HULL AND GOOLE PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY

8th December 2021

(Council Chamber, the Guildhall, Kingston upon Hull)

PRESENT: -

Councillors Brady (Chair), Vickers (Deputy Chair), Briggs, Chambers, Collinson and Fareham.

IN ATTENDANCE: -

Laurence Dettman (Chief Port Health Inspector), Annemarie Hamil (Chief Administrative Officer), Alison Gill (Senior Finance Officer, Hull City Council) and Louise Hawkins (Democratic Services Officer, Hull City Council).

| Minute **No.** | Business |
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| 1790 | **APOLOGIES**  Apologies were received from Councillors Chaytor and Pantelakis. |
| 1791 | **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**  No declarations of interest were made in respect of the items that follow below. |
| 1792 | **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8TH SEPTEMBER 2021**  **Agreed -** That, the minutes of the meeting of this Authority, held on 8th, September, 2021, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and correctly recorded and be signed by the Chair. |
| 1793 | **REVENUE ESTIMATES**  The Treasurer and the Chief Port Health Inspector submitted a report which provided details of the proposed revenue estimates and planned use of the reserves for the Hull and Goole Port Health Authority.  The Board was informed that –   1. The deadline for the border checks had changed, which meant the Authority had not received the additional income which had been expected from July 2021. The new deadline for the introduction of phased border checks was now 1 July 2022; 2. The grant which had been received from Defra had been carried forward into the next financial year and there would be another bidding process for additional funding to cover the staffing costs for the staff which had been recruited to carry out the checks; 3. The Chief Port Health Inspector had asked Defra to provide written assurance that adequate funding for the new checks would be made available to the Authority in the financial year 2022/23; 4. The expenditure costs had been recovered but the projected income from charges had not been recovered. However, the Authority had been prudent about the expenditure and expected income; 5. The Board needed to consider whether a raise in the levies charged to the local authorities was required to cover the shortfall in the budget. A 3% increase had been recommended by the officers.   **Agreed –**   1. That the Board approves the revised estimates for 2021/22; 2. That the budget for 2022/23 be approved, and 3. That members approve Option B to increase the levies by 3% in line with the estimated pay award and CPI inflation rate and that the associated budget be approved, and 4. That the levies required from the constituent authorities using option B be approved. |
| 1794 | **EU TRANSITION AND UK BORDER READINESS UPDATE**  The Chief Port Health Inspector submitted a report which provided the Authority with an update on developments and progress made in relation to EU transition and UK Border readiness.  The Members were informed that –   1. The phasing approach to the introduction of border checks would reduce the pressure on the Authority as all of the new responsibilities would not come into force on 1 July 2022, and 2. If the most recent bid submitted to Defra was successful, the Authority would be financially secure until July 2022.   The Board discussed the following matters –   1. That the implications of checks on fishery products being delayed until 1 November 2022 could hit this Authority substantially more than other ports. The Chief Port Health Inspector explained that such matters would need to be considered as part of the bidding process and that any funding that this Authority secured would need to continue through to November 2022;   The Chief Port Health explained that the Authority would be subject to a substantial shortfall in funding if the bid to Defra was unsuccessful. There had been some challenges during the recruitment process and the Authority had not recruited to the expected levels. This had provided a benefit in that the Authority was not paying for staff that were not currently required. There were other Port Health Authorities which had fully recruited, which could have a negative impact on finances and staff morale. There was a possibility for some newly recruited staff to be seconded to Defra to assist on project work. The outcome of the Defra bid would not be known until January 2022. The Authority should be in a better position in terms of knowing what the staffing requirements would be by the March meeting of the Board.  The border control post at Killingholme was in a more advanced stage of completion that the one in Hull. The sites would be ‘mothballed’ until they were required in July, however the Authority would have access to undertake training and familiarisation. It was hoped that a site visit for Board Members would be arranged in early 2022.  A member of the Board queried why the Port Health Authority staff could not currently have direct access to data on the IPAFFS system. The Chief Port Health Inspector explained that he had raised this query and had been informed that there were data-sharing issues as the system was linked into other systems. However, from 1 July 2022 the relevant import data would be available directly.  The Board expressed the view that the Authority could not accept the responsibility if there was a failure with the new government IT systems, and that the MPs for the region needed to be aware of the situation. The Chief Port Health Inspector explained that the Authority had taken a pragmatic approach to the changes which were being implemented which had worked well to date. There were other ports which were under much more pressure, for instance, Dover which had ferries coming into port every 20 minutes.  **Agreed –**   1. That the Board note and endorse the contents of this report and await a further update at the next meeting, and 2. That any serious unresolved concerns be sent to the MPs for the constituent authorities. |
| 1795 | **QUARTERLY SUMMARY AUGUST 2021 TO OCTOBER 2021**  The Chief Port Health Inspector submitted a report which detailed the quarterly summary of the Authority’s work in respect of inspections, notifications, and investigations undertaken during the period August 2021 to October 2021.  It was noted that there had been may ships arriving in the district with positive Covid-19 cases or suspected cases. The continuing pandemic still presents many challenges to the Authority and health partners.  **Agreed –** that the report be noted. |