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Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

10am on Friday 19 September 2025

Room 77, The Guildhall, Alfred Gelder Street, Hull, and MS Teams

Present: Councillors Gardiner, Hale, Hofman, Kemp, Payne, Randall, and Robinson (C)

In attendance

T. Parker (Assistant Director Finance)

R. Barker (Head of ICT Operations and Support)

M. Armstrong (Head of Financial Accounting)

I. Anderson (Director of Legal Services and Partnerships)

B. Smith (Head of Service – Contracting and Investment)

C. Leader (Maintenance and Improvements Manager)

Apologies:

Apologies were received from Councillors Burton and Pantelakis.

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19	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
Councillor Hale declared an interest at minute 34 insofar as he was a Director or KWL.		
Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:	Officer Assigned
a) N/A	a) N/A.	a) N/A

20	MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 25 JULY 2025	
The Scrutiny Officer submitted the minutes of the meeting of Friday 25 July 2025 for approval.		
Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:	Officer Assigned
a) That the minutes of the meeting held on Friday 25 July 2025 be taken as read and correctly recorded.	a) N/A.	a) N/A

21	MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 29 AUGUST 2025	
The Scrutiny Officer submitted the minutes of the meeting of Friday 29 August 2025 for approval.		
Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:	Officer Assigned

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a) That the minutes of the meeting held on Friday 29 August 2025 be taken as read and correctly recorded.	a) N/A.	a) N/A
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22	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND TRANSFORMATION PRESENTATION	
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T. Parker, Assistant Director Finance and R. Barker, Head of ICT Operations and Support attended the meeting on behalf of the Director to update the Commission on any service, policy or strategy developments that fall within the remit of the Committee.

The Committee was informed:

- i. That the government had indicated their Autumn budget would be announced in late November and that December was anticipated for notification of the Local Government settlement. The 2026/27 budget timetable had been revised however the service would aim to meet the budget timescales for February however the Medium-Term Financial Plan may not have outputs from fair funding within the November update.
- ii. That the Head of ICT and Operations and Support was in attendance to discuss the IT issues previously raised by the Committee in relation to elected members technology devices and the Guildhall WiFi.

The Committee discussed:

- i. That issues had been raised previously due to the amount of money being spent against the accessibility of WiFi within the Guildhall. The Microsoft updates were also raised which were not user friendly and reference was made to an issue raised within Full Council in terms of providing subtitles provided for meetings which were webcast. There was an expectation that due to the money being spent, the quality of IT in the Guildhall would be better.
- ii. Concern that members were often required to tether data from their mobile phones dependent upon where they were in the building and that the lack of WiFi was a lost opportunity to promote the building as an event and conference venue with a system available which was fit for purpose. There were also issues in terms of syncing of devices.
- iii. A proposal for a member of IT staff to be made available on site for member IT issues during Full Council Day rather than relying on the appointment system.
- iv. The conversion of telephone services to MS Teams and that handheld telephones could no longer be used.
- v. The reasons why corporate owned devices were being insisted upon; why the two-factor authentication used nationally and why this wasn't used for corporate devices as there were currently multiple layers of passwords to access a device.

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Officers responded:

- i. The Microsoft 365 updates were issued automatically, however there had been an issue with the recent update which resulted in the update being downloaded again. Any issues which had been experienced should now be resolved.
- ii. There was a project being undertaken to upgrade the WiFi within a number of buildings however the Guildhall was complex in that it was subject to technical and conservation considerations in regard to aligning the WiFi access points to optimal locations for optimal coverage in every room. Work was currently being undertaken with BDS (Building Design Services) and the Conservation Officer and a survey was to be undertaken as planning permission may be required for mounting the access points. Advice would be gained from BDS in terms of the infrastructure and cabling to consider new routes.
- iii. For the transfer of calls to MS Teams, handsets were still able to be used however could be removed if not required. Other options included taking calls through the use of headsets, as well as using speakers on the device and transferring calls through to a mobile.
- iv. There was an active project currently ongoing which would look to enable one log in to devices through VPN which would improve user experience.

	Reasons for Recommendations:	Officer Assigned
a) As members wish to consider the progress of and issues around the lack of provision of WiFi in the Guildhall, an item be added to the work programme with relevant officers from Building Design Services invited to attend in relation to the building issues identified with upgrading the WiFi.	a) To allow for further discussions to take place and that all issues impacting the upgrade of the WiFi provision are explored.	R. Barker
b) That the potential for IT Officers to be available on site at the Guildhall for elected member queries on Full Council day be explored further.	b) To enable member IT queries to be resolved with IT officers in person.	R. Barker/ D. Taylor

T. Parker, Assistant Director Finance and M. Armstrong, Head of Financial Accounting attended the meeting to present the annual treasury report reviewing treasury management activities and providing the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2024/25.

The Committee was informed:

- i. There were assurances that the borrowing included within the report was for the purpose of capital and the statutory borrowing limit had not been breached at any time.
- ii. From 1st April leases had now been included onto the balance sheet as per the table at paragraph 2.6 which showed the leases at £44.9m. This was capital expenditure under accounting rules and the corresponding liability as notional debt.
- iii. Training for elected members would continue to be carried out regularly going forward.

