

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

**RESOURCES O&S COMMITTEE – PUBLIC MEETING**

**1400 hours on Thursday 10 December 2020 (On-line Meeting)**

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**Present:**

Councillor Sir Albert Bore (Chair)

Councillors: Muhammed Afzal, David Barrie, Meirion Jenkins, Yvonne Mosquito and Paul Tilsley

**Also Present:**

Councillor Tristan Chatfield, Cabinet Member, Finance and Resources

Rebecca Hellard, Interim Chief Finance Officer

Alan Layton, Interim Head of Financial Planning

Jayne Bowles, Scrutiny Officer

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny

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**1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST**

The Chairman advised the meeting to note that this meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site ([www.civico.net/birmingham](http://www.civico.net/birmingham)) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Lisa Trickett.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

**4. ACTION NOTES – 12 NOVEMBER 2020**

(See document 1)

Cllr Tilsley pointed out that at the last meeting he had raised a query regarding the transition of the Brussels Office and this had not been recorded in the action notes. The Chair undertook to pick this up with the Scrutiny Office after the meeting and

request a note from the Cabinet Member or European & International Team. It was suggested that this be discussed in more detail under the financial monitoring item.

The following updates were given:

- Update on implementation of the ERP system – timing to be advised;
- Neighbourhoods Directorate – CIPFA “deep dive” – the report should be finalised and sent to the Cabinet Member in the next day or so and it should therefore be possible to programme this for the January meeting;
- Bid for Government funding for sports and leisure centres – still awaiting bidding guidance and as soon as that comes out the bid is ready to go;
- Responses to the actions from the last meeting had been circulated, however to date no responses had been received to the letters sent to Cabinet Members;
- Engagement of Agency Workers, Consultants and Interims – work has started and is progressing well and the intention is to bring a report to either the January or February meeting;
- Update on Athletes Village Revised FBC – due to go to Cabinet in February;
- The CityServe Review is now due to go to Cabinet in March;

**RESOLVED:-**

- A note on the position with regard to the transition of the Brussels Office to be requested;
- The action notes of 12 November 2020 were agreed.

## **5. FINANCIAL MONITORING 2020/21 – MONTH 7**

(See document 2)

Councillor Tristan Chatfield, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, Rebecca Hellard, Interim Chief Finance Officer, and Alan Layton, Interim Head of Financial Planning, attended for this item.

The following points were highlighted:

- Despite the impact of Covid, the position continues to improve with a net underspend of £5.4m, primarily driven by Adults but significant improvements can be seen in a lot of directorates, eg Neighbourhoods;
- It is worth also noting the additional £44m from Government to alleviate pressures during the winter;
- With regard to Capital, they are beginning to highlight key projects and a £149.3m underspend is forecast, the majority being re-profiling mainly due to Covid, with a small amount of savings as well;
- The two areas highlighted around the re-profiling are disabled facilities grants of £3m, which is purely Covid-related, and the other one is the Paradise development re-programming due to Covid-related operational issues;
- There is work being done around the establishment with workforce controls and improving governance with the aim of reducing spend on agency;
- With regard to savings delivery, £19m of £27m has been achieved, with £4.3m at risk, so edging towards delivered stage and a significant improvement on previous years.

In the course of the discussion, and in response to Members' questions, the following were among the main points raised:

- The Chair once again commented on the improved format and consistency of the reports, making it easier to pick up issues from month to month;
- With regard to Capital and the slippage on the Paradise development, it is understood that the project is still within the original business plan forecast;
- Cllr Tilsley provided clarification on the matter raised under the action notes and his request for a note on the position regarding the Brussels office going into the future and what support we will get from other partners in the enterprise;
- Cllr Chatfield agreed to get more detail and provide a response;
- In response to a question about the Covid situation and whether the Government funding puts us in a surplus position, Members were told that technically it does, but the funding has been given to us to cover costs as we go into the winter period and it is likely a large proportion of it will have to be used to mitigate effects.

**RESOLVED:-**

- A note to be provided on the position regarding the Brussels office;
- The report was noted.

## **6. SCHOOL DEFICITS**

(See document 3)

The following points were made:

- It was noted that no officer had been able to attend due to a clash with Schools Forum, however the report addressed the issues which had been raised at the previous meeting;
- The Month 7 report indicates a £9m deficit, which is a worrying position, however Members agreed the report provided reassurance that measures are in place which appear to indicate that we are doing what we can to try and contain the situation;
- No further issues were raised and the Chair expressed the Committee's thanks to officers for providing the report.

**RESOLVED:-**

The report was noted.

## **7. COMMERCIAL PROPERTY INCOME RISKS**

(See document 4)

The following points were made:

- The slides included in the agenda papers had been taken from a presentation given to the Economy and Skills O&S Committee in November;

- Members agreed that the information provided was clear and dealt with concerns raised at the last meeting in relation to the impact of Covid on commercial property income;
- No further issues were raised and the Chair expressed the Committee's thanks to officers for providing the information.

**RESOLVED:-**

The report was noted.

**8. PLANNED PROCUREMENT ACTIVITY REPORT**

(See document 5)

There were no issues raised with regard to this month's report.

**RESOLVED:-**

The report was noted.

**9. WORK PROGRAMME**

(See document 6)

The Chair confirmed that the items discussed under the Action Notes item would be scheduled into the work programme.

**RESOLVED:-**

The report was noted.

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Noted.

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

None.

**12. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None

**13. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

**RESOLVED:**

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

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The meeting ended at 1444 hours.