

MINUTES of a meeting of THE LEICESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP REVENUES AND BENEFITS JOINT COMMITTEE held in the The Symington Building, Adam and Eve Street, Market Harborough on THURSDAY, 28 APRIL 2022

Present: Councillor D Bill (Hinckley and Bosworth) (Chairman)

Councillors R Ashman (North West Leicestershire), R D Bayliss (North West Leicestershire), P Dann (Harborough), J Hallam (Harborough) and K Lynch (Hinckley & Bosworth)

Officers: Mr A Wilson (HBBC), Mrs J Kenny (HBBC), Mr C Mason (HDC) and Mrs C Hammond

29. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared.

31. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2022

It was moved by Councillor P Dann, seconded by Councillor R D Bayliss and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2022 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

32. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE TO FEBRUARY 2022

Mr A Wilson presented the report to members. He advised that there was an underspend of just under £47k at the end of February and that as the back dated pay rise had had been applied the salaries were overspent. It was expected that there would be a year end saving of £32k as at 31 March 2022.

In response to a question from Councillor R D Bayliss, Mr Wilson advised that some of the savings had arisen due to Covid, such as car allowance etc. and as the partnership returned to normality, the budgets would be spent.

By affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The financial performance of the Partnership be received and noted.

33. PERFORMANCE SUMMARY REPORT FEBRUARY 2022

Mrs J Kenny presented the report to members. She noted that the partnership had been very busy with the annual billing. In terms of the performance it was noted that recovery collection for both Council Tax and Business Rates was improving, but it was not quite back up to the normal pre-covid levels. It was reported that both HBBC and NWLDC were just shy of their targets and that Harborough had met theirs. In terms of Benefits performance, not all targets had been hit, but all were in a sound tolerance level.

Chairman's initials

Members were advised that there had been a good take up of the Test & Trace scheme payments, which had now closed, as with the payments for the Omicron Leisure and Hospitality grant. The team was now working towards delivering the new Covid 19 Additional Relief Fund and gearing up for the Energy Rebate Scheme for properties in bands A-D.

Officers provided an update on how residents, who did not pay their Council Tax by direct debt, would be able to claim their refund.

Mr A Wilson updated members on the discretionary relief funding and the amounts each authority had been received. It was noted that it was for households in E-H where residents were facing financial difficulty and bands A-D if top ups were required. He noted some residential dwellings would not be eligible such as student residences, and that work was being carried out to finalise the policies.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Performance Summary Report February 2022 be noted.

34. FORWARD PLAN

Consideration was given to the Joint Committee's forward plan.

It was noted that there would be reports coming forward from the new internal auditors and the work that had been carried out in relation to the Grant Fraud Work.

Mrs J Kenny updated members on discussions that had taken place with other authorities in relation to joining the partnership with an update to come to a future meeting.

RESOLVED THAT:

The Joint Committee's forward plan be noted.

35. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Members noted the dates and venues of the future meetings.

The meeting commenced at 3.39 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 3.57 pm