

During consideration of the report the following main points were made –

- Members were informed that the number of temporary workers by Directorate has been steady in the past year, however there have been some peaks in holiday periods. Work is taking place to look at the number of temporary workers that have been with the Council for over 12 weeks, and reviewing this to ascertain if there is a permanent requirement for these posts
- E&R Public Realm are currently employing the most temporary staff, and work is taking place with management to establish if the requirement is permanent, or is just covering for annual leave/sickness
- The analysis of service requirements for agency workers has led to departmental targets being set, with a view to reducing to a long term annual target of 10%. A medium term target is 11.7%, and current progress against this target is c.12.69%
- A set of principles has been adopted to support the reduction of agency workers
- Offers and contracts have been moved onto the Council's online recruitment system, and both are now sent out at the same time as a verbal offer is made. DBS checks will also be moving onto the online system
- It was stated that it is anticipated the numbers of agency staff would reduce in the next few months, and there is a commitment at CMB to ensure that the numbers are reduced
- Reference was made to the fact that the individual agency staff targets per department should be included in future reports
- In response to a question it was stated that a new shorter version of the sickness procedures policy would hopefully be implemented shortly, and managers would be able to manage sickness more effectively
- Members expressed the view that future reports should be more detailed and have comparative figures from previous years and include departmental targets, and explanations if these had not been met and remedial measures that are being put in place

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted and future reports include comparative figures from the previous year, and explanations if these had not been met, together with remedial measures that are being put in place to address these
- (b) That future reports provide information detailing the targets/actual use of agency staff per department, in addition to those detailed for the Council overall

The Chair thanked Councillor Hull, and Alan Grant for attending

147 PERFORMANCE /SCRUTINY - PRESENTATION (Item C2)

Councillor Andy Hull, Executive Member Finance, Performance and Community Safety was present for discussion of this item, and was accompanied by Roger Dunlop, Director of Strategy and Change, and Annette Hobart, Strategy and Change

During consideration of the presentation (copy interleaved), the following main points were made –

- Members noted examples as to how other Local Authorities consider performance information

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- Members were informed that pre-decision scrutiny could include aligning this function to the Council's priorities, outcomes and policy framework, early involvement in future decisions or policy changes, and not necessarily just reviewing the final report going to the Executive. Pre decision scrutiny can also act as a sounding board for policy changes and implications, representing the voice of communities
- How to choose scrutiny topic – this could include reviewing the Forward Plan, key corporate plan commitments, upcoming consultations, intelligence from performance reporting framework
- Centre for Public Scrutiny – this supports local authorities and other public bodies to effectively scrutinise their organisation, and to hold Executives to account on behalf of the Public
- Good scrutiny guide 2019 refers to the importance of maintaining a watching brief on the local area, and how local people experience, and influence, the services delivered to them by public bodies and others. The guidance makes specific reference to member's ability to access a digest of information about the area. Using evidence and gaining expertise is essential to enable scrutiny to make informed judgements on what it should be looking at
- Key information for scrutiny committees – Centre for Public Scrutiny guide lists a range of information as key to enabling scrutiny to perform its role – the Council plan, Partnership Plans and strategies, the Council's overall budget and policy framework, and the medium term financial strategy, quarterly performance reports, quarterly finance figures, risk registers, complaints digests/information, external improvement plans and activities. The Council's own research and insight, information from benchmarking clubs, including CIPFA, and the LGA, and information from Ombudsman investigations can be utilised
- The model adopted by PPS for the Universal Credit scrutiny proved very effective in hearing from partners, staff and residents, getting out into the community, and visiting services to see how things worked first hand. Scrutiny could also adopt a similar approach, where there are concerns about performance or lack of progress. Scrutiny could also look to move beyond the formal scrutiny structure and consider holding meetings in different venues, hearing from staff or residents about specific services etc.
- Should be core standards for performance reporting to scrutiny – reports should be clear, concise and avoid jargon, information should be based not just on data but context. Benchmarking data should be used, where and when this is available, customer complaints and satisfaction data should also be referred to where this is available. In addition, where performance is off track the report should address the key questions, and relevant senior officers from key services should attend to respond to queries, and take away any issues. Issues should also be followed up in a timely manner, with a full and helpful response
- What else should be considered – best practice examples from Centre for Public Scrutiny, and examples from other Council's indicates the scope for better 'triangulation' of data. Consideration could be given to introducing a digest of information, easily accessible to scrutiny and the public, bringing together a wider set of information on key priorities, including performance, financial data and risk. There should be better use of charts and diagrams, though telling the 'story' is important, closer working with Executive Members, and Senior Officers, to inform pre decision scrutiny. In addition, ways of working could be looked at to make scrutiny feel more important
- Reference was made to the possibility of an interactive dashboard which would enable the organisation to be managed more effectively by officers and offer better scrutiny to the Committee
- It was stated that culture change was important to improving performance