The Committee discussed:

- i. The inclusion of notional leases and whether this was the reason behind the media reporting that there was debt into the millions between Hull and East Riding and that previously there would have been an article to inform residents of the borrowing and that the council tax leaflet could potentially be used to communicate.
- ii. Paragraph 13.2 of the report and the fall of the bank rate impact on interest rates with confirmation sought that this was no longer on target in light of the non-drop in interest rates.

Officers responded:

- i. In relation to the additional borrowing on the capital programme the media had been responded to accordingly. Hull were not in the same risk position as some other Local Authorities in terms of affordability related to the borrowing.
- ii. More information available in November in relation to interest rates as the report was no longer accurate.

	Reasons for Recommendations:	Officer Assigned
a) The Committee supported the recommendations outlined at Section 3 of the report and recommended that further consideration be given to use of the annual Council Tax letters to communicate and provide an explanation to residents in relation to the debt associated with capital borrowing.	a) As per the minute.	N/A

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24	CITYWIDE FENCING – PRE-PROCUREMENT APPROVAL	
<p>I. Anderson, Director of Legal Services and Partnerships; B. Smith, Head of Service (Contracting and Investment), and C. Leader, Maintenance and Improvements Manager attended the meeting to present the report to Cabinet on Citywide Fencing – Pre-procurement Approval.</p> <p>Having taken the report as read, the Committee discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Community Initiatives Budgets which were now also being used for fencing within individual wards was working well however reassurance was sought that contractors would treat community fencing the same as routine void fencing and how it would be ensured that work would be undertaken in a timely manner.ii. The finances associated with the contract outlined at paragraph 2.2 of the report.iii. Whether consideration had been given to awarding a single contract. <p>Officers responded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. The contract would be let in two lots, one for use within neighbourhoods and housing and one for community fencing replacement and it would be a different contractor for both lots. The specification had not yet been finalised, and response times could be added with consequences for not achieving targets.ii. The budget had been increased to meet demand based on the numbers undertaken within previous years.iii. The contracts had been split to make them more attractive to smaller providers.		
Reasons for Recommendations:		
Officer Assigned		
a) The Committee supported the recommendations outlined at Section 3 of the report and recommended that response times be included within the contract specification with associated break clauses.	a) As per the minute.	N/A.

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25	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2025-26	
<p>M. Kohler (Scrutiny Officer) presented the Committee’s work programme to support Committee members in their consideration of items they wished to be included on the agenda.</p>		
	Reasons for Recommendations:	Officer Assigned
a) That the work programme is noted.	a) N/A.	N/A

26	EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC	
<p>To consider the exclusion of the press and public for the items listed as exempt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KWL – Business Update • Hull Culture and Leisure Ltd – 6 Month Update 		
	Reasons for Recommendations:	Officer Assigned
a) That the press and public be excluded for the duration of the items.	a) The Committee supported that the items were considered as exempt.	N/A

27	KWL – BUSINESS UPDATE	
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I. Anderson (Director of Legal Services) attended to provide an update upon delivery of the KWL Business Plan for the period 2025-27 for review.		
The officer summarised the report and the Committee discussed its content, agreeing recommendations as a result.		
Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:	Officer Assigned
a) The Committee supported the recommendations as set out at Section 2 of the report.	a) As per the minute.	N/A
b) The Committee requested that further consideration be given to achieving consistency alongside Council policy in terms of meeting duties as a corporate parent and guaranteeing job interviews for care experienced young people.	b) To increase the opportunities for our children looked after and care leavers.	I. Anderson

28	HULL CULTURE AND LEISURE LTD – 6 MONTH UPDATE	
The Committee discussed the Hull Culture and Leisure Ltd – 6 Month Update, agreeing recommendations as a result.		
Recommendations:	Reasons for Recommendations:	Officer Assigned
a) The Committee supported the recommendations as set out at Section 2 of the report.	a) N/A.	

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<p>b) That further data be circulated to the Committee off agenda in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Visitor numbers for each individual leisure facility, library, theatres and halls and museum, including postcodes where possible (if information not available, could this be gathered as a weekly snapshot). ii. The reduction in visits to the City Hall and New Theatre and potential reasons behind the decline. iii. Clarification in relation to the number of online visits to the library service and whether this was measured by outcome or by clicks. iv. The increase of in person visits to the libraries and the detail recorded around reasons for the visit. <p>c) The Committee requested that further consideration be given to achieving consistency alongside Council policy in terms of meeting duties as a corporate parent and guaranteeing job interviews for care experienced young people.</p>	<p>b) Members wished to further understand data around visitor numbers to Leisure and Cultural facilities in the city.</p> <p>c) To increase the opportunities for our children looked after and care leavers.</p>	<p>K. Wynn-Hague/T. Balaam-Reed</p> <p>K. Wynn-Hague/T. Balaam-Reed</p>
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