

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

21 July 2022

PRESENT:

Labour Group

Councillor Pearson (Chair), Councillor Rhind (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Southerd, Richards, and Taylor.

Conservative Group

Councillors, Ackroyd, Bridgen, Dawson, Fitzpatrick, Ford, Patten,

Independent Group

Councillors MacPherson

Non-Grouped

Councillor Churchill

In Attendance

Councillor Wheelton

Councillor Smith

FM/16 **APOLOGIES**

The Committee was informed that apologies had been received from Councillor Lemmon and Councillor Corbin (Conservative Group)

FM/17 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Committee was informed that no declarations of interest had been received.

FM/18 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 10**

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

FM/19 **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/ 20 **REPORTS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee was informed that no reports of Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been received.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEEFM/21 **FINAL REVENUE BUDGET OUT-TURN 2021-22**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) introduced the report and informed the Committee highlighted those areas of the budget that had been affected by the Covid Pandemic. The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) summarised key areas within the report that included the General Fund surplus, the Section 106 Agreement funding, the work carried out by the Customer Services Team in relation to the collection of debts and how capital projects would be drawn down from Reserves. The Committee was informed that there would be a separate report later in the year in relation to earmarked reserves.

Members of the Committee commended the report and the good news regarding the surplus and thanked the Finance Team for the good work.

Councillor Patten raised a query regarding the costs in relation to Land Charges.

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) advised the Committee that the costs related to a temporary arrangement with Lichfield District Council who had employed agency staff in the delivery of land charges and that earmarked reserves had been allocated to meet the additional costs for the future system changes.

RESOLVED:***1.1 The Committee approved the final outturn position for:***

- ***The General Fund Revenue Account 2021/22***
- ***The Housing Revenue Account 2021/22***
- ***The Collection Fund 2021/22***
- ***The Balance of Reserves as at 31 March 2022.***

1.2 The Committee approved that a net appropriation of £5,360k in 2021/22 be made between the General Fund Reserve and other Earmarked/Usable Reserves and a net appropriation of £45k be made from the HRA General Reserve to Earmarked Reserves as detailed in the report.***1.3 The Committee noted the following contributions and write-offs adjustments had been made to Bad Debt and Appeal Provisions in 2021/22.***

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|--|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Sundry Debtors</i> | <i>-31,728</i> | <i>General Fund</i> |
| <i>Temporary Accommodation</i> | <i>2,147</i> | <i>General Fund</i> |
| <i>Housing Benefit Overpayments</i> | <i>-78,506</i> | <i>General Fund</i> |
| <i>Council Tax Arrears</i> | <i>87,813</i> | <i>General Fund</i> |
| <i>Business Rates Arrears</i> | <i>28,087</i> | <i>General Fund</i> |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Business Rates Appeals</i> | <i>42,764</i> | <i>General Fund</i> |
| <i>Planning Appeals</i> | <i>-75,000</i> | <i>General Fund</i> |
| <i>Housing Rent Arrears</i> | <i>27,266</i> | <i>HRA</i> |

FM/22 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) delivered the report and highlighted the that the Council was within the prudential indicators and interest rates had been very low over the year, but returns had started to increase which would have a beneficial effect on the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account as debts were paid with variable interest rate. The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) highlighted the £4 million investment and explained that investments made were pretty low risk but that investments would always be kept under review.

Councillor MacPherson raised a query regarding the housing scheme and the numbers in the long term. The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) informed the Committee that housing would be covered in the next report but confirmed that opportunities were regularly considered regarding the acquisition, or the building of properties and that Housing Reserves would be used.

RESOLVED:

1.1 The Committee approved the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2021/22 as per Appendix 1 of the report.

1.2 The Committee noted the Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2021/22 to 2026/27 as per Appendix 2 in the report, as approved in February 2022.

1.3 The Committee approved the updated counterparty (lending) list as at 31st March 2022 as per Appendix 3 of the report.

FM/23 **FINAL CAPITAL OUTTURN 2021/22**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the report the Committee and explained how capital projects spend would be spread over several years with underspends carried over to complete the builds. It was further noted that 70% had been spent over all on the schemes and explained that delays had been due to the Covid Pandemic but that all were moving forward. The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) informed the Committee that the capital reserves in section 4 of the report would be held in the Housing Revue Account reserves which had a new reserve for the upgrade of existing properties or the purchase of new housing stock.