- The view was expressed that reports needed to have figures for previous years in order that comparisons on achieving targets can be made
- It was stated that with regard to Childrens Services Committee there may be a need to have variations to reflect those indicators where the Council could not have a direct impact. Another example is the crime statistics where the Council can only have a small impact on performance
- Reference was also made to the need in the sickness indicators there needed to be data on the numbers of employees per department so that effective comparisons can be made between departments
- Discussion took place as to the sickness levels in E&R and that future reports should make clear the issues where targets that are not being met, and an explanation of these and strategy for improvement

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted and that the Committee discuss further at a future meeting the presentation of performance indicators to future meetings, with a view to making recommendations for change
- (b) That in future reports detailing sickness levels, particularly in E&R, where there are targets not being met, an explanation be given as to the reasons why, and the strategy in place for improvement

The Chair thanked Councillor Hull, Roger Dunlop and Annette Hobart for attending

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QUARTER 1 WELL RUN COUNCIL/COUNCIL TARGETS (Item C3)

Councillor Andy Hull, Executive Member Finance, Performance and Community Safety was present and was accompanied by Roger Dunlop, Director of Strategy and Change, and Annette Hobart, Strategy and Change

During consideration of the report the following main points were made –

- The targets for corporate performance indicators for 2019/20 have been agreed
- In 2018/19 96.6% of Business Rates were collected, and in quarter 1 of 2019/20 25.3% of Council Tax was collected, which is as expected, and is on target for year end
- Noted that the number of visits to the Customer Care Centre, and the number of phone calls through Contact Islington has continued to reduce. The number of online transactions in Quarter 1 was below target, however, overall the longer term trends show a reduction in both calls and visits, and a move to more online transactions
- The Council is now looking to develop Contact Islington into a customer transaction centre, which handles all routine calls, and basic transactions, on behalf of Council services
- Sickness amongst Council staff has decreased in the past 12 months, and the trend is expected to continue, following measures that have been put in place
- Reducing agency staff –agency staff currently account for 12.8% of the workforce, and this has increased from the same period last year
- In relation to ensuring fair progression for BME and disabled staff, data for the end of Quarter 1 indicated that BME staff accounted for 20.2% of the top 5% of earners across the Council, a slight improvement on last year. The proportion of Disabled staff in the top 5% of earners remains similar to last year at 5.8%
- Councillor Hull informed the Committee that two additional indicators in relation to carbon emissions will be included in the Quarter 2 figures
- Members noted that Scrutiny Committees would be consulted on determining PI's at an early stage for the next municipal year

