

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

**Monday, 1 March 2021 at 5.30 pm in the This meeting will be held via MS Teams -
Link to View via You Tube to follow.**

From the Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey

Item	Business
1	Apologies
2	Minutes (Pages 3 - 8) The Committee is asked to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on
3	Impact of Covid 19 (Pages 9 - 12) Report of the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital
4	Delivering Thrive - a New Performance Management and Improvement Framework (Pages 13 - 16) Report of the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital
5	Work Programme 2020-21 and Development of Work Programme for 2021-22 (Pages 17 - 20) Report of the Chief Executive and the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

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GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, 30 November 2020

PRESENT: Councillor John Eagle (Chair)
Councillor(s): S Ronchetti, J Wallace, D Bradford, L Caffrey, P Foy, T Graham, S Green, M Hall and J Simpson

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): D Duggan, J McClurey, R Mullen, I Patterson, J Raine and K Wood

CR34 MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2020 be approved as a correct record.

CR35 DELIVERING THRIVE - APPROACH TO A NEW PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The Committee received a report and presentation on the proposals to develop a new Performance Management Framework. The Council's current performance framework has been in place for several years and has evolved over time, however, there is a need to develop a new framework which better reflects the priorities of the Council and which enables it to manage performance and demonstrates delivery against Thrive priorities.

Any new framework also now needs to respond to the impacts of Covid-19 and the future shape and role of the Council. While it is clear a new approach is needed, some elements of the existing approach that work and are valued could evolve within the new framework.

A new framework would have a range of underpinning features and also have a greater focus on impact and:

- Is shaped around the characteristics needed to enable people to thrive
- Is simple, responsive, timely and meaningful indicators
- Empowers employees to drive improvement
- Incorporates qualitative and quantitative approaches
- Recognises locality-based approaches, population and community level interventions to improve
- Considers partnerships, communities and aligned to key policies and strategies such a Health and Well-being Strategy, schools, housing outcomes
- Is intelligence led, using evidence to learn and improve
- Considers how to incorporate a wider range of data, for example linking to a 'Data Hub' approach

- Measures the health of the organisation (balanced scorecard approach)
- Enables members to scrutinise performance and see the impact of decision making

The Committee were presented with some examples of what other authorities are doing. The Committee were advised that further engagement will take place across the Council with both elected members and services and that this is seen to be crucial to the development of a fit for purpose framework.

The Committee were asked to consider the following questions and their comments would be used towards the development of the framework, the Committee were also advised that further consultation would take place with Councillors in the coming months.

The Committee suggested that it was important that everyone has a shared understanding of what Thrive is meant to be about and that our staff see how what they do fits into the Thrive.

It was suggested that it is easier for Councillors to grasp how they contribute to thrive. It was also noted that it is not just about quantity of outputs it is about quality of outputs. We need to think about how do we know what we are going makes a difference.

It was noted that with regards to the notion of management and improvement plans and reduced resources we need to make sure that we concentrate resources where we can and that a management and improvement plan is focussed on what we can do. It was suggested that we look at it in three elements which can be put in a simple way to it can be reported effectively.

It was suggested that we need to look at this in a way that is statistical but that it also qualitative, for example when we talk about employee absenteeism in percentages it can end up putting more pressure on.

It was noted that there had been a very positive discussion and at this point we really don't know what is going to happen with the budget, it was suggested that it would be good to put teams together with different specialisms in order to become more effective so that council departments aren't working in silos. It was also suggested that whatever process is agreed should be tested and that if possible staff should have some involvement in the process / consultation and it was felt that it was important to have IT involved.

It was suggested that there should be a timeframe on how long the system should work for.

It was noted that if we have a performance management framework that highlights areas where performance is not doing so well, then it is at this point scrutiny can come in and ask questions about why and what could be done to improve e.g. service changes, posts etc.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That any further comments can be submitted to officers over the coming months; and
 - (ii) That councillors can contact officers if they wish to be further involved in the development of the framework

CR36 IMPACT OF COVID 19

The Committee received a presentation and report on the Impact of Covid-19 in Gateshead and the work the Council had undertaken to mitigate some of the impact. The Council is currently still in the response phase but is looking at the recovery phase and lessons learned.

At the beginning of the pandemic the Council undertook both household and business surveys in order to gather real time information but also to engage with local communities.

