

Meeting Date: 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Public/Private\*: Public

Title: **Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel – Vice Chair  
Councillor Pam Birks**

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### **Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020**

The December Panel was predominantly 2021/22 draft budget focused, which was greatly assisted by Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel and Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel having gone through their defined budget areas before our meeting and reporting issues of concern back to the Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel. Our thanks go to both Panels for their help.

Due to COVID 19 this has been a difficult year for any business and the Council are no different. The finance team have worked hard to keep us on budget this year, whilst undertaking additional work to support the impact of COVID on Council works and budgets and presenting a draft budget for 2021/22. There continues to be many unknowns in the 2021/22 budget, we will not know until the end of December what funding we can expect from Government. We look forward to an update on the proposed 2021/22 budget once Finance have received all outstanding information.

Finance is looking at the short and long-term impacts of the shortfall in income during this year, revenue has been impacted by reduced car park income, rents etc. Submissions are being sent to Government on the shortfalls in Council income due COVID, which in due course we hope will be underwritten/repaid by Government.

We have experienced higher than normal exceptions on performance, but in light of COVID lockdown these were to be expected. A highlight of performance was there has been an 11% decrease in staff absence this year.

## **What will 2021 bring?**

The Director of Economic Development gave an overview of BREXIT, and how the Council is readying itself for 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021. This item sits on the Corporate Risk Register and is closely aligned to the Cumbria wide plan in which the Local Resilience Forum and Local Enterprise Partnership are heavily involved.

Going forward a Members' Working Group is to be set up from all three Panels to review content of performance reports and setting measures and targets for the forthcoming year. We hope that the vaccine proves to be successful and we get back to some sort of normal. That as a Council we continue to support the communities and businesses that make Carlisle a City to be proud of and that we are able to fulfil all of our commitments within our COVID financial constraints.

Full details of the meeting are available in the minute book.