

THE EXECUTIVE

Meeting: Thursday, 8 February 2024 at 6.00 pm in Virtual Meeting

Present: Councillor A McKeown (Chair)

Councillors A Barrow, G Claff, D Greenhalgh, F Sloman, M Taylor and J Todd

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Baker

The Chair announced that due to the adverse weather conditions it had been decided to hold the meeting online. Officers would take any decisions on behalf of councillors in accordance with urgency powers in the Council's Constitution.

24/40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
(Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations made.

24/41 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
(Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2023 be approved as a correct record, subject to the correction of a typographical error.

24/42 FORWARD PLAN
(Agenda Item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Plan be noted.

24/43 QUARTER 3 FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND PROCUREMENT REPORT
(Agenda Item 5)

The purpose of the report was to inform members of the Council's overall performance and financial position for the period ended 31st December ("Third Quarter 2023/24"). The report summarised the Council's performance and financial position after considering service activity up to the end of the Third Quarter (i.e. 31st December 2023). The report was considered by the Corporate Select Committee on 5 February 2024.

Options considered:

Detailed analysis was contained within the report appendices.

RESOLVED:

That the third quarter 2023/24 financial, procurement and performance position detailed in Appendices A, B and C and summarised at 3.3 of the covering report be noted.

24/44 2024/25 BUDGET & MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2024/25 TO 2027/28

(Agenda Item 6)

The purpose of the report was to present the proposed Budget for 2024/25, updated Medium-Term Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2027/28, Capital Strategy 2024/25, proposed Fees and Charges for 2024/25, and Procurement Forward Plan 2024/25. The report was considered by the Corporate Select Committee on 5 February 2024.

Options considered:

The report recommended a Council Tax level and associated budget, Medium Term Financial Plan, Capital Strategy (and future capital programme) and Fees & Charges for 2023/24 designed to best deliver the Council's corporate priorities within a balanced budget. Other options were feasible, but any alternatives would need to identify the service and financial implications robustly in order to satisfy the Council's Section 151 Officer (under the Local Government Finance Act 1988, section 114) of the need to deliver a balanced budget.

RESOLVED:

That the Executive be recommended to make the following recommendations to Council:

- Approves the General Fund Budget for 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix A (section 8).
- Approves the revised Medium-Term Financial Plan (2024/25 to 2027/28) as detailed in Appendix A, including the revised Capital Programme (attached at Annex A).
- Approves the Capital Strategy 2024/25 as set out in Appendix B.
- Approves the proposed Fees and Charges for 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix C.
- Approves the proposed Procurement Forward Plan for 2024/25, providing the Authority to procure based on procurement activity detailed in Appendix D.
- Approves a Band D Council Tax of £217.68 for 2024/25 (an increase of £6.32 or 2.99% from 2023/24).
- HRA charges as follows:
 - All dwellings rents to increase by 7.7%, increasing the average rent from £77.78 to £84.09 per week (average rent takes into account

new tenancies let over the previous year where the higher formula rent was charged. This gives an arithmetical increase of 8.01%)

- Garage rents to be increased by 5% from £8.26 to £8.68 average per week.
 - Other Charges including service charges to increase by a maximum of 5%.
 - Fuel charges at individual blocks have been reviewed and the 2024/25 charge is based on the previous years usage and estimated costs, charged on an individual scheme basis.
- Notes the Chief Finance Officer's view that the level of reserves are adequate for the Council, based on this budget and the circumstances in place at the time of preparing it (Appendix A Annex C).

24/45

COUNCIL TAX SECOND HOME AND EMPTY PROPERTY PREMIUMS (Agenda Item 7)

The purpose of the was to recommend the implementation of the premium for empty homes (that have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for one year or more) from 1 April 2024, and to implement the premium for second homes (no one's sole or main residence) from 1 April 2025. The report was considered by the Corporate Select Committee on 5 February 2024.

Options considered:

- With effect from 1 April 2024, implement a 100% premium on empty properties that have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for one year or more.
- With effect from 1 April 2025, implement the maximum premium of 100% on second homes (a property that is no one's sole or main residence and is substantially furnished).
- Make no changes to these classes of property.

RESOLVED:

That Members note the content of the report and approve the following recommendations to Council:

1. Implement the premium of 100% for properties that have been empty for over one year (applied to properties over two years currently) from 1 April 2024.
2. Implement the maximum premium of 100% for second homes from 1 April 2025 (this being the earliest that the new charge can apply, as legislation states that twelve months' notice is required to be given to existing owners of second homes).
3. Where premiums are to be applied, the Council is mindful of the current consultation by government, which recommends exceptions in certain circumstances outlined within this report. Subject to the outcome of that consultation, it is recommended that the Section 151 Officer be given

delegated powers to implement the Council's policy on premiums in line with statute, the Council's requirements and any guidance given by the Secretary of State.

24/46 TO APPROVE THE EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
(Agenda Item 9)

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2023 be approved as a correct record.

24/47 APPLICATION FOR WRITE OFF OF NON- RECOVERABLE DEBTS
(Agenda Item 10)

The Executive approved a report that sought approval to write off balances which were deemed non recoverable.

24/48 TO RESOLVE THAT THE PUBLIC AND PRESS BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS BECAUSE THERE MAY BE DISCLOSURE TO THEM OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN PART 1 OF SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972.
(Agenda Item 8)

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business as there maybe disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The meeting concluded at 6.36 pm

CHAIRMAN