

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2021 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllr. Dickins (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. McArthur, Dyball, Maskell and Thornton

Cllrs. Pender and Purves were also present.

Cllr. Carroll was present via a virtual media platform, which does not constitute attendance as recognised by the Local Government Act 1972.

21. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 8 July 2021, be agreed and signed as a correct record.

22. Declarations of interest

There were none.

23. Questions from Members (maximum 15 minutes)

A Member asked a question related to an item referred from the Scrutiny Committee (In-Depth Scrutiny Working Group - CCTV). The Chairman indicated that Cabinet would consider the recommendations of the Working Group in full as part of the next agenda item.

24. Matters referred from Council, Audit Committee, Scrutiny Committee, CIL Spending Board or Cabinet Advisory Committees (if any)

a) In-Depth Scrutiny Working Group - CCTV

Members considered the report from the Scrutiny Committee. At its November 2019 meeting the Scrutiny Committee resolved to set up a working group to evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's CCTV Service in supporting the Community Safety Theme of the Council's Plan and its impact of privacy. The working group considered the number and location of CCTV cameras provided across the District and their effectiveness in meeting the aims of the CCTV service the impact of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and recovery costs.

Resolved: That

- a) Further information be obtained to assist in justifying the pressing need for CCTV;

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- b) the Council should not disable or remove the audio recording hardware from the cameras in the Council Offices but should ensure that it is made clear that an audio recording is made; and
- c) a request to third parties, such as the Police for them to recover costs of running the CCTV Service, be considered.

25. Bank Account Signatories

The Principal Accountant presented a report which sought approval for a change to the list of officers authorised to sign cheques and sanction banking instruments on behalf of the Council, in order to bring up to date the list of authorised signatories for the Council's bank accounts.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That, pursuant to Financial Procedure Rules 4.73 and 4.74, Mr Joshua Bell, Senior Accountant, be authorised to sign cheques and sanction banking instruments on behalf of the Council.

26. Treasury Management Annual Report 2020/21

The Portfolio Holder Finance & Investment presented the report which sought approval of the Treasury Management Annual report 2020/21. The Principal Accountant set out that the report outlined the strategy adopted during the year, showed the position of the investment and debt portfolios at the beginning and the end of year and gave details of how the investment fund performed in comparison with previous years and against various benchmarks.

Members were advised that the Finance & Investment Advisory Committee had considered the same report and recommended it for approval.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That Treasury Management Annual Report for 2020/21, be approved.

27. Financial Results 2021/22 to the end of July 2021

The Portfolio Holder Finance & Investment presented the report on the Council's financial results to the of June 2021, which showed the year-end position was currently forecast to be an unfavourable variance of £0.246m which was largely due to COVID-19.

The Head of Finance spoke on this item and indicated that the forecast variance represented 1.4% of the Council's net service expenditure budget totalling £17.015m.

Members were advised that Finance & Investment Advisory Committee had noted the same report.

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.

28. Financial Prospects and Budget Strategy 2022/23 and Beyond

The Portfolio Holder Finance & Investment presented the report which was the first report of the Council's budget setting process for 2022/23 onwards. It set out the financial pressures the Council was likely to face in the coming years and suggested an appropriate strategy, utilising the 10-year budget framework, which had proved successful to date and put the Council in a much stronger financial position than most other Councils.

To achieve this and ensure a balanced budget position over the next 10-year period would continue to be challenging largely due to the uncertainties and ongoing financial impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The budget process would be the same as two years ago as opposed to the shortened process last year, however it was planned to shorten the process in future years to run from November to February. The Portfolio Holder advised that Finance & Investment Advisory Committee had considered the same report.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Finance and Trading set out that the annual budget gap included in the report was £100,000, which related to the annual savings target. However, it was expected that the gap would increase due to the impacts of homelessness, ongoing Covid-19 impacts and inflationary pressures. Growth and savings proposals were to be presented to the Advisory Committees and Cabinet, and their recommendations would be considered as part of the process to remove the gap.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Resolved: That

- a) the ten-year financial planning approach; financial strategy and principles set out in this report, be endorsed;
- b) Advisory Committees be requested to review the Service Dashboards and advise Cabinet of possible growth and savings options; and

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- c) Officers be requested to continue to review the assumptions in this report and consider options to address the budget gap and report back to Cabinet on 9 December 2021.

IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

This notice was published on 17 September 2021. The decisions contained in Minutes 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28 take effect immediately.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 7.47 PM

CHAIRMAN