

Minutes of the Corporate and Economic Strategy Select Committee

**Thursday, 11th January, 2024 at 6.00 pm
In Committee Room 3, The Council House, Dudley.**

Present:

Councillor D Stanley (Chair)
Councillor S Henley (Vice-Chair)
Councillors C Eccles, J Foster, A Hopwood, E Lawrence, T Russon and K Westwood

Officers:

H Martin (Director of Regeneration and Enterprise), C Blunn (Corporate Performance Manager), S Haycox (Corporate Performance Support) and K Taylor (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

Also in Attendance:

Councillor P Atkins (Cabinet Member for Corporate Strategy)
S Shingadia (Director of Strategic Partnerships and Integration), A Shaw (Executive Director) and J Hughes (Member Relationship Manager) (Transport for West Midlands) for Agenda Item No. 6 – Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension Delivery Update.

37 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors S Mughal, N Neale and P Sahota.

38 **Appointment of Substitute Member**

It was noted that Councillor K Westwood had been appointed to serve as a substitute Member for Councillor P Sahota for this meeting of the Committee only.

39 **Declarations of Interest**

No member made a declaration of interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

40 **Minutes**

Councillor J Foster referred to Minute No. 32 – Commercial Strategy page 11 paragraph two stating that the word unity should be replaced with unitary.

Resolved

That, subject to the amendment referred to above, the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November, 2023, be approved as a correct record and signed.

41 **Public Forum**

No issues were raised under this agenda item.

42 **Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension Delivery Update**

The Committee received a presentation by representatives of Transport for West Midlands on progress with the delivery of the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension.

A Shaw, Executive Director, provided an update on progress made in relation to the main construction works as part of phase 1, which was expected to be completed by the end of 2024.

Members were advised that following construction, and to ensure a safe operating tram network, an entry into service would commence including technical sign-off and completion of safety assessments. Further extensive driver training would also be undertaken given the significant change of metro operations from a single line to a network. It was anticipated that the entry into service would be completed within two months following construction.

Reference was made to the closure of the Dudley Bus Station from Sunday 14th January, 2024 in preparation of the significant transformation of the Dudley Interchange.

A map outlining the locations of the three areas that had been identified for Phase 2 of the project namely, 2a to Waterfront, 2b to Merry Hill and 2c to Brierley Hill was provided at the meeting.

It was noted that there were a number of risks associated with construction costs on all capital projects in particular as a result of inflationary supply chains. The complexities of projects within the Black Country in ensuring the ground was stabilised to support the tram construction was mentioned together with the Delta Junction tie in works and expansion of the West Midlands Metro Depot in Wednesbury. The importance of ensuring connectivity with the main railway line at Dudley Port Station was also emphasised.

S Shingadia, Director of Strategic Partnerships and Integration, then confirmed that the overarching business case was being refreshed recognising the number of additional factors and developments that had occurred since the commencement of the project and to ensure that a robust investment case overall was maintained.

It was noted that work was ongoing on the upgrade of the Wednesbury Depot to ensure that it was fit for purpose to support the wider network of operations, additional trams, larger stabling facilities, and the operational workforce. It was hoped that this extension would enable the metro network to expand across the wider West Midlands in the future.

An overview of the progress made on a number of significant major projects within the Black Country was provided, including the construction works on the Wednesbury Delta Junction which would allow the operations to run into line one forming the wider metro network, which included a large extension to the metro network of eleven kilometres with 17 stops identified along the route. It was noted that the project would help regenerate over 170 hectares of brownfield land within the area resulting in up to 50,000 houses across the corridor.

It was noted that 33,000 tons of ballast had been delivered for the track installation across the railway corridor, and that a number of tram stops across the route were starting to take shape. The positive collaborative working with the local Transport Team was acknowledged in order to ensure local accessibility to the tram stops by integrating into existing cycling and walking routes along the corridor.

A number of significant new structures for phase one of the new route had been delivered, however works were continuing on the Wednesbury Delta Junction and Hanson's Ale Bridge.

Reference was made to the completed track work in Castle Hill within Dudley Town Centre with the installation of rail continuing at pace in Flood Street and King Street. The number of projects within the Town Centre were acknowledged and the importance of ensuring that all work programmes fit together into the wider program of the metro works to ensure that projects were delivered efficiently and effectively at the same time.

