

Report of the Director for Customer & Business Support Services

2014-15 Monitor 2

Purpose

1. This report analyses the latest performance for 2014/15 and forecasts the outturn position for the services falling under the responsibility of the Corporate and Scrutiny Management Committee.

Financial Analysis

2. The council's net General Fund budget for 2014/15 is £124,186k and the net budget for the areas covered by this report is £19,414k.
3. Following on from previous years, the challenge of delivering savings continues with £11m to be achieved in order to reach a balanced budget. £2,539k of these savings fall within the services covered by this report. The forecasts outlined in this report reflect a prudent view of how that challenge is currently being met.
4. All budgets are reviewed on a quarterly basis and some are monitored monthly. Those that are monitored monthly are high value or high risk areas. The latest review has not identified any major variations that require action or mitigation and all savings proposals are progressing. Overall the areas covered by this report are forecasting a small underspend of £61k.

Performance Analysis

5. The performance delivery is analysed against the key delivery priorities of the Council Plan and the cross-cutting organisational priority themes. This report therefore covers
 - Create jobs and grow the economy
 - Core competencies

Create Employment

6. The number of Job Seekers Allowance claimants has fallen to 1% from 1.2% in Q1 and is below national and regional averages of 2.2% and 2.9% respectively. However, York has a higher proportion of part time workers than both regional and national averages at 33.2%, compared with 26.3% and 25.3% respectively. The 5th jobs fair held at York Railway Institute in September attracted 1,023 residents looking for jobs and career advice. The event, which was organised through partnerships between the Council, York Learning, Job Centre Plus and Learning City York sought to bring together employers to offer advice and the chance to speak face to face to businesses about real employment opportunities in the city.

Older People in Employment

7. The Council's Economic Inclusion Fund has been used to commission the Experience Work 50+ programme designed to help older people into work. The pension age for women is increasing to 65 in 2018 and 66 for all in 2020 meaning people will either choose or need to stay in work for longer. 92 people have completed the programme and 36.6% have gained employment, are self employed or gone on to further training.

Supporting Businesses

8. York has received funding through the Leeds City Region and York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Enterprise Partnerships, including £26m through the Local Growth Fund, £400k through the Business Growth Fund, and potential further resource through the £1bn West Yorkshire + Transport Fund. Within the last quarter two successful bids have been made through the North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership Business Growth Programme: First Steps Day Nursery were awarded £40,000, and Monk Bridge Construction Company were awarded £90,000. Including these there have now been 13 successful bids across both LEPS with £2.3 million total spend, £400k total grant and 71 jobs.

Supporting young People with high support needs into Employment

9. The Route to Success Training Programme for Young People includes providing support to those with high support needs to gain employment. This programme has been successful with 30 students completing and 15 of those being High Support Needs learners. Performance is expected to increase in the 2014/15 academic year, with 22 High Needs Support students recruited so far.

High Speed Rail Developments

10. There has been significant national investment announcements and plans around rail in recent months, providing sizeable opportunities for York and its strong rail sector over the next few decades. September saw the announcement that the proposed national high speed rail college is coming to Yorkshire, with Doncaster selected to co-host the training centre with Birmingham. After York missed out on its bid to host the college, the city backed Doncaster's bid to train at least 2,000 apprentices for the planned HS2 project, and will be working with Doncaster closely in 2015 to ensure help shape the curriculum appropriately for York-based employers. High Speed 2 and High Speed 3 proposals continue to develop, with intense lobbying from various cities and regions. York specifically has been championing investment which will benefit the city through the East Coast Mainline Authorities and Connected Cities group at party conferences; as well as directly with government. Finally, Rail North, a body taking forward a collective approach to rail in the North, shortlisted bidders for the running for current Northern and Transpennine franchises. Over the next 5 years more than £1 billion will be spent on the rail network in the north.

Core Competencies

Improve the whole customer service experience

11. In Quarter 2 West Offices reception dealt with 2,082 customers a month, up from 1,691 a month in Quarter 1. The Council has installed a customer satisfaction kiosk known as 'cmetrix' in the customer centre at West Offices, to coincide with National Customer Service Week. To help customers with hearing impairments the Hearing Loop facilities have been made more visible, after a number of visitors were unaware of their availability. To help visitors with visual impairments, investigations have started into implementing a British Sign Language interpretation tool. A visual impairment accessibility audit will be carried out in autumn to ensure all necessary design adjustments are in place, such as painting the edges of desk dividers a contrasting colour to the floor.

City of York Trading Company

12. The company is now providing the council's full casual workforce and expanding its services to schools and other organisations. The company has recently reported a year on year increase in turnover and profit, and will be returning its first dividend to the council as shareholder for activity in 2013/14.

Roll out a new offer to young people on apprenticeships, work experience placements and internships

13. The Council continues to promote and support fully funded apprenticeships and a review of the current apprenticeship scheme will take place. The Council currently work with the University of York offering a winter and summer internship programme. The summer programme is a student internship programme offering 4 to 12 week placements for current students. The winter programme is a graduate programme offering 8 week placements.

The Equalities Peer Challenge

14. A key ambition in the Council Plan is to achieve excellence against the Equalities Framework for Local Government and the Council are currently at the Achieving level. Local Government Association Peer Challenge Assessors will be reviewing how equalities are embedded within both the organisation and its work with partners during January 2015.

Improve feedback from staff and create a wellbeing offer

15. A corporate learning and development prospectus has been launched with a range of courses and other learning and development opportunities. The Supporting Staff through Change Programme has been implemented. The Council has been shortlisted for a Living Wage Champion Award, which recognises employers that have made contributions to communities and industries by implementing the Living Wage.

York CVS

16. As part of the process of transforming public services, City of York Council has been working with the voluntary, community and faith sector and social enterprises in York, to find out what they currently do and what they might want to do more of. Officers have attended Voluntary Sector Forums of organisations working with children, young people and families, older people and people with long-term conditions and people concerned with the environment.

Update on progress on Single Equality Scheme

17. Further to the Single Equality Scheme Update and Refresh report submitted to scrutiny on 8th September, members requested further statistical information be provided which is attached below.

Consultation

18. There has been consultation with Trade Union groups on the ongoing implications of the council's financial situation and performance improvement issues.

Corporate Priorities

19. The information and issues included in this report demonstrate progress on achieving the priorities set out in the Council Plan.

Implications

20. The financial implications are covered within the body of the report. There are no significant human resources, equalities, legal, crime and disorder, information technology, property or other implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

21. The risk management processes embedded across the council continue to contribute to managing the risk issues associated with major projects and key areas of service delivery.

Recommendations

22. As this report is for information only there are no specific recommendations.

Reason: To update the Committee on the latest finance and performance position for 2014/15.

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Kay Crabtree	Report Approved	√	Date	<i>19 December 2014</i>
Wards Affected: <i>All</i>				

For further information please contact the authors of the report

Annexes

Annex 1 - Workforce Equality Score Card

Glossary of abbreviations used in the report:

BaME – Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic

CVS – Council for Voluntary Service

FTE – Full Time Equivalent

HR – Human Resources

LEP's – Local Enterprise Partnerships

LGBT – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, And Transgender.