
Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny Committee 14th September 2015

Report of the Director for Customer & Business Support Services

2014/15 Outturn

Purpose

1. This report analyses the 2014/15 outturn for the services falling under the responsibility of the Corporate and Scrutiny Management Policy and Scrutiny 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. The outturn shows an under spend on these areas of £211k. The main areas of underspend relate to vacant posts in ICT, procurement and finance, along with a range of other minor underspends including additional income from schools.
3. Following on from previous years, the challenge of delivering savings continues with £12m to be achieved in order to reach a balanced budget. £2,539k of these savings fall within the services covered by this report.

Performance Analysis – 2014/15 outturn

4. 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 Jobs & Grow the Economy

5. Achievement: A feasibility study has been completed for York Central (the city's largest development site), and a memorandum of understanding signed with Network Rail. Unlocking and maximising the development opportunity through the wider York Central site, would unlock 1100 homes and 85,000m² of grade A office space, as well as building on the National

Railway Museum's existing offer to realise a world class museum attracting 1m footfall a year. Projections demonstrate this will deliver up to £254m in Gross Value Added per annum and a net 4,750 jobs on completion.

6. Achievement: The Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership (LEP) confirmed further devolved funding through the government's Employer Ownership Pilot to create a £17.5 million skills service for local businesses. The aim of the funding is to provide funding to small and medium sized businesses to enable them to source the skills solutions they require to develop and grow. An additional £30k investment to help cut red tape and enable local small businesses bid for council contracts has been identified in the emergency budget in line with the priority set out in the draft Council Plan
7. Achievement: The first year of the Super-Connected City (SCC) programme has seen the delivery of significant projects, funded principally by the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS):
 - Wifi and Public Transport. 80x buses had free wifi successfully installed in the last quarter of 2014/15
 - Public Buildings Connectivity and Wifi. The installation of wifi and improved connectivity (principally Gigabit fibre connections) has been completed to 28 public buildings: the Art Gallery, Guildhall, 11 sheltered Housing Schemes and 15 Community Hubs.
 - City Centre Wifi. Phase 1 of the city centre wifi has been enhanced by the recent collaborative working with York University to extend the access to Eduroam via the city connect wifi platform.
 - Connection Vouchers. The York Voucher Connection Scheme has always been seen as the mainstay of the national SCC programme. Over the first 12 months, 23 vouchers have been delivered allowing these Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) to more than double their broadband speeds. For businesses supported by the voucher scheme/ grant the increased
 - competition has lowered average monthly revenue costs for broadband service from £460 to £75.
8. Challenge: In York average weekly gross earnings of residents have fallen (from £520 to £479) but nationally pay has increased (to an average £521 a week). Regionally pay is static. In line with the approach proposed in the draft Council Plan, the Council is working with businesses to understand and address this trend, while also promoting the benefits of paying the Living Wage

Our Organisation

9. Achievement: New speech server telephony software has been introduced which improves the experience of callers using automated speech recognition. The technology could also be used to allow customers to navigate themselves to information they require without having to talk to a member of staff and opportunities for further deployment of this technology are being explored.
10. Achievement: Council Tax and Business Rate collection have improved throughout the year and are on a par with previous year levels at 97.5% and 98.2% respectively (both 98% in 2013/14).
11. Achievement: The Workforce Strategy 2012-2015 had five key themes, Skills and Behaviours, Recruitment and Retention, Pay, Reward and Recognition, Wellbeing and Engagement, and Performance and Change. Under each of the key themes, a range of measures have been delivered, such as the introduction of a Behavioural Standards Framework and a Rising Stars Programme for High Performers, a new staff discounts scheme with national and local discounts, the Living Wage and the Living Wage allowance for apprentices, a Support through Change programme, and a new Performance Management Framework.
12. Challenge: Sickness in the Council averaged 11.4 days per employee between April and March, which is higher than 2013/14 (8.39 days).
13. Challenge: In Quarter 4 79.5% of telephone calls into the York Customer Centre were answered, 47.6% within 20 seconds. This is an improvement from 2013/14 when 76.4% of calls were answered, 42.5% in 20 seconds. Securing further improvements to performance in the Customer Centre is a priority in the draft Council Plan.

Consultation

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

Corporate Priorities

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

Implications

16. 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

17. 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

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

Reason: To update the Committee on the outturn for 2014/15.

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Wards Affected: <i>All</i>				
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