Members were advised of the work undertaken to strengthen the Parkhead Viaduct in Dudley in order for the structure to be fit for purpose and the natural and historic nature of the structure retained whilst ensuring structural integrity. This activity was recently highly commended at the Institution of Civil Engineers West Midlands Awards.

The importance of communicating forthcoming disruptive activity was mentioned together with working closely with local authority teams to ensure that construction disruption was being managed accordingly and engagement with elected members and local communities that were directly affected. It was essential that the right levels of journey planning messaging through targeted social media was undertaken and working with local attractions to promote that they were open as usual.

It was expected that there would be a significant improvement to public transport accessibility and public transport journey times once operational.

An overview was provided of the work underway to support the overall programme of works including refreshing the business cases working with the Department for Transport and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities was provided. The business case was expected to be submitted to Government in Mid 2024 and considered later in 2024 for the mobilisation of phase two, subject to approval.

In concluding, it was noted that the overall cost of the extension and the additional funding that had been indicatively allocated from the Government required the refresh of the business case to ensure good value for money. Collaborative working with the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise and colleagues would continue to ensure briefs were being met and the delivery of the project whilst managing costs was being undertaken.

Members asked questions, made comments and responses were provided where appropriate as follows: -

- a) The Chair commented positively on the presentation given and thanked officers for their attendance and sought clarification as to whether the Metro Depot located in Great Western Street was sufficient to cope with the additional loads.

In responding, the Director of Strategic Partnerships and Integration confirmed that the proposed extension was for both the Depot building and to accommodate the additional stabling required for the larger number of trams that would be in operation. It was noted that the connectivity from Dudley Town Centre would be to either Birmingham or Wolverhampton through the Delta Junction, which would be constructed during Easter. It was noted that there would be some closures and disruption to the metro whilst works were ongoing.

- b) The Chair referred to the poor condition and accessibility issues at Dudley Port Station and queried whether there were any proposals for enhancement works.

In responding, the Director of Strategic Partnerships and Integration confirmed that work had been completed in relation to integrating the metro and heavy rail services. It was recognised that the current structure did not meet access standards, therefore consideration would be given to the longer-term aspirations for Network Rail at Dudley Port.

- c) Following a request by Councillor C Eccles in repainting the mural previously displayed on Hanson's Ale Bridge to the new structure, the Executive Director agreed to refer comments back and investigate options available.

- d) With regard to Phase 2C, Councillor C Eccles referred to the extensive discussions held over a number of years relating to extending the metro line to Stourbridge which was considered vital in improving future connectivity to other areas including Wolverhampton.

In responding, the Director of Strategic Partnerships and Integration acknowledged that it had been recognised that the wider connectivity from Stourbridge to Walsall remained important. Heavy rail solutions had been considered within the area to enable connectivity back towards Brierley Hill but that was not operationally or commercially feasible. Further work would be commissioned on the connectivity for the entire Walsall to Stourbridge corridor with options being considered in terms of light rail.

- e) Councillor E Lawrence referred to the unresolved ownership of the Canal bridge with Network Rail and the Mineshafts at Birmingham New Road and queried why these were deemed a risk now and not during the planning process.

In responding, the Executive Director confirmed that work was being undertaken with the Canal and River Trust and Network Rail with regard to the ownership of the Canal bridge for maintenance responsibility. Although the structure was not part of the metro infrastructure, the metro would travel across and underneath. Intrusive surveys had been undertaken to assess the structural integrity of the bridge, and although there was not a significant risk in terms of its condition, it was essential that responsibility for ownership was taken. It was hoped that this would be concluded prior to formal 'sign-off' of the project.

The issues associated with mineshafts and projects throughout the Black Country was acknowledged. As a result of poor record collection, mineshafts were identified during programmed works with suitable action taken to stabilise the mineshafts as appropriate. This area therefore scored high on the risk register until investigated and resolved. Ground condition surveys had been completed for phase one with some undertaken for phase 2 and it was confirmed that budget contingencies had been allocated for any additional works required.

- f) Councillor K Westwood echoed comments made by Councillor C Eccles and referred to the heritage value of Hanson's Ale Bridge that was located within a large leisure area within the Black Country. In considering local heritage, Councillor K Westwood queried whether reference points to the old Bridge and display boards highlighting the Parkhead Viaduct heritage could be arranged.

