

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

13th February 2020

PRESENT:

Conservative Group

Councillor Watson (Chairman), Angliss (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors, Mrs. Brown, Corbin (substituting for Cllr Billings) Fitzpatrick, Ford, MacPherson and Mrs Patten (substituting for Cllr Roberts).

Labour Group

Councillors Dr Pearson, Rhind, Richards, Southerd and Taylor.

FM/111 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Billings and Roberts.

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillors Mrs Brown and Atkin

FM/112 **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Finance and Management Committee held on 10th December 2019 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

The Minutes of the Audit Sub-Committee held on 11th December 2019 were noted.

FM/113 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Committee was informed no declarations of interest from Members of the Committee had been received

FM/114 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 10**

The Committee was informed no questions from members of the public had been received.

FM/115 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

The Committee was informed no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

FM/116 REPORTS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillor Corbin informed the Committee that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee intends to take a closer look at procurement and has therefore requested a report outlining the business case for using NHS services and if this offers value for money.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE**FM/117 FINAL BUDGET PROPOSALS 2020/21 AND FINANCIAL PLAN TO 2025**

The Head of Finance delivered the Report to the Committee, highlighting the updates since January 2020, including the New Homes Bonus, Business Rates, and the Housing Revenue Account recharges.

Some Members raised concerns regarding the proposed Council Tax increase and the Head of Finance informed Members that officers can only make recommendations regarding the increase of Council Tax and it is Members who make the decision. The Committee was also informed that a number of groups were consulted, including 6 Area Forums and South Derbyshire Partnership, open invitations were also sent to the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses and no substantial issues had been raised regarding the budget proposals and Council Tax increase.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That a Council Tax increase of 1.95% for 2020/21 be recommended to Full Council on 26th February 2020.***
- 1.2 That estimated net General Fund Revenue Expenditure totalling £12,798,230 for 2020/21 be recommended to Full Council on 26th February 2020.***
- 1.3 That Committee approved the Medium-term Financial Plan to 2025 on the Council's General Fund Revenue Account as detailed in Appendix 1 of the Report.***
- 1.4 That Committee Approved the Financial Plan for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to 2030 as detailed in Appendix 2 of the Report.***
- 1.5 That Committee approved the transfer of £500,000 from the Growth Provision earmarked reserve into the Vehicle Replacement earmarked reserve.***
- 1.6 That the revised HRA Recharge from the General Fund be approved and updated in the Base Budgets.***

1.7 That Committee noted the Council's National Non-Domestic Rate Return (NDR 1) for 2019/20, showing retained business rates of £11,200,979 for 2020/21 and £10,515,933 for 2019/20.

FM/118 **CAPITAL PROGRAMME BUDGET TO 2025**

The Head of Finance presented the Report giving an overview of the Council's proposed capital expenditure in relation to both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account as well funding for the next five year period.

Councillor Richards asked if the Swadlincote Project was on course to complete during the 2019/2020 financial year. The Head of Finance confirmed that this was the case.

RESOLVED:

That the capital programme expenditure and funding to 2025 was considered and approved.

FM/119 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2020/21**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) requested that as the Appendices had not been shared prior to this Committee meeting, this report be deferred to the next Full Council meeting.

RESOLVED:

The Committee agreed that this report be deferred for consideration at the next Full Council meeting.

FM/120 **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECTION 151 OFFICER**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the report to the Committee

Members raised queries regarding the planned housing and asked if Developers chose to build in different areas could they be challenged. The Committee was informed by the Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) that the Local Plan directs where new housing is sited and includes a prediction of housing requirements.

Councillor Fitzpatrick raised queries regarding the Financial Resilience and the dependence of central Government funding of which the Council has no control over. The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) and the Chief Executive informed Members that the Council is considering other funding

options and commercialisation which could, for example, involve consideration of innovative ways to raise income through tourism and car parking.

RESOLVED:

1.1 That Committee considered and noted the Annual Report of the Section 151 Officer.

1.2 That the Council has due regard to the Annual Report when approving the Budget for 2020/21 at Full Council on 26th February 2020 and when considering future proposals for new spending and the utilisation of resources.

