

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

08 February 2023

PRESENT:

Labour Group

Councillor Bambrick (Chair) and Stuart (Vice-Chair)
and Councillors Gee and L Mulgrew.

Conservative Group

Councillors Atkin, Hewlett and Muller.

OS/46 **APOLOGIES**

The Committee was informed that apologies had been received from Councillor Ackroyd.

OS/47 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM ITEMS ON AGENDA**

The Committee was informed that no Declarations of Interest had been received.

OS/48 **QUESTIONS RECEIVED BY 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.

OS/49 **QUESTIONS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 11**

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

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

OS/50 **BUDGET SCRUTINY 2023-24**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the report to the Committee giving an overview of the budgets for 2023-24, noting that following consultation with local businesses no questions had been raised. The proposed Council Tax levels and rent increase were outlined.

The Committee was informed that reserves were expected to drop below £1.5 million in 2026/27, and that 2023/24 government funding had reduced but would

be compensated by the growth in the Council Tax Base and a guaranteed grant payment from the Government of £1.8 million. It was further noted that earnings from investment interest was higher than projected.

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) summarised the current cost pressures and mitigation measures and updated the Committee regarding Medium Term financial Plan noting the projected reserves.

The Housing Revenue Account was outlined highlighting the repayment of the national housing debt and risks and cost pressures, that included voids and relets, council house sales and funding uncertainty.

Members raised queries regarding investments, pension contributions, reserves and asset reduction.

The Strategic Director informed the Committee that interest accrued was used to offset debts and that the Council strived to get the best return on investments and invested as safely as it could. The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) explained that the government had made changes to the pension fund which made pensions less attractive and that every 3 years the pension fund was independently revalued and noted the Council was at 100% which meant that currently all pensions could be paid if the Council no longer existed and noted that the Council's contribution had risen up to 20%.

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) confirmed that void costs would be covered by reserves. It was explained how some reserves were set aside for specific things such as vehicle replacements, IT and planned maintenance and that some reserves were set aside to protect service provision such as the funding of temporary staff etc. The Committee was informed that asset reduction had been considered and many assets have been passed across to Parishes which reduced liabilities for the Council.

RESOLVED:

1.1 The Committee considered the proposed budgets of the Council for 2023/24.

1.2 The Committee considered the medium-term financial plans of the General Fund and Housing Revenue Accounts.

OS/51 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

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

RESOLVED:

That the Committee considered and approved the updated work programme.

OS/52 **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 would be 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.

OS/53 **EXEMPT QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

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

The Meeting terminated at 19:05 hours

COUNCILLOR S BAMBRICK

CHAIR