In responding, the Executive Director commented positively on the work undertaken in preserving the Parkhead Viaduct and undertook to work with Dudley officers and the Dudley Canal and River Trust with regard to interpretative signage accordingly.

- g) In responding to a question raised by Councillor J Foster, the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise undertook to confirm whether the Parkhead Viaduct was locally listed.
- h) In responding to a question raised by the Chair in relation to anticipated timescales in undertaking works to extend to Brierley Hill, the Executive Director confirmed that all transport work order powers had been approved, and that the timescales were dependent on final sign-off of the business case by Government. A further update could be presented to the Select Committee later in the year if requested.
- i) An update was provided on the mitigation strategies considered during the closure of the Dudley Bus Station.
- j) The Chair referred to the Very Light Rail works undertaken at the bottom of Castle Hill, Dudley and queried whether there were any proposals to connect the Very Light Rail and Metro.

In responding, the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise confirmed that whilst there was a possibility in the long-term, the financial implications would need to be considered. It was noted that there was currently a very light rail and track with a 15 metre radius which was testing different options for a very light rail transit service.

The Chair thanked officers for the presentation given and the informative discussions undertaken during the meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the information contained in the presentation on progress with the delivery of the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension, be noted.
 - (2) That the Executive Director, Transport for West Midlands be requested to refer comments and explore options available in relation to:
 - Repainting the mural previously displayed on Hanson's Ale Bridge to the new structure.
 - Interpretative signage for the Parkhead Viaduct and Hanson's Ale Bridge.
 - (3) That the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise be requested to confirm whether the Parkhead Viaduct was locally listed.
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43 **Progress on Major Regeneration Projects**

A report of the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise was submitted on an update on the major regeneration projects and other town centre proposals/projects in development.

In presenting key information through presentation slides, the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise referred to the support provided by the Local Authority in delivering significant projects that were not Council projects such as the Dudley Interchange and Metro Extension, including exercising Compulsory Purchase Order powers to acquire the required properties. Reference was made to the fully granted funded schemes that were in delivery where the Council was a key delivery partner including Brierley Hill Future High Street Fund Programme and Dudley Towns Fund – Health Innovation.

It was noted that although the Local Authority did not have a dedicated Regeneration Team, there were a number of professionals within the Directorate, including conservation officers, planners, tree experts and designers. Collaboration working with colleagues across the Council enabled delivery of the projects that were progressing.

The Director of Regeneration and Enterprise gave a detailed overview on the status of the next phase of projects both in Dudley town centre and around the Borough, including the Health Innovation Dudley, Portersfield, Eton College, Flood Street, Wellington Road, Brierley Hill Future High Street Fund Programme, Brierley Hill Street Heritage Action Zone and Lye Regeneration Programme. A sustainable and connectivity package was being considered with colleagues from the Highways Department for Stourbridge to improve pedestrian movement and safety together with wider sustainable connectivity enhancements to support the town centre. Maps and drawings associated with each development were displayed at the meeting, and further details of the projects on site and in the pipeline were contained within the report submitted.

An overview was given of the projects that were being considered as part of a 10-year programme across the Local Authority, working closely with colleagues in Public Health, with a whole system approach being adopted to areas that require improvement. Funding bids for each individual element would be explored and submitted as appropriate.

It was noted that the Local Authority was one of 25 local authorities taking part in the Design Code Pathfinder programme to develop a design code for their area based upon National Design Code Guidance 2021. It was confirmed that work was being undertaken with stakeholders to produce a design code for the regeneration of Lye. It was anticipated that the process undertaken would determine future arrangements for regeneration and improvement across Town Centres and areas within the Borough.

Members were advised of the successful national government grant allocations awarded including the Longer-Term Plan for Towns of £20m for a 10-year socio-economic regeneration programme in Dudley Town Centre. Although the four Levelling Up Fund Bids that were submitted to the Government were not successful, in November 2023, non-competitive allocations had been awarded of £20m to both the Brierley Hill and Halesowen bids, which were required to be spent by March, 2026. It was noted that the Lye Regeneration Programme currently remained unfunded.

It was reported that the Brierley Hill bid would support the development of a new Technology Centre at Venture Way, with the existing building being relocated to Wolverhampton, together with a package of support to address connectivity issues between the High Street and Merry Hill.