The household survey found that:

- Significantly more people from deprived ward are worried about Covid-19
- There is an overall upward trend towards increased car use
- There has been a 40% increase in online shopping across all age ranges and more people reported shopping with local businesses or at least the same as before the outbreak
- In the most deprived wards, a greater proportion of respondents are furloughed
- More than a third have no savings or investments irrespective of whether people are in full or part time work, this could be the result of low pay or higher living costs/debt
- There is a heightened anxiety, particularly amongst young people and those of working age
- There is an increase in proportion working from home, particularly younger people
- Many expect to work more from home in future leading to a potential reduction in demand for office space and therefore a reduction in developer contributions and business rates

The business survey found that:

- There was a steep decline in turnover in quarters 1 and 2
- 1 in 3 businesses struggled to obtain materials, good and services during lockdown and sourced alternative suppliers or solutions
- Businesses are reluctant to pass increased costs onto customers, which is affecting profitability and may impact on future viability
- Ongoing uncertainty is weighing heavily on confidence and investment decisions
- Some businesses perceive there are not enough people with the skills they are looking for – 40% have reported shortages
- Other businesses need help to navigate the recruitment process

The Council has seen an increased demand on resources from local people and businesses, It is expected that the council wide financial impact will be around £50m, this includes additional expenditure for support to the adult social care and the purchase of PPE, there has also been a loss of income / reduced income due to the closure of leisure facilities and catering services being reduced. The figure is also based on a projected loss of council tax and business rates.

Staff have been mobilised to work from home safely and effectively, staff shortages have had to be managed some due to self-isolation and shortage of staff trained to cover key services.

Public Health have led the response with support from the emergency and resilience team. The response has included the creation of shielding hub and responding to increase demand for services. The approach has been prioritised using information from Business Impact Assessment and Business Continuity Plans and re-directing resources where they were needed.

Buildings have been made Covid Safe by reducing the numbers allowed and enhanced cleaning. IT have increased systems capacity through additional licences and servers with over 700 office phones diverted to officers' own phones. Committee and other meetings are being held virtually and making sure the public has the ability to access remotely. Procurement have been making sure there is a continuity of supplies and where possible extending contract arrangements in order to support local businesses, the Council and TGHC now has 12 weeks stock of key items.

Over 6000 requests for support were received and were managed via the community hubs, 300 individuals and 50 corporate groups have applied to offer support to the Council's response, 70% of volunteers supported Age UK with telephone befriending, shopping for and delivery essential items and delivering hot meals and food.

The Council has managed the business grant fund of nearly £40m issuing 3608 grants. A 12 month business rates holiday has been granted to over 1000 businesses. There are a number of examples of joint working across the council. Over £22m has been provided in council tax support dealing with over 22,000 claims. The Council is also managing the £500 self-isolation grants, there has been over 15000 applications since October, however, a significant number of people are not eligible but may need support. 89,000 telephone enquiries have been received between April and September including 6700 to the telephone hotline. The Answer rate is 93%. 21,000 plus general enquiries emails with an average turnaround of 1.5 days. There has been an increase in online payments, fly-tipping reports, garden waste subscriptions etc. A case management system has been developed and used successfully for the hubs along with other digital solutions and online systems for grant applications, pavement licences to support pubs and restaurants and compliance for business.

The Council has recognised that the pandemic has had an impact on employees in different ways and there has been a fantastic response from employees throughout. Most employees are working from home if they can. Work is continuing with trade

unions to make sure workplaces are Covid-safe in accordance with government guidance. Every clinically extremely vulnerable employee has had an individual risk assessment to ensure their needs are being properly managed. Suitable work has also been identified wherever possible for those in areas that have needed to be closed.

In recognition of the impact on staff on line support sessions have been set up which are open to all and bespoke sessions have been delivered to those working in care settings. An FAQ has been set up for employees with signposting and guidance on managing physical and mental health. Regular communications have been circulated, including messages from the Leader and the Chief Executive.

Planning ahead an 'individual employee personal discussion' template has been developed and an employee health and wellbeing needs assessment survey 2020 is being developed.

Work is ongoing across the Council to identify future needs, with a ways of working of focus, service reviews will be undertaken which will focus resources on priorities. Community Wealth building planning principles will be building ins areas such as procurement including the importance of local supply chains and local economic growth.

RESOLVED - That further update report will be submitted to the Committee in March 2021.