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- A Member referred to the fact that affordable home is not a true PI and that this should be amended to social housing for rent. Councillor Hull stated that he would investigate this
- A Member expressed the view that the information on agency staff was different in two of the reports that evening and information presented should be presented consistently
- A Member also referred to the fact that the number of people killed/seriously injured on streets should be included in future reports
- Reference was also made to the fact that there should be a PI that measures how responsive the Council is to the public
- Discussion took place as to the removal of the major works PI in relation to Partners and that there is a need, given the level of complaints from residents about Partners, and that there needed to be some measure put in place to hold Partners to account. It was stated that if the Housing Scrutiny Committee wished to propose an appropriate PI in this regard this could be considered
- Reference was made to the high levels of stress prevalent in E&R and the reasons for this, and that this would be reported on in more detail in the sickness report presented in January
- A Member expressed concern that the number of transgender hate crime figures were omitted from the crime PI's and it was stated that these should be included in future reports
- Discussion took place as to the alcohol and drug abuse targets and that these did not seem likely to be met

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted
- (b) That the Director of Public Health be requested to provide more information to Members on the rationale of the targets for alcohol and drug abuse and whether these were realistic, and reasons as to why they are not being met
- (c) That Councillor Hull be requested to look at a new definition for the PI on affordable homes, as referred to above, and an additional PI on responsiveness of the Council to the public
- (d) That future reports include transgender hate crime details
- (e) That consideration be given to the inclusion of a PI on keeping streets safe, detailing the numbers of people seriously injured/killed on Islington streets
- (f) That the Housing Scrutiny Committee consider the provision of a new definition of a suitable PI for Partners, and inform Councillor Hull of any suggestions

The Chair thanked Councillor Hull, Roger Dunlop and Annette Hobart for attending

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QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE STATISTICS - CRIME (Item C4)

Councillor Andy Hull, Executive Member Finance, Performance and Community Safety was present, together with Keith Stanger, Service Manager Community Safety and Crime Reduction, and Catherine Briody, Head of Youth and Community Services

During consideration of the report the following main points were made –

- The Safer Islington Partnership has led on 5 priority areas – Crimes involving young people, Hate Crime and ASB, Drugs and Adult Offending, VAWG, Domestic Abuse, and Exploitation and Extremism
- Overall crime reduction of 5%, while crime across London rose 4% in the same period. There has been a small increase in violent crime of 0.4%

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- Significant reduction of over 60% in theft snatch offences, as a result of the co-ordinated partnership response. Continued reductions in serious youth violence, youth violence, gun crime, knife crime, and knife crime victims under 25
- 27% reduction in robbery offences in the past year, following a peak in 2017/18. The Police have robbery cars available, allowing for faster identification of perpetrators
- Domestic violence offences continue to rise by 7%, in line with a London wide increase, and positive outcomes for victims remains a challenging area
- There has been a small increase of 6% in racist hate crime, but there have been reductions in all other forms of hate crime
- Action Plan from the scrutiny on school exclusions is being overseen by a Task and Finish Group, to address the connection between exclusions, offending and exploitation
- Despite a reduction in violent crime types, the challenges remain with serious incidents in Islington, and continued fatalities across London. There is increased complexity of the issues that young people are presenting with, including trauma, due to abuse and neglect, and early childhood experiences, inability to self-regulate, and risk of criminal exploitation. There has been a further reduction in first time entrants, and improved custody and reoffending rates amongst YOS people
- Work has been taking place re: violence against women and young people, and there has been a recent improvement in the DA crime sanction and detections rate, but work to hold more perpetrators to account remains a priority for the VAWG Strategy Board
- Anti-social behaviour and hate crime – Islington Community MARAC 2018/19 review is now complete, achieving excellent results on supporting 46 high risk vulnerable victims of crime. Now considered one of best CRM's in England, with Islington Learning Disability Partnership now referring victims of Hate Crime
- Creation of a wide ranging action plan, following a multi-agency workshop on dealing with the complex street population issues in Stroud Green Road, to be rolled out borough-wide
- Plan in place to continue to increase the number of young people undertaking Hate Crime training, and delivery of a successful Hate Crime Awareness week – 13-20 October
- Over 80 confirmed Safe Haven locations, with many more venues that are interested in becoming safe havens
- There has been ongoing multi-agency work around hot spots across the borough that are recording higher rates of crime, and ASB, compared to the borough average. This includes the Finsbury Park Area, Archway/New Orleans, and Cally, amongst others
- Adult Offending and Drugs - Camden and Islington Drugs Strategy 2018/21 aims to deliver response to rising drug issues. Co-ordinating a range of activities to tackle crime and ASB in the Finsbury Park tri-borough hotspot, mainly linked to drug dealing and use. Islington's integrated Offender Management scheme supported 119 service users with 49 prolific offenders, successfully exiting the scheme, due to reducing the risk of reoffending and taking up education, training and employment opportunities. MOPAC have recognised Islington's approach as one of the best in London. Community Rehabilitation Company contract ending in March 2020, with migration into the National Probation Service
- Community Safety – Exploitation and Extremism – established a multi-agency board and action plan, working closely with the Human Trafficking Foundation to produce materials for communities in Islington, identifying good practice from across London, through the pan London MDS Board. A Council web page is under development, extended training roll-out to front line staff, etc.
- Prevent – funding now confirmed for 2019/20, but has been cut considerably with only the Brave (gangs), and Small Steps (Far Right) projects remaining. Prevent