A new college facility would also be provided in Halesowen on the existing Pool Road Car Park site; however, consideration would need to be given to accessibility access. Additional parking capacity would be considered at Andrew Road and Halesowen Leisure Centre to offset some of the loss at Pool Road.

Work continued in developing the Economic Regeneration Strategy which focussed on key themes which identified a number of actions and interventions needed to address and maximise the benefits of the regeneration programme.

(At this juncture, Councillor E Lawrence withdrew from the meeting)

Members asked questions, made comments and responses were provided where appropriate as follows: -

- a) The Chair welcomed and expressed his gratitude for the comprehensive report presented.
- b) Councillor J Foster although commented positively on the significant number of projects that were progressing, queried the allocation of funding and consideration as to who would benefit from the investment and how these improved the quality of life for residents.
- c) Councillor J Foster requested further clarification on funding requirements and timescales associated with Brierley Hill and Halesowen.

In responding, the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise confirmed that the Local Authority was required to work through the guidance to undertake steps to access the funds. In considering that the funding will have to be spent by March 2026, work had commenced in developing business plans outlining the delivery of the programme. Discussions had also commenced with the Colleges, as these were a prominent force in the design work for both areas. It was hoped that both business plans would be submitted in the near future. Although guidance had not yet been issued with regard to the funding restrictions, it was anticipated that the process would be similar to the Longer-Term Plan for Towns funding, however the funding would need to be spent by March, 2026. The challenges associated with the implementation of the funding within a limited amount of time was mentioned.

- d) Following comments made, Councillor J Foster considered there to be a significant amount of work for staff to undertake within the current challenging financial situation, and queried whether there were any projects at risk due to the emergency financial measures implemented and the requirement in setting a legal budget this year.

In responding to all comments made, the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise confirmed that Benefit Cost Ratio assessments had been undertaken on all projects to determine the benefits to the community. It was evident that the Government was satisfied that the two projects in relation to Brierley Hill and Halesowen had demonstrated significant local benefits in terms of driving up skills, providing access to meaningful and well-paid employment and future proofing investment.

The Director of Regeneration and Enterprise acknowledged comments made in relation to the current financial position and stated that the significant elements that placed the biggest risk to the entire project is the inability to identify match-funding. It was noted that match-funding totalling £1.3m had not yet been identified and was not considered an exception within the spending control restrictions. Conversations were being held with several organisations, including the West Midlands Combined Authority, to identify what support could be provided to bridge the gap. Discussions were also being held with colleagues in the Highways Department to review work programmes over the next couple of years in order to re-prioritise work and allocate available funds to support the delivery of the infrastructure and connectivity.

- e) Councillor J Foster shared her concerns that the Medium-Term Financial Strategy report would not be presented to individual Select Committees. It was acknowledged that some difficult decisions would need to be made that were in the scope of the Select Committee and therefore queried whether any special meetings would be arranged as a matter of urgency where Elected Members could examine the proposals within the remit of their respective Select Committees.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Strategy confirmed that a dedicated question and answer session had been arranged for Members and that the budget would be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25th January 2024.

Councillor J Foster further emphasised her concerns that there would not be an opportunity to discuss the proposals in public before approval in particular during such a difficult time with a proposed budget with significant implications for this year and forthcoming years. Reference was made to processes that had been implemented for several years which allowed Members the opportunity to examine budget proposals at a Scrutiny meeting.

Following further discussion, Councillor J Foster recommended the scheduling of an urgent cycle of additional Select Committee meetings where Elected Members could examine the most controversial and impactful proposals within the remit of their respective Select Committees. The Chair acknowledged the comments made and agreed to consider the suggestions further.

- f) Councillor S Henley referred to the proposed car parking in Andrew Road, Halesowen following the closure of Pool Road Car Park and suggested that this was located too far for users of the leisure centre. The Leisure Centre was an asset to the Town Centre which should be promoted to encourage attendance.

Reference was made to the new college facility on the Pool Road Car Park site and the potential increase in traffic in an area that was already heavily congested. It was therefore queried whether any other locations had been considered near to the Pool Road Car Park in order to maintain footfall within the Town Centre.

In responding, the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise acknowledged comments made and undertook to provide a written response.

