| | | | Paper/Presentation Deadline: 25 Aug 2023 | | | |
| September | Financial Challenges - Scrutiny Contribution to the Budget Savings and Recovery Plan (10.35 – 11.50) Corporate Priorities: 8 | To consider the implications of Equal Pay and the Medium Term Financial Plan for the Committee's work programme including agreed savings for 2023/24. | Committee meeting – standing item: 6 Sep 2023 at 10am Venue: Committee Rooms 3 and 4, Council House Paper/Presentation Deadline: 25 Aug 2023 | | | |
| October | Hidden Children Corporate Priorities: 8 | To update the Committee on hidden children including exclusions, suspensions, part time timetables, elective home education, findings of the Inquiry on period poverty regarding attendance during their periods, and information on children that have and have not returned following the pandemic. To consider information and data on the equalities implications of hidden children. | Committee meeting standing item: 18 October 2023 Presentation/Paper Deadline: 9 Oct 2023 Venue: Council House, Committee Rooms 3 and 4 at 10am | Sue Harrison, Strategic Director, Children and Families | Razia Butt, Director, Children and Families Steve Howell, Head Teacher, City of Birmingham School Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP) – in person or written information. | Duty on local authorities to progress recommendations linked to improving school attendance in Government White Paper by Sept 23 Working together to improve school attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk) |

| Month | Item/Topic | Aims and Objectives | Scrutiny Method | Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer | Other Witnesses | Additional Information and Outcome* |
|---------|---|---|--|---|-----------------|--|
| | | The Committee to agree any comments / recommendations. | | | | |
| October | Performance Update Corporate Priorities: 8 | Report on Children's Services Improvement Plan and data The Committee to agree any comments / recommendations. | Committee meeting standing item: 18 October 2023 Presentation/Paper Deadline: 9 Oct 2023 Venue: Council House, Committee Rooms 3 and 4 at 10am | Sue Harrison, Strategic Director, Children and Families | TBC | |
| October | Financial Challenges - Scrutiny Contribution to the Budget Savings and Recovery Plan Corporate Priorities: 8 | | Committee meeting standing item: 18 October 2023 Presentation/Paper Deadline: 9 Oct 2023 Venue: Council House, Committee Rooms 3 and 4 at 10am | Sue Harrison, Strategic Director, Children and Families | TBC | |

| Month | Item/Topic | Aims and Objectives | Scrutiny Method | Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer | Other Witnesses | Additional Information and Outcome* |
|----------|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| November | Update on the review of short breaks when it has been completed (TBC) Corporate Priorities: 8 | To provide an update on the review of short breaks The Committee to agree any comments / recommendations | Committee meeting single item: 29 Nov 2023 Presentation/Paper Deadline: 20 Nov 2023 Venue: Council House, Committee Rooms 3 and 4 at 10am | Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive, Children's Trust | David Stringfellow, Director, Children's Trust | |
| November | Performance Update Corporate Priorities: 8 | Report on Children's Services Improvement Plan and data. The Committee to agree any comments / recommendations. | Committee meeting standing item: 29 Nov 2023 Presentation/Paper Deadline: 20 Nov 2023 Venue: Council House, Committee Rooms 3 and 4 at 10am | | | |
| November | Financial Challenges - Scrutiny Contribution to the Budget Savings and Recovery Plan Corporate Priorities: 8 | | Committee meeting standing item: 29 Nov 2023 Presentation/Paper Deadline: 20 Nov 2023 | | | |

| Month | Item/Topic | Aims and Objectives | Scrutiny Method | Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer | Other Witnesses | Additional Information and Outcome* |
|--------------|--|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| | | | Venue: Council House, Committee Rooms 3 and 4 at 10am | | | |
| January 2024 | Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Partnership (BSCP) Annual Report Corporate Priorities: 8, 10 | To update the Committee on the children's safeguarding arrangements in the city. | Committee meeting single item: 17 January 2024 Presentation/Paper Deadline: 8 Jan 24 Venue: Council House, Committee Rooms 3 and 4 at 10am | Penny Thompson, Independent Chair, BSCP | Simon Cross, Business Manager, BSCP | |

*Outcome: This will be populated once the item/topic has been completed. It will identify the added value and impact.

Menu of Issues for Consideration

The following items had been identified as potential topics for future consideration. This approach enables the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to remain flexible and respond in a timely manner to emerging issues.

This is a live work programme. New items may be added, or items removed during the course of the year. Proposed aims and objectives as well as scrutiny methodology may also be subject to change.

| Item/Topic | Proposed Aims and Objectives | Proposed Scrutiny Method | Additional Information |
|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Early Years | | | Project to increase uptake of early years and profile of families and data on variation of uptake: BCC Early Years - NESTA project Birmingham City Council |

| Item/Topic | Proposed Aims and Objectives | Proposed Scrutiny Method | Additional Information |
|---|--|--|------------------------|
| Child Poverty | | | |
| Regular update on SEND | | | |
| TBC: Visit for Committee to a school to inform future work. | | | |
| UNICEF Child Friendly City | | | |
| Post 16 | | This could be a joint piece of work with the Economy & Skills OSC | |
| School Attainment (may be February or March) | | | |
| SEND Commissioner | To provide an update on the work of the SEND Improvement Board and identify key areas across SEND services where further work is needed. | | |
| SENDIASS | To provide an update on the Improvement plan to meet statutory compliance. | | |
| Draft SEND Sufficiency Strategy | | | |
| Children's Travel Service Workshop | | A workshop to be held in the Council House. This could include stalls and meeting the team, and a roundtable discussion. | |
| A Data Workshop | | A workshop to be arranged for later in the year. | |

Scrutiny Method Options:

Committee meeting - single item, Committee meeting - single theme, Committee meeting – standing item, Task and Finish Group (outline number of meetings), On location, Other - (describe).

Corporate Priorities, Performance and Outcomes

Corporate Priorities 2022 – 26:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Support inclusive economic growth | 11 Increase affordable, safe, green housing |
| 2 Tackle unemployment | 12 Tackle homelessness |
| 3 Attract inward investment and infrastructure | 13 Tackle health inequalities |
| 4 Maximise the benefits of the Commonwealth Games | 14 Encourage and enable physical activity and healthy living |
| 5 Tackle poverty and inequalities | 15 Champion mental health |
| 6 Empower citizens and enable citizen voice | 16 Improve outcomes for adults with disabilities and older people |
| 7 Promote and champion diversity, civic pride and culture | 17 Improve street cleanliness |
| 8 Support and enable all children and young people to thrive | 18 Improve air quality |
| 9 Make the city safer | 19 Continue on the Route to Zero |
| 10 Protect and safeguard vulnerable citizens | 20 Be a City of Nature |
| | 21 Delivering a Bold Best in Class Council |

Information on the Corporate Priorities, Performance and City Outcomes was reported to the Education and Children's Social Care OSC in June 23:
[Document.ashx \(cmis.uk.com\)](https://cmis.uk.com/Document.ashx)