training delivered to Islington Grand Mentors, where grandparents mentor young people leaving care, and 180 caretakers have been upskilled in Far Right awareness. It was noted that far right stickers/leaflets have appeared across the borough. Planning is underway for post March 2020 to source new funding streams, or products. Increasing the knowledge of, and how to report Far Right activities for both front-line staff, and members of the Public will be taking place

- Public Protection – Trading Standards – Letting agent fees are now banned, and they now have to be a member of a client money protection scheme. Test purchasing is continuing, usually leading to licence reviews, where sale of alcohol occurs, or prosecution, where it is a knife
- Public Protection – Environmental Health - the total number of food businesses as of May 2019 is 2,339, with 88% of all types currently broadly compliant, an increase on last year from 84%. Programmed inspections resulting in 62 hygiene improvement notices have been served on 36 businesses and there have been 4 voluntary closures of businesses
- Members stated that the next PI report should contain detailed information in relation to Domestic Violence and Hate Crime
- Reference was made to the improved situation with regard to Pentonville Prison and relationships with the new Governor
- A Member expressed the view that the quoted small 6% in racist hate crime was not a small increase in her view
- It was noted that safeguarding work is taking place and a lot of work is taking place with community groups to capacity build
- Reference was made to the recent prosecutions of County Lines gangs in Islington, and that discussions were needed with the Police on sharing of information
- Work is taking place on DV to raise awareness
- It was stated that details of the Youth Safety would be circulated when available
- Discussion took place as to the Archway/New Orleans gangs and that Councillor Hull should provide further information on this to Councillors Chapman, Poyser and appropriate ward Councillors
- A Member also referred to the problems with delivery drivers committing traffic offences, urinating in the street in the Nags Head area, and these issues needed to be addressed. It was stated that an updated report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee
- Discussion also took place as to the street population in the Finsbury Park area and that the minutes of the Finsbury Park workshop should be circulated to the Committee
- A Member referred to the problems caused by the Deliveroo, etc. drivers in relation to road noise and lack of toilets for use. She added that this issues is prevalent across London and should be raised with London Councils

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the presentation be noted
- (b) That minutes of the Finsbury Park Workshop be circulated to Members of the Committee
- (c) That the issue referred to above in relation to Deliveroo etc. be referred to London Councils for discussion
- (d) That a report be submitted to a future meeting relation to the issue raised above, in relation to delivery drivers in the Nags Head area
- (e) That the next report to the Committee on Crime statistics include more details on Hate Crime transgender crimes, and Domestic Violence
- (f) That information be provided to Councillors Chapman, Poyser and relevant Ward Councillors on the Archway/New Orleans gang

(g) That details of the location of Safe Havens and Youth Safety bulletin be circulated to Members

The Chair thanked Councillor Hull, Keith Stanger and Catherine Briody for attending

