

THE CABINET
19th July, 2021

Present:- Councillor Read (in the Chair); Councillors Alam, Allen, Beck, Brookes and Roche.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Clark, Cusworth, Lelliott and Sheppard.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

18. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present at the meeting and no questions submitted in writing.

19. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Further to Minute No. 3, it was advised prior to the meeting that Cabinet would formally respond to the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board Working Group review on building use at the September 2021 meeting.

Resolved: -

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Cabinet held on 21st June, 2021, be approved as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

20. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chair advised that Appendix 1 to Minute No. 25 was exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. However, the Appendix was not discussed during the meeting and as such, the meeting remained open to the press and public throughout.

21. TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN 2020/21

Consideration was given to the Annual Treasury Management report, which was submitted to review the treasury activity for 2020/21 against the strategy agreed at the start of the year. The report also covered the actual Prudential Indicators for 20/21 in accordance with the requirements of the Prudential Code. The report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Council is required to comply with both Codes through Regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003.

Furthermore, the Council received an Annual Treasury Strategy report in advance of the 2020/21 financial year at its meeting on 26th February, 2020, and the Audit Committee received a mid-year report at its meeting on 19th January, 2021, representing a mid-year review of treasury activity during 2020/21.

The Council's treasury management functions had been operating within unprecedented times of uncertainty due to the exit from the EU and the financial pressures and overall effect of COVID-19. It was expected that the impacts were due to last for several years. However, the Council had been able to manage cashflow levels for the majority of the financial year without significant difficulty.

Resolved:-

- (1) That the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators outturn position as set out in Section 3 and Appendix 1 be noted; and
- (2) That the report be forwarded to the Audit Committee for information.

22. FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2020/21

Consideration was given to a report which outlined the final revenue and capital outturn position for 2020/21. It was reported that the Revenue Budget 2020/21 was approved by Council on 26th February, 2020. A budget of £233.3m was set for General Fund services, which excluded schools' budgets and Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

The final outturn position was an underspend against budget of £6.1m following the mitigating actions taken to manage the financial impacts of COVID-19. It incorporated the late receipt of £2m of Government support towards costs associated with Operation Stovewood and after a proposed transfer of £2m to create a new Children and Young Peoples Services Social Care Reserve. The mitigation actions included the application of Government's provision of £18.9m emergency funding to support the COVID-19 response and cost implications of this, the submission of compensation claims totalling £4.8m relating to the adverse impact of COVID-19 on Sales, Fees and Charges income and the use in 2020/21 of £5.2m from the Control Outbreak Management Fund (COMF.) Without the grant funding streams, the Council's financial outturn would have been a £22.8m overspend.

The report suggested a prudent use of the remaining underspend following its transfer to the Council's reserves. From this underspend, an allocation of £2m was to be earmarked for a COVID-19 Recovery Fund in order to support local residents throughout the remainder of the pandemic. A report would be brought back to Cabinet later in the year setting out how the Fund would be utilised. A further £2.4m was to be earmarked to support the budget gap within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2022/23. The remaining £1.7m would be held within

the Council's Budget Contingency Reserve as per the approved Strategy and recommendations within the Council's Budget and Council Tax Report 2021/22.

The Housing Revenue Account had an underspend of £2.8m. However, the revenue contribution to capital outlay was increased by £0.2m. Therefore, the net budgeted use of HRA reserves reduced by £2.6m.

The Capital outturn shows slippages and underspend of £44.6m against the estimated spend for 2020/21 included within the Capital Programme. The pandemic had significantly impacted the delivery of a number of schemes, in the main due to COVID-19 restrictions impacting how works were undertaken.

It was noted that the report had been submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for pre-decision scrutiny on 14th July 2021, where Members had supported the recommendations in the report.

Resolved:-

- (1) That the revenue outturn position be noted.
- (2) That the budgeted transfer from HRA reserves was reduced by £2.6m following the HRA revenue and capital outturn positions be noted.
- (3) That the carry forward of the combined schools balance of £3.066m in accordance with the Department for Education regulations be noted.
- (4) That the reserves position set out in section 2.44 be noted.
- (5) That the capital outturn and funding position as set out in sections 2.54 to 2.75 be noted.
- (6) That the report be referred to Council for information and for approval of the updated Capital Programme as set out in paragraphs 2.76 and 2.79 and Appendices A to D of this report.
- (7) That the transfer of £2m of Council funding into a newly created Children's and Young People's Services Social Care Reserve to support current and future pressures, be approved.
- (8) That the transfer of £4.4m of Council funding into the Budget Strategy Reserve, with £2m earmarked for a Covid Recovery Fund with specific use delegated to Cabinet, and £2.4m earmarked to support the MTFS budget gap for 2022/23, be approved.