Councillor Wheelton raised queries regarding the number of Right To Buy houses sold compared to the number of acquisitions made and expenditure for village halls.

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) confirmed that about 10 properties had been acquired during the year and that there was a planned

maintenance programme in place for village halls and that funds available for this would be for the Committee to consider in the future.

Members discussed the repair status of village halls but noted that there were some under the parish precepts and that an audit of who had responsibility for which village halls would need to be undertaken before a decision could be made regarding repair funds.

RESOLVED:

1.1 The Committee approved the final Capital outturn position for both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for 2021/22.

1.2 The Committee approved the final balance on Capital Reserves for 2021/22.

FM/24

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2021/25: PROPOSED RESOURCING

The Head of Organisational Development and Performance presented the report and informed the Committee about the work that had been carried out and summarised work planned for 2022/23 with the assistance of the requested part-time additional resource. It was explained how the strategy and action plan fed into actions within the Corporate Plan and assisted to meet statutory requirements. It was further noted that a dedicated resource could support all service areas to deliver statutory duties along with the Council's visions and commitments.

Members commended the report and the work that had been undertaken and affirmed that they were fully supportive of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

RESOLVED:

1.1 The Committee approved the addition of a part time post (22.5 hours) of a Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer on a fixed term contract of 18 months.

1.2 The Committee approved that the post be subject to job evaluation in line with the Council's local scheme.

1.3 The Committee approved that the Council's Guidance on Organisational Change be followed to implement these proposals, including formal consultation with employees and Trade Union representatives.

1.4 The Committee approved that the change be implemented with effect from 1 September 2022.

1.5 The Committee approved that any change to the dates as detailed in the report be delegated to the Strategic Director (Corporate

Resources) in consultation with the Chief Executive and Chair of the Committee.

1.6 The Committee approved that the cost of the new post be funded from the General Fund Reserve.

FM/25 **ANNUAL TRAINING REPORT 2021-2022 AND PRIORITIES FOR 2022/23**

The Head of Organisational Development and Performance presented the report to the Committee and gave an overview of the training undertaken and the priorities and actions for the year ahead, which included an increased level of engagement with the use of a variety of learning platforms and an increase in apprenticeships. The involvement with the East Midlands Council Pitstops and partnership working with Derby Museums were highlighted as success stories. It was further noted that that leadership and management training, development and coaching programmes would be available to aid the progress of staff using a wide range of platforms.

Members commended the report and the increase in the number of apprenticeships.

RESOLVED:

1.1 The Committee noted the investment and outcomes made in learning and development activities from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 which were linked to the delivery of the key priorities of the Council's Corporate Plan.

1.2 The Committee approved the priority areas for learning and development during 2022-2023.

1.3 The Committee approved that the Council continues to provide employment and work experience opportunities under the national Modern Apprenticeship Scheme and other vocational based learning initiatives working with local schools and other academic centres.

FM/26 **DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENT FUND ENHANCEMENTS 2022/2023**

The Head of Customer Services delivered the Report to the Committee and noted that every year the funding amount set by government to help where tenancies may be at risk was spent and that every year the funding pot had been reduced. The Head of Customer Services explained that the additional pot requested was for those who were stuck in properties where they could not move out of and would assist those that would want to move. The positive benefits were summarised and the Committee was informed that after the trial period an update report would be brought back to the Committee the following year.

Members commended the report and spoke of their pride in the way the Council supported residents in need.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 The Committee approved a total of £56,586.97 be transferred into the Council's Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) budget.***
- 1.2 The Committee approved that a further £30,000 be set aside in a separate DHP rent arrears top-up budget.***
- 1.3 The Committee approved the Council's updated DHP Policy as per Appendix 1 of the report.***

FM/27 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

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

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 The Committee considered and approved the updated work programme.***

FM/28 **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.

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

The Committee was informed no questions had been received.

APPOINTMENT OF A RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PANEL

The Committee approved the recommendations in the report.

RE-GRADING OF POST – ACTIVE SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP OFFICER (CP10)

The Committee approved the recommendations in the report.

The meeting terminated at 19:30 hours

COUNCILLOR R PEARSON

CHAIR