- g) Councillor T Russon echoed comments made by Councillor S Henley and referred to e-mails he had received indicating that visitors would not use the Leisure Centre in Halesowen should there not be any nearby car parking facilities available.
- h) Councillor A Hopwood sought clarification on the proposed consultation on the proposals contained within the Stourbridge Project Plan which was scheduled to take place in January 2024, and whether there were any proposals to improve car parking facilities within Lye as part of the Regeneration Programme.

In responding, the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise confirmed that the consultation would commence within the next couple of weeks, and that no plans had been finalised for Lye. Consideration would need to be given to the impact on parking facilities as a result of Town Centre developments on all proposals.

- i) Councillor K Westwood referred to the Eton College project within Dudley, which if successful, would result in the closure of the car park located in Tower Street, Dudley which would have a significant impact on visitors to the Dudley Town Hall during events, and queried whether there would be alternative provision to accommodate visitors.

In responding, the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise confirmed that, if successful, it was anticipated that the entirety of the site would be utilised by the developers for their own purposes resulting in the closure of the car park. However, plans of the proposed layout were awaited.

- j) The Chair emphasised the importance of long-term future regeneration within the Borough and supporting traders and businesses during regeneration works.
- k) In responding to a question raised by Councillor T Russon in relation to the designation of the vacant Daniel's Land in Brierley Hill, the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise confirmed that the land was largely made up of ground following works undertaken nearby and that she was not aware of any designation adopted to the site. The challenges faced financially in developing the site was outlined and it was noted that discussions were being held with colleagues at the West Midlands Combined Authority and Homes England over potential strategic acquisitions that they may wish to support to hold it in control in advance of the metro being operational in the area.

Resolved

- (1) That the information contained in the report submitted and as reported at the meeting, on an update on the major regeneration projects and other town centre proposals/projects in development, be noted.
- (2) That the Chair consider the comments made with regard to scheduling an urgent Committee meeting where Members could examine the most controversial and impactful of proposals within the remit of the Select Committee.
- (3) That the Director of Regeneration and Enterprise be requested to provide a written response to options considered in relation to car parking following the closure of Pool Road Car Park, Halesowen.

44 Corporate Quarterly Performance Report – Quarter 2 (1st July – 30th September, 2023)

A report of the Chief Executive was submitted on the Quarter 2 Corporate Quarterly performance report covering the period 1st July to 30th September 2023 which aligned to the 2022-25 Council Plan.

In presenting key information through presentation slides, the Corporate Performance Manager stated that of the eleven measures to be reported on there were three on target, four below target and four with no targets with those being noted in the respective scorecards. One measure would be reported during Quarter 3. The direction of travel comparing short term trend and annual trend within the respective scorecards was reported, together with an overview of measures that were showing areas of concern with assurances given by relevant services to monitor and improve performance.

With regard to PI.47 - % of Corporate Complaints given a full response within 20 working days, it was noted that although the outturn for Quarter 2 was 79%, against an 85% target, the trend of increasing positive performance against the key performance indicator had continued. It was noted that a brief presentation on the complaints procedure to include processes and how they were handled would be presented during Quarter 3.

With regard to key performance indicators relating to sickness absence, it was noted that there had been a 16.35% decrease in the number of working days lost per full time equivalent, 9.37% decrease in the number of long-term days lost, and 33.5% decrease in short-term days lost during this period. The primary reason for short-term absence related to Covid symptoms and positive testing. Further information in relation to work being undertaken with regard to staff and sickness absence would be presented during Quarter 1 or 2 of the next financial year.

An overview of the progress made on key actions recorded for Quarter 2 was provided at the meeting.

Reference was made to the four Directorate Service Summary Documents that had been appended to the report submitted, providing an overview of service delivery, service achievements and opportunities for improvement during the relevant quarter focusing on Finance and Legal, Digital, Customer and Commercial Services, Regeneration and Enterprise and Chief Executive's.

Members were advised on the training developed for Councillors on Corporate Performance that had been made available through the Members Portal. Reference was made to the implementation of the new Learning Experience Platform namely, Thrive at Dudley. A training package had been developed for Managers and Elected Members and further discussions would be undertaken with regard to accessing Member training on Thrive.