CR37 DEVELOPMENT OF OSC WORK PROGRAMMES

The Committee received a report on the current position with regards to the OSC Work Programme for 2020/21 and proposals for the 2021/22 work programme development. The Committee were advised that further consultation would take place with members of the OSC in March 2021 for the 2021/22 Work Programme.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the position with regards to the 2020/21 Work Programme be noted.
 - (ii) That the proposals for the 2021/22 Work Programme be agreed.

Chair.....

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TITLE OF REPORT: Impact of COVID -19

REPORT OF: Darren Collins, Strategic Director, Resources and Digital

SUMMARY

This report sets out an overview of an update to be provided to Committee on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on areas relevant to its remit.

Background

1. Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee is receiving reports setting out the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on areas relevant to its remit.
2. The early impact of the Covid-19 pandemic was reported to Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2020. This provided an overview and also outlined the impact of the pandemic on performance against the five Thrive pledges.
3. The ongoing response and need to recover is being monitored and the Committee received an update at their last meeting on 30 November 2020. It was agreed that the Committee would receive a further update on 1st March. 2021

Overview of response

4. The global Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact throughout the world. There have been considerable implications for everyone in the UK including Gateshead, where it continues to affect the lives of all who live and work here. It is clear the impact, particularly the long term issues, will be far reaching for many years to come.
5. The Council implemented action from the beginning of the pandemic putting in place measures and steps to respond to the issues that emerged early on and throughout. The Council has continued to prioritise responding to the pandemic and its impact. It has focused on supporting people in Gateshead, particularly the most vulnerable, some of whom has required support for the first time. It has also provided help to businesses who have and continue to be adversely affected. This has included the administration of various grants and financial support as well as providing advice and signposting.
6. The issues and impact have required a collaborative approach working in partnership with a range of organisations and communities and volunteers who

have come together in response from strategic resilience planning to delivering food and prescriptions to those unable to leave their home.

Impact and informing future

7. While the Council has been responding to the short term impacts, the full picture in regard to the longer impacts is not yet fully understood. Services will continue to identify impacts and learn lessons to inform activities and the future ways of working.
8. The Council has made many changes to adapt to working and delivering services differently to ensure local people get the support they need. Lessons learnt from the early response have helped the Council to continue to respond during the increase in Covid-19 infections. Services are also looking at how to retain what has worked well as well as seeking to understand what may be needed as part of recovery and beyond.
9. The Committee will receive a presentation which will provide a more detailed overview of the impact of the pandemic on areas relevant to this committee including:
 - Update on the impact and continued response
 - Lessons learnt
 - How this is changing how we work in the future
10. Key areas are highlighted below, though further detail will be covered in the presentation:
 - Impact and response to increased demand from local people and businesses for financial support including Council Tax Support, Council Tax Hardship Fund, Winter grants and over 11,000 payments made to businesses
 - Customer experience developments to ensure local people can effectively and efficiently contact Council services - with 156,000 general calls since March
 - The Covid - 19 pandemic accelerated the IT adoption and change program as demand for technologies that enable new ways of working has increased significantly. Software such as Microsoft Teams, which has enabled the organisation to communicate and collaborate via video, is completely different to the position a year ago. To meet this demand, the key lesson has been to confirm the plan for new ways of working enabled by technology is the right approach. However, to maximise the opportunities presented by new technology there is a need for further investment
 - Supporting employees throughout the pandemic from frontline workers to those working at home, responding to different needs and ensuring safe working environments through risk assessments and activities
 - Employees have been able to access counselling, 'wobble room' and guidance on looking after mental health and wellbeing while the Individual Employee Personal Discussion tool has been rolled out to understand the different needs of employees and how they can be supported
 - A Health and Wellbeing Survey is currently underway with employees and the findings will be used to inform future developments

- A focus on agile working for the future, when employees can return to the workplace, and having solid foundations in place for different ways of working on a permanent basis
- Support through the hubs which have received over 7,500 requests for assistance including food, utilities and routine shopping
- Working with volunteers and community groups to support vulnerable and isolated people. Over 500 individuals offered to volunteer while a range of initiatives have been undertaken, most recently through the Christmas and winter period providing Christmas Hampers, gifts and a joint Gateshead and Newcastle Spirit of Christmas Campaign
- Supporting the Public Health response to the pandemic with implementation of resilience and business continuity planning
- Learning lessons from resilience work with partners across the Northumbria area and nationwide as well as implementation of more virtual communications and ensuring that continued incident responses adhere to health and safety guidance pertaining to Covid -19
- Financial impact on the Council through increased expenditure as well as lost / reduced income
- Supporting schools through the Services for Schools commercial services with continued engagement with schools and responding to emerging issues