FM/121 PROPOSED LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2020-21

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) delivered the annual report requesting that the current scheme remains in place to enable a new system to be developed for the next financial year. The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) informed Members that the Revenues Team is currently working on an options paper which will be brought to Finance and Management Committee for consideration, in April 2020.

RESOLVED:

1.1 Committee approved that the existing Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme currently in place be continued for 2020/21.

1.2 That the detailed parameters be submitted to Full Council on 26th February 2020 for formal adoption.

FM/122 CORPORATE PLAN MEASURES 2020-2024

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the report to the Committee highlighting that the Council's priorities will be managed using the 35 Corporate measures detailed in the report. Members were also informed that a quarterly update will be provided to the Finance and Management Committee.

RESOLVED:

1.1 That Committee approved the 35 Corporate measures to support the Corporate Plan for 2020-2024, as per Appendix A (Performance Dashboard 2020-2024) of the Report.

1.2 That Committee approved the detailed Performance Measures Report template, in Appendix B of the Report.

An indexed Performance Measure Report to be completed for each of the key performance indicators and be reported to Committee at the end of quarter 4 with the outturn figure for quarter 4 2019/2020.

1.3 That Committee approved the proposed changes to the Committee Report incorporating changes to the way the overall performance against the Corporate Plan priorities is reported in section, 4.0 and 4.1 of the report, as per Appendix C of the Report.

FM/123 **TRANSFER OF HOUSING REPAIR CALLS INTO CUSTOMER SERVICES**

The Head of Customer Services presented the report to the Committee explaining how the transfer of Housing Repair calls into Customer Services is intended to improved customer service delivery to the Council's residents and local businesses.

Members raised queries regarding Customer Services being able to cope with the high level of calls that are received each year as well as training for the apprentice. The Head of Customer Services informed Members that currently there is no queueing system available for Housing Repair calls, and customers simply get an engaged tone meaning that numerous calls go unanswered but by moving to Customer Services the members of staff are experienced in taking a variety of calls and can guarantee that all calls will be answered within 20 seconds. The Head of Customer Service added that the cost of £21,000 for the Modern Apprenticeship does include training costs.

Councillor Richards enquired if the Council could claim for an apprenticeship levy. The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) confirmed that this was the case.

RESOLVED:

That Committee approved the transfer of Housing Repair calls into Customer Services and the creation of an additional Customer Services Advisor post on the Council's Establishment – which will be either a full time Modern Apprentice, or a part-time (18.5 hours a week) skilled Customer Services Advisor.

FM/124 **DOMESTIC ABUSE PROCEDURE – MAKE A STAND CAMPAIGN**

The Head of Cultural and Community Services presented the report to the Committee, updating Members of the progress regarding the four pledges made by the Council in 2018.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That Committee noted the progress against the 'Make a Stand' pledges outlined in the report.***
- 1.2 That Committee approved the Domestic Abuse Procedure as per Appendix 1 of the Report.***
- 1.3 Committee agreed that the Strategic Director (Service Delivery) be appointed to champion work that the Council is doing to support people experiencing domestic abuse.***

FM/125 **SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY 2020-2021 AND SOCIAL MEDIA ACTION PLAN 2020-2021**

The Head of Organisational Development presented the report to the Committee highlighting the key points of the Action Plan.

Councillor MacPherson added that it was important to ensure that traditional methods of communication are still maintained.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That Committee approved the Social Media Strategy 2020-2021 as per Appendix A of the Report.***
- 1.2 That Committee approved the Action Plan 2020-2021, as per Appendix B of the Report.***

FM/126 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the report to the Committee.

RESOLVED:

Members considered and approved the updated work programme.

FM/127 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

RESOLVED:-

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be

transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.

MINUTES

The Exempt Minutes of the Finance and Management Meeting held on the 10th October 2019 were received.

TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 11

The Committee was informed no questions had been received.

STRUCTURAL REVIEW CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY

The Committee approved the recommendation in the report.

ROSLISTON FORESTRY CENTRE – REVIEW OF STAFFING

The Committee approved the recommendation in the report.

REVIEW OF DOCUMENT SERVICES TEAM

The Committee approved the recommendation in the report.

DEBT COLLECTION, RECOVERY, BAD AND DOUBTFUL DEBTS

The Committee approved the recommendation in the report.

The meeting terminated at 7:30 pm.

COUNCILLOR P WATSON

CHAIRMAN