Members asked questions, made comments and responses were given where appropriate as follows: -

- a) A discussion was held in relation to Elected Member training, which the recent LGA Peer Review report had identified as inadequate, therefore further work was needed to explore why the current format was not fit for purpose in order to implement improvements accordingly and emphasise the importance of Member Training.
- b) Councillor J Foster commented positively that the Quarterly Performance Report was being used to directly inform the work programme for the Select Committee, which was not being followed in other Committees. It was also considered that as performance management was within the remit of the Select Committee, recommendations could be made about how performance data was used.

In responding to comments made, the Corporate Performance Manager confirmed that it was her understanding that performance was considered by all Select Committees individually and undertook to discuss further with relevant officers.

- c) Councillor J Foster suggested that as several areas of business were deteriorating, there was some potential to consider areas such as sickness absence and complaints in-depth. In particular, as it was expected that there would be a significant escalation of complaints as a result of budget proposals and potential impact to services. The challenges in managing complaints when resources were decreased, and the possible changes to performance benchmarking arising from service areas potentially being withdrawn or impacted resulting in further delays was mentioned.
- d) Councillor C Eccles referred to short term sickness absence and sought clarification on the Council's current policy with regard to COVID testing. It was also noted that stress had been identified as a factor in long-term absences and given the significant amount of pressure that was expected, queried what measures had been considered to support teams across all Directorates to ensure that stress levels were not exacerbated.

In responding, the Corporate Performance Manager undertook to provide a written response.

Following comments made, Councillor J Foster considered that an in-depth scrutiny exercise on sickness absence and in particular stress should be undertaken, and recommendations made to drive improvement.

- e) Councillor A Hopwood echoed comments made in relation to stress and emphasised the importance in addressing and understanding causes, the effect it has on people and the environments they were situated in.
- f) The Cabinet Member for Corporate Strategy referred to the improvement made in the outturn in Corporate Complaints over the last three quarters taking into account the challenges faced in meeting the 20 working days for responses target. Although welcoming further scrutiny in this area, it was suggested that the Committee consider whether there was a core element of the Council that was underperforming as opposed to an overview of complaints.

With regard to sickness absence, the improvement on an annual basis was acknowledged and it was suggested that further consideration should be given as to whether employees were able to work flexibly in order to suit their lifestyle, as flexibility and ensuring a work/life balance impacted stress and sickness absence.

- g) The Chair suggested that a happy team was a productive team, working to one objective within the right atmosphere. It was important to have more involvement with employees and consider their welfare in order to give the right support as necessary.
- h) The Corporate Performance Manager reflected on the flexibility given to employees which had been very positive in her experience and referred to the work undertaken by Public Health and Human Resources and Organisation Development colleagues in relation to the People Strategy.
- i) In responding to a question raised by Councillor J Foster in relation to Staff Surveys, the Corporate Performance Manager stated that there had been some discussions as to whether an interim survey with limited number of questions would be more beneficial, however no decision had been made.
- j) The Chair referred to the importance of obtaining information from exit interviews from employees that had left the authority.

In responding, the Corporate Performance Manager undertook to ascertain whether an overview of the reasons why employees had left the authority could be provided to Members for information.

Resolved

- (1) That the information contained in the report submitted, and as reported at the meeting, on the Quarter 2 Corporate Quarterly Performance report of the 2023/24 financial year covering the period 1st July, 2023 to 30th September, 2023, be noted.
- (2) That the Corporate Performance Manager be requested to:
 - (i) Discuss with relevant officers future reporting of the Corporate Performance Report to all Select Committees.
 - (ii) Provide a written response on the Council's Policy for COVID testing and the measures taken across the Council to mitigate stress levels for employees in view of the current financial situation and challenging times ahead.
 - (ii) Liaise with the Chair and Vice-Chair on dedicated sessions focusing on specific elements raised by the Committee, including complaints and sickness absence, in future reports.
 - (iii) Investigate whether an overview of the reasons why employees had left the authority could be provided to Members for information.

45 Corporate and Economic Strategy Select Committee Progress Tracker and Future Business

A report on the Progress Tracker and Future Business was received and noted by Members. The future work of the Select Committee would be considered to reflect the discussions and suggestions made during the meeting by the Chair, Vice-Chair and the Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Resolved

That, the information contained in the report submitted on the Corporate and Economic Strategy Select Committee Progress Tracker and Future Business, taking into accounts comments made during the meeting, be noted.

46 **Questions Under Council Procedure Rule 11.8**

There were no questions to the Chair pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 11.8.

The meeting ended at 8.15pm

CHAIR