Recommendation

11. It is recommended that Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive the presentation and:
 - consider the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the areas relevant for this committee
 - identify any areas, they feel they require more detail about or feel require further scrutiny

Contact: Lindsay Murray

Ext: 2794

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TITLE OF REPORT: Delivering Thrive - a New Performance Management and Improvement Framework

REPORT OF: Darren Collins, Strategic Director, Resources and Digital

SUMMARY

This report sets out the proposed approach to performance management and improvement following engagement. The views of members of the Committee will be sought on the draft framework.

Background

1. Performance Management is used by local authorities to identify how well they are delivering services and making a positive difference as well as where improvements need to be targeted. It aims to help services get from where they are to where they need to be and inform decision in an efficient and effective way.
2. The Council's current performance framework has been in place for several years and has evolved over time. There is a need to develop a new framework that better reflects the priorities of the Council and which enables it to manage performance and demonstrate delivery against Thrive priorities.

Development

3. The development of a new approach began by agreeing some underpinning guiding principles which aims to develop a framework that:
 - Is shaped around the characteristics needed to enable people to thrive
 - Is simple, responsive, timely and meaningful indicators
 - Empowers employees to drive improvement
 - Incorporates qualitative and quantitative approaches
 - Recognises locality-based approaches, population and community level interventions to improve
 - Considers partnerships, communities and aligned to key policies and strategies such as the Health and Well-being Strategy, housing and schools
 - Is intelligence led, using evidence to learn and improve
 - Considers how to incorporate a wider range of data, for example linking to a 'Data hub' approach
 - Measures the health of the organisation (balanced scorecard approach)
 - Enables members to scrutinise performance and see the impact of decision making
4. It was also clear that any new framework needed to be able to respond to the impacts of Covid-19 and the future shape and role of the Council.

Engagement

5. Engagement across the Council both elected members and services has been a really important element of the development of a new approach to performance. Partner involvement has also been developing recognising that delivery of Thrive requires a range of partners working together to achieve better outcomes and address inequality. Engagement has been phased with this first seeking views on how to develop a new approach while more recently this has been used to seek views on a draft framework. Engagement has included:
6. Member engagement to date has taken place through:
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committees (November and December 2020)
 - Portfolio (November and December 2020)
 - Corporate Advisory Group (February 2021)
 - Chairs and Vice Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Committees (February 2021)
7. Officer engagement has included:
 - Senior Leadership discussions with Corporate Management Team and Service Directors
 - Officer workshop
 - Employee focus groups
 - Trade Unions
 - Service / thematic discussions
8. The Council is also engaging with its partners including health partners and the Voluntary and Community Sector and the Health and Well-being Board.
9. Members will receive an overview of the outcome of engagement however key comments made so far include:
 - Thrive was the overarching policy for the framework supported by the Health and Wellbeing Strategy with a strong emphasis on tackling inequalities.
 - The framework should provide members with a tool to challenge and scrutinise how priorities are being delivered and their impact
 - To be used to inform decision making about interventions and resource deployment.
 - Consider how to draw on and make best use of existing data ensuring this is robust and accessible to a range of audiences
 - Must be meaningful to all employees being clear on how everyone contributes to Thrive
 - Analysis is a key element with interpretation of the data with qualitative and quantitative elements and enabling a 'deeper dive' into areas
 - A greater emphasis on inequalities was needed so understand the areas of greatest need and whether we are closing the gap
 - Highlighting both areas for improvement as well as achievements
 - Presentation a step forward but could be clearer still
 - Greater engagement of partners as this develops

10. This has been used to inform development and refine the new framework. Further engagement is also planned as, crucially, part of new approach will include review and reflection and continued engagement will be a key feature of this.

The new framework

11. The purpose the new Performance Management Framework is to:

- Enable the Council to know whether the it is achieving its priorities. (Thrive Policy)
- Ensure that the Council's resources are being deployed effectively
- Make both short and long term effective decisions
- A whole systems approach – embedded in our partnership working to deliver the Health and Wellbeing Strategy

12. The new approach will be firmly based on Thrive, but framed within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the six policy objectives, which aim to address inequalities in Gateshead. This will also help to ensure that resources are being deployed in the areas that matter to local people.

