

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

At a Meeting of **Overview and Scrutiny Management Board** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Friday 19 July 2013 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor P Stradling in the Chair

Members of the Committee:

Councillors B Alderson, R Bell, D Boyes, J Chaplow, K Henig, A Hopgood, P Lawton, H Liddle, R Todd, J Turnbull and S Wilson

Faith Community Representative:

Revd K Phipps

Co-opted Members:

Mr A J Cooke and Mr D Kinch

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Armstrong, A Batey, R Crute, D Hall, J Lethbridge, T Nearney, A Shield and M Simmons.

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitute Members in attendance.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5 Items from Co-opted members or interested parties

There were no items from Co-opted members or interested parties.

6 Medium Term Financial Plan (4), Council Plan and Service Plans 2014/15 - 2016/17

The Board considered a joint report of Corporate Director, Resources and Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on the development of the 2014/15 Budget, the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP 4) and Council/Service Plans (for copy see file of minutes).

The Head of Finance (Corporate Finance) informed the Board that the financial outlook for the Council continues to be extremely challenging. Key changes were in the content of the Chancellors March budget announcement, stating a further 1% cut for 2014/15 and the employer national insurance contributions rebate would cease in 2016/17.

It was reported that as of 31 March 2013, £93m of savings have been delivered for 2011/12 and 2012/13. Excellent progress had been made towards the £20.9m savings target for 2013/14, but estimated additional savings of £25.9m would be required for 2014/15 and a further £62.7m for 2015/16 to 2016/17 would be required to reach the revised £202m total savings target.

Councillor Hopgood commented that much of the significant savings that had been made were due to the implementation of the Unitary Council and asked how much of the current figures related to Local Government Reorganisation. The Head of Finance (Corporate Finance) responded that there was a £21m savings target for 2009/10 and 2010/11 for LGR based on major restructures. It is an impossible exercise to identify in the MTFP process from 2011/12 which savings were due to Local Government Reorganisation.

In response to a comment that the Council would forward some of the New Homes Bonus directly to a single pot of money, to which individual LEP's would bid, it may be that Durham would not receive a share equal to what it had put in. Councillor Hopgood suggested that the LEP representative on the Authority should be aware of this to be in a position to challenge and therefore the Head of Planning and Performance would relay this to the representative.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

7 County Durham Partnership Update

The Board considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on the issues being addressed by the County Durham Partnership (CDP) including summaries from the Board, the five Thematic Partnerships and all Area Action Partnerships (AAP's). The report also included updates on other key initiatives being carried out in partnership across the County (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor R Bell referred to paragraph 17 and 18 of the report and queried where the money would be coming from to fund the 'Big Local' programme in Bishop Auckland. Clare Marshall, Principal Partnerships and Local Councils Officer responded that the AAP's had been working in partnership with the Big Lottery and Community Development Foundation to secure external funding to benefit areas in Bishop Auckland and Shildon.

Feedback would be provided to Cllr Bell after the meeting to advise of the reasons why Bishop Auckland had been chosen, and whether it would be applicable for other areas to apply.

Councillor D Boyes suggested that Area Action Partnerships share best practices and that the information circulated to coordinators should also be shared with AAP members.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

8 Information update from the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

The Board considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update of overview and scrutiny activity between June 2013 and July 2013 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

9 Notice of Key Decisions

The Board considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services which provided a list of key decisions which were scheduled to be considered by the Executive (for copy see file of minutes).

The Committee Services Manager informed the Board of the items that had been removed from the previous notice while being considered by Cabinet.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.