23. MAY 2021/22 FINANCIAL MONITORING

Consideration was given to the report which set out the financial position as at the end of May 2021 and was based on the actual costs and income for the first two months of 2021/22 and forecast for the remainder of the financial year.

Members noted that financial performance was a key element within the assessment of the Council's overall performance framework and was essential to achievement of the objectives within the Council's Policy Agenda. The report was the first in a series of monitoring reports for the 2021/22 financial year which would continue to be brought forward to Cabinet on a regular basis.

As at May 2021, the Council expected to deliver the overall outturn within budget for the financial year 2021/22. However, it was noted that the longer term impacts of COVID-19, extended restrictions and the pace at which Services could return to normal was unknown.

It was noted that the report had been submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for pre-decision scrutiny on 14th July 2021, where Members had supported the recommendations in the report. OSMB had also requested that a report be presented at a future meeting of the Board that detailed how the changes that had been made to how the Council operated and provided services as a result of the pandemic had informed budget management procedures, and whether these changes to how the Council operates had highlighted any new opportunities where future budget savings could potentially be made. The Board also requested that information on the budget processes and on the assumptions used to determine staffing budgets across all Directorates be circulated to members of OSMB.

Resolved:-

- (1) That the current General Fund Revenue Budget forecast of a balanced budget be noted.
- (2) That it be noted that actions will continue to be taken to ensure that a balanced financial outturn is delivered.
- (3) That the Capital Programme update be noted.
- (4) That the use of the additional Local Support Grant, as detailed in section 2.45, and the use of unringfenced COVID grants to cover the estimated overspend of £50k, be noted.
- (5) That authority for the management and delivery of the extended Infection Control and Testing Funding is delegated to the Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health.

- (6) That a report be presented at a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board that details how the changes that have been made to how the Council operates and provides services as a result of the pandemic have informed budget management procedures, and whether these changes to how the Council operates have highlighted any new opportunities where future budget savings could potentially be made.
- (7) That information on the budget processes and on the assumptions used to determine staffing budgets across all directorates be circulated to members of OSMB.

24.

NEW APPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS RATES RELIEF

Two applications had been submitted requesting Discretionary Business Rate Relief. The applications related to Food Aware CIC and Kiveton Park & Wales Community Development Trust. Both applications were in line with the Council's Business Rates Discretionary Relief Policy and it was recommended that the award for relief be granted to both organisations.

Food Aware CIC was a not for profit social enterprise which redistributed surplus/donated food and other items such as cleaning materials, clothes, toys and furniture to local community groups. Throughout the pandemic, the organisation estimated it had seen operations at the Hellaby site increase 1000%.

Kiveton Park and Wales Community Development Trust was a charity that aimed to improve the lives of the local community in terms of health, education, employment and environment through services such as a food bank, sports facilities and a community hub.

Resolved:-

That Cabinet approve the applications for Discretionary Business Rates Relief for Food Aware CIC and Kiveton Park & Wales Community Development Trust in accordance with the details set out in Section 6 of the report for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years.

25.

NEW APPLICATION FOR BUSINESS RATES HARDSHIP RELIEF

The Council had received an application for Business Rates Hardship Relief that met the Council's qualifying criteria. Granting the relief would assist the organisation through a difficult period and it was considered that the loss of the vital service, should support not be provided, would have a significant impact on the more vulnerable communities in the Borough.

The details of the organisation were exempt under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as to disclose the applicant's business financial information could jeopardise the reputation of the business and place competitors at an unfair advantage. The details were available to Cabinet Members in exempt Appendix 1 to the report.

Resolved:-

That the application for Hardship Relief be approved.

26. LOCAL PLAN: ADOPTION OF HERITAGE AT RISK STRATEGY AND REGISTER

Consideration was given to the report which presented the Heritage at Risk Strategy and Heritage Register. The Strategy set out the actions which the Council would take to reduce the number of assets at risk and achieve the repair and restoration of assets which would otherwise be lost. The Council would work where possible with owners of the heritage assets but the Strategy also identifies actions which may be taken where this cannot be achieved.

Approval was also sought for the current Heritage at Risk Register which identifies assets which are at risk of further deterioration and loss. The Register was a live document which would be kept updated.

If Cabinet was to approve the Strategy and Register, the documents would be available for a 6 weeks consultation period. Should any significant changes be needed following the consultation, the document would be brought back to Cabinet for consideration, however, this was not expected.

It was confirmed that the Council would work with the South Yorkshire Joint Committee on Archaeology when required in relation to heritage assets.

It was noted that the report had been submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for pre-decision scrutiny on 14th July 2021, where Members had supported the recommendations in the report.

Resolved:-

- (1) Subject to the completion of a 6-week period of consultation with key stakeholders, that Cabinet approves the adoption of the Heritage at Risk Strategy at Appendix 4. Should any