13. Implementation is envisaged to be from April, though will be an iterative process recognising that the new approach requires culture change including greater ownership corporate performance across the organisation and empowerment of employees to drive improvement and better outcomes.

14. The Committee will receive a presentation setting out the outcome of the engagement to date and the revised draft framework.

Recommendation

15. Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be asked to consider and provide views on the following:

- What are your views on the new framework?
- How will this help your scrutiny role?
- How would you like to be involved and engaged as this develops further into implementation and then review?

Contact: Lindsay Murray

Ext: 2794

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TITLE OF REPORT:	Work Programme 2020-21 and Development of Work Programme for 2021-22
REPORT OF:	Sheena Ramsey, Chief Executive Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services & Governance

Summary

This report is set out in two parts. The first part sets out the current work programme for Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2020-21 and the second part details the current position / next steps in the development of the work programme for this OSC for the municipal year 2021-22.

2020-21 Work Programme

1. As a result of the uncertainties arising in relation to the Covid -19 pandemic, along with the pressures on services that this brought and having regard to the Council's approach to the development of a new performance framework, a more flexible approach was adopted for scrutiny during 2020-21.
2. This approach recognised the demands on services and the Council as a whole but, at the same time, has ensured that we have been meeting our statutory obligations to provide an effective scrutiny function and scrutiny has concentrated on delivering work that is of genuine value and relevance to the work of the wider Council.
3. The work of this OSC was refocused on the current Covid-19 related priorities and the impacts of that alongside a couple of other priority issues for the Council / partners which are already being progressed elsewhere to avoid placing any additional burdens on service areas and a reduced programme of meetings was agreed.
4. The Committee's current work programme is set out at Appendix 1 and any changes to the programme have been highlighted in bold and italics for ease of identification.

Development of 2021-22 OSC Work Programmes

Background

5. At its December 2020 meeting the OSC acknowledged that the ongoing uncertainties relating to the Covid 19 pandemic, the lack of clarity on the outlook for local government finance alongside the strong possibility that OSC meetings will continue to need to be held remotely for some time to come, meant that the approach to developing the OSC work programmes for 2021-22 was likely to have to be similarly flexible and proposals were likely to be indicative.

6. It was also noted that a continued focus on the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic in some form or another would be likely to be a major area of focus for the OSCs at key points during 2021-22.

Current Position

7. With this in mind, an initial consultation with OSC Chairs and other elected members and officers on the proposed priority issues for the new work programmes for 2021-22 was carried out between 1 and 15 February 2021.
8. It was highlighted that that any suggestions for the work programmes should focus on priority issues that would support the Council's Thrive agenda and add value, taking account of the five priority areas outlined in the budget consultation; the development of the Council's new Performance Framework; the Gateshead Strategic Needs Assessment and the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
9. At this OSC meeting on 2 March 2021 there will be an opportunity for the OSC to comment on / discuss emerging issues for this OSC / put forward additional issues for consideration.

Next Steps

10. Subsequently, in line with usual practice, partner organisations will be consulted on the emerging issues for each OSC for 2021-22 with a view to OSCs considering any feedback/ additional suggestions / endorsing their respective work programmes at their June 2021 OSC meetings and referring them to Council for agreement.

Recommendations

11. The Committee is asked to:-
 - a) Note the work programme for 2020-21;
 - b) Comment on the emerging issues for this OSC's 2021-22 work programme / highlight any additional issues for consideration.

Contact: Angela Frisby

Ext: 2138

Draft Corporate Resources OSC Work Programme 2020/21	
7 September 2020 10.00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress update on the impact of the Covid - 19 pandemic • Update on end of year performance for 2019-20
30 November 2020 10.00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid-19 Update – focusing on lessons learned and how this is impacting / has impacted on / changed the way the work of the Council is progressed in the longer term. • Performance Framework – PowerPoint Presentation – setting out the principles and some examples to facilitate a discussion about what members would like from a new framework. • Development of OSC Work Programmes – setting out the process for developing the work programmes for 2021-22
1 March 2021 10.00am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid-19 Update - focusing on lessons learned and how this is impacting / has impacted on / changed the way the work of the Council is progressed in the longer term • New Performance Framework – share with OSCs and seek approval. • OSC Work Programmes 2021-22 – Emerging Issues

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