

## FINANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2018 commencing at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllr. Eyre (Vice Chairman in the Chair)

Cllrs. Mrs. Bayley, Bosley, Dr. Canet, Esler, Kelly, Krogdahl and Lake

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. C. Barnes, Pearsall, Pett and Scholey

1. Appointment of Chairman

Resolved: That Cllr. Scholey be appointed as Chairman of the Advisory Committee for 2018/19.

2. Appointment of Vice Chairman

Resolved: That Cllr. Eyre be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Advisory Committee for 2018/19.

(Cllr. Eyre in the Chair)

3. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance Advisory Committee held on 27 March 2018 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

5. Actions from Previous Meeting

The Actions were noted.

6. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit committee (if any)

There were none.

CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS

## Finance Advisory Committee - 5 June 2018

With the Committee's agreement, the Chairman brought forward the consideration of agenda item 8.

### 7. Council Tax Reduction Scheme - 2019/20

The Chief Finance Officer provided details of the proposed Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme, which would be implemented with effect from 1 April 2019.

Members were reminded that the CTR scheme was for working-age applicants only and was means tested.

One of the main components of the current CTR scheme was all applicants were required to pay a minimum of 20% towards their Council Tax liability.

Full service Universal Credit would start in the District in November 2018, which resulted in an increased number of changes to individuals. Based on this and the fact more frequent changes were received due to systems currently in place, the existing CTR scheme was not viable going forward.

The proposal was to have a banded scheme so that the CTR of individuals is not amended every time there is a small change in circumstances. This should make it more efficient for staff and less confusing for customers.

Members questioned the reasoning behind the proposal for the capital limit being reduced from the current £16,000 to £6,000, and the proposal for the child maintenance payments disregard to be removed from the scheme.

The Chief Finance Officer advised that he would investigate, and provide the information at a later date to Members.

*Action 1 - Chief Finance Officer to provide reasons for the proposals to reduce the capital limit from £16,000 to £6,000, and for the child maintenance payments disregard to be removed from the scheme, and provide information to Members when available.*

### Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the progress so far on proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2019/20 be noted.

### 8. Update from Portfolio Holder

The update from the Portfolio Holder was noted by Members of the Committee.

### 9. Financial Performance Indicators 2017/18 to the end of March 2018

## Finance Advisory Committee - 5 June 2018

The Head of Finance presented a report which detailed the ten internally set performance indicators as at the end of March 2018, that covered activities that support information provided in the regular financial monitoring statements, which Members considered.

He advised Members that most indicators met their target by March 2018, or were up for discussion in the coming months.

The report also covered how the use of these indicators meant management were able to highlight areas which had a financial impact on the authority. The Head of Finance explained that of the amount of debt outstanding for more than 21 days is equivalent to 0.73% of debts raised in the previous 12 months or a collection rate of 99.27% (16/17 98.2%). Furthermore, the amount of debt outstanding for more than 61 days is equivalent to 1.17% of debts raised in the previous 12 months or a collection rate of 98.83% (16/17 98.23%).

Members queried the staffing costs versus the debts itself, and the financial implications that this had for the Council. The Head of Finance advised that the team could keep on top of monitoring sundry debts because their flexibility allowed the work (comparable to less than one full time equivalent) to be absorbed and the costings were not significant.

### Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

### 10. Provisional Outturn 2017/18

The Head of Finance reported the Provisional Financial Outturn figures for 2017/18.

It was explained that there had been a favourable variance of £617,000 achieved, which represented 4.2% of the net service expenditure budget.

In response to questions, the Chief Finance Officer explained that there had been additional costs due to difficulties in recruiting technical area roles, which had resulted in the use of agency staff in some areas. Members noted that this issue was currently being considered by the Scrutiny Committee.

In response to Members' questions about staff National Terms and Conditions, the Chief Finance Officer explained that there were no plans for this to change, but work was continuing on the payment packages available to staff to aid retention. This was included in the work carried out by a Scrutiny Committee Working Group, which was looking at overall staff recruitment and retention.

### Public Sector Equality Duty

## Finance Advisory Committee - 5 June 2018

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

- Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the report be noted.
11. Work Plan

The Work Plan was noted.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.20 PM

CHAIRMAN