

**REPORT UNDER RULE 2(vi) OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES****Report by Councillor Gary Hewson, Chair of Performance Scrutiny Committee**

Madam Mayor – Members of the Council:

It gives me great pleasure to present to you this evening a flavour of the business that has passed through the Performance Scrutiny Committee since my last report in January 2020. This report like all of our Performance meetings since the beginning of 2020 has been conducted online via Zoom. Personally I am tiring of this form of conducting our activities and look forward to hopefully meeting up in Committee Room 1 at City Hall or sitting around that table at the Historic Guildhall in the not too distant future to resume to some form of normality. The 10 months covered in this report have as you might expect been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with two meetings (March and May) cancelled due to the virus. Since meetings resumed in July the focus has largely been on the core business of the committee, namely financial and operational performance as well as receiving portfolio holder reports. It's so vital to keep a regular update from the Members of the Executive who across their Portfolios have ownership of all the management of the Council's business on our behalf. Brief details of the Performance Scrutiny workload are provided with this report.

**Committee Activity**

Performance Scrutiny Committee has held nine meetings since my last report which has included reports in the following areas:

- Portfolio Holder Reports, including those aligned to Vision 2020 and Vision 2025.
- Quarterly financial monitoring to provide members with a summary of actual income and expenditure compared to the revised budget and appropriate allocation of any surpluses to reserves.
- Performance update reports to ensure regular monitoring of the Council's operational performance as a key component of the Local Performance Management Framework. This included a review of 2019/20 including our COVID-19 response and quarter 1/2 report in November.
- A quarterly review of the Strategic Risk Register - what improvements or issues have been identified.
- A report on Treasury Management and Actual Prudential Indicators as a requirement of the Council's reporting procedures under regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003.
- An annual report detailing progress made by the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee.
- Income and arrears monitoring reports providing updates to members on the position with regard to amounts of monies owed to the City Council as at 1<sup>st</sup> April.
- Revenues and Benefits performance updates providing members with an update on performance in the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service.
- A report on the financial and performance position of the Housing Repairs Service.
- An update on the Modern Slavery Charter and Statement Review.
- Fire Safety Update.

- Our Befriending service.

The Committee received minutes from one sub-committee and one sub-group:

- Budget Review Group Minutes
- Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee Minutes

### Portfolio Holder Reports

As members will be aware Vision 2020 was concluded in the spring, being followed by our new strategic plan, Vision 2025. Due to the break in meetings between February and July fewer reports than would normally have been expected have been considered by the committee. However, Performance Scrutiny Committee has received the following reports from portfolio holders in respect of progress towards our strategic priorities:

- Let's reduce inequality – With Cllr R Kirk's report in January 2020 (Vision 2020)
- Let's deliver quality housing – With Cllr Nannestad report in January 2020 (Vision 2020)
- Let's enhance our remarkable place – With Cllr Bushell's report in February 2020 (Vision 2020)
- Portfolio Holder, Customer Experience and Review – With Cllr C Burke's report in February 2020 (Vision 2020)
- Portfolio Holder, Our People and Resources – With Cllr R Metcalfe's report in August 2020 (Vision 2025)
- Let's drive inclusive economic growth – with Cllr Murray's report in October 2020 (Vision 2025)

### Financial and Performance Reports

The committee was able to scrutinise all financial reports, including quarterly financial monitoring, Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators and Income and Arrears monitoring reports as normal.

However, due to pressures on service areas, resulting in many services having to change the way their services were being delivered, or in some cases supporting delivery of new or other services, quarterly performance monitoring has also been reported differently. Instead of the usual Quarter 4 report, we received a short summary of the usual performance indicators but were also able to scrutinise the council's response to the pandemic from a performance perspective. One of the key services provided during the pandemic was the Befriending Service, and the committee received a separate report reviewing this area.

Very few services areas undertook 'business as usual' during quarter 1 and therefore the decision was taken to provide a joint report for quarters 1 and 2 and this was received by the committee in November. It included further comment on our response to the pandemic, as well as the usual performance data where available with a full explanation of how this had been impacted by COVID-19. The report covered a broader range of services than usual and highlighted how many services and staff had gone 'above and beyond' during the lockdown period and beyond.

## Modern Slavery, Charter and Statement Review

Members received an update on the revised Modern Slavery statement and our compliance with the modern slavery charter. The report set out the council's commitment to recognising and reducing risk around modern slavery across the council.

## Fire Safety Update

This report updates members of the committee on City of Lincoln Council's actions progress on fire safety in the light of Hackitt review following the tragic events at Grenfell Tower. It confirmed that we have no combustible cladding on any of our buildings, outlined the proactive work taken over the past year on overall fire safety within the council's housing stock and provided an update on the progress made in addressing the issues and proposals arising from the Hackitt review.

## Budget Review

The role of Performance Scrutiny Committee was to scrutinise in detail the robustness of the proposed budget options and Council Tax for the 2020/21 as well as the Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2020-2025. This was undertaken in a committee format by Budget Review Group which is a cross party sub-group of Performance Scrutiny Committee, made up of nine non-executive members.

## Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee looks in more detail at matters relating to housing and our housing stock. Since January 2020, the sub-committee has considered matters relating to Lincoln Tenants Panel, an update on Housing Officers, Tenancy Sustainment, Housing Planned Work, details of Housing Performance, the Befriending Service, and Voids and the Homeless and Rough Sleepers work which effects both the HRA and General Fund accounts I would like to thank the Councillors and Tenants Panel members who always supply a lively input into the Committee and to the Portfolio Holder who tends to acquaint his self as a spectator and sometimes a contributor with useful information for members at meetings Also thanks to Officers for the contribution of sought after information for members for scrutiny

## Looking Ahead

As with all matters relating the work of the city council we are in uncertain times. We are all adapting to new ways of working and conducting business and evidence of this has been provided to the committee in the reports received over the past six months or so.

Last year we introduced our new performance management system, PIMS, and it had been hoped to develop this over the past year. However, progress was put on hold as officers focused on the Befriending Service and as a result further development of PIMS is now proposed over the coming year.

A final few words to give my thanks to members on the Performance Committee for their commitment and passion at each and every meeting, and to officers for providing performance and other reports for us to hopefully have the opportunity to make informed, if not decisions, recommendations to Executive as sometimes critical overseers. It is worth noting that in cases when some of the decisions that have not had the opportunity of

scrutiny which some may class as controversial an explanation should be considered as a smooth way forward.

**Councillor Gary Hewson**  
**Chair of Performance Scrutiny Committee**