150 **FINANCIAL MONITORING (Item C5)**

Councillor Andy Hull, Executive Member Finance, Performance and Community Safety was present for discussion of this item

During consideration of the report the following main points were made –

- It was noted that there is a forecast General Fund overspend of £0.504m, without taking into account the corporate contingency budget of £5.080m
- The Housing Revenue Account is forecast to break even over the year
- It is forecast that £119.206m of capital expenditure will be delivered in 2019/20, against the 2019/20 capital budget of £144.205m
- The agreed 2019/20 budget included savings totalling £13.775 for the 2019/20 financial year. Of these £9.559m are currently on course for delivery, £0.375m have an 'Amber' risk, and £2.5m Red savings are considered high risk, and £1.341m Black savings are now considered delayed/undeliverable, in the current financial year. Replacement savings for the undeliverable savings are being sought, and these will form part of the 2020/21 budget report
- Members expressed the view that future reports to the Committee should indicate the details of the Red and Black savings, detailing reasons why these had not been met and compensatory measures being put in place
- Reference was made to the deficit in E&R and whether this is a structural deficit that need rectifying in the base budget. Councillor Hull stated that this was being looked at and that he would assess the position before any changes are made to the structural budget
- It was also stated that the reasons for the high level of staff suffering stress in the E&R Department needed to be investigated
- A Member enquired whether there were any plans to electrify the vehicle fleet and it was stated that about 50% of the fleet was now electrified, however there were difficulties at present with replacing refuse vehicles as the technology was not available for these currently to be replaced reliably
- Discussion took place as to progress on capital spend on the HRA and that more detailed information on this would be provided in future report

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted
- (b) That future reports to the Committee include details of the Red and Black savings, as referred to above, indicating the reasons why savings are not being delivered, and remedial measures being put in place to address these
- (c) That in a future report on sickness to the Committee the figures for E&R include
 - (1) a breakdown of sickness figures for both management and manual staff, details of the levels of stress amongst staff and why this is so high
 - (2) details of sickness procedures that are in place in the department
 - (3) details of whether the overspend in E&R is a structural overspend and whether an amendment is proposed for the budget to rectify this

The Chair thanked Councillor Hull for attending

151 **WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20 (Item C6)**

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

152 MONITORING REPORT (Item)

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

153 IT STRATEGY - PRESENTATION (Item J1)

Councillor Andy Hull, Executive Member Finance, Performance and Community Safety was present for this item, and was accompanied by Jon Cummings, Interim CIDO

During the presentation, copy interleaved, the following main issues were raised –

- Members were informed of the proposed roll out of software and systems
- Changes and strategy to improve the future – continuous update – a growing proportion of software, including windows, is now on continuous update, which means that incremental changes are provided more frequently, as opposed to ‘big bang’ versions
- Move to cloud/software as a service – Council are deliberately moving to Cloud where software is provided as a service, and updates undertaken by the vendor, at scale, in a manner that is generally invisible to the Council
- Enterprise and Application Planning – Under the new IDS structure is the Enterprise Planning Group. This group is tasked with documenting and agreeing to a 3 and a 5 year plan for enterprise technology, and an associated investment plan. Adhering to this plan is key in reducing/managing technology debt, avoiding nasty surprises, and ensuring the cyber security of the organisation is maintained at an acceptable level. Where compromises are required, decisions can be taken informed by fact, and in a culture of active risk management

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the presentation be noted
- (b) That a sub - committee of Policy and Performance be established with a view to ensuring the Digital Strategy progress is to the timescales envisaged, and is ‘rolled out’ effectively across the Council. It was noted that Councillors Champion, Poyser, O’Sullivan and Gantly indicated that they were willing to be Members of the sub-committee
- (c) That additional Members, to those indicated above, wishing to serve on this sub-committee notify their names to Democratic Services

The Chair thanked Councillor Hull and Jon Cummings for attending

The meeting ended at 10.20 p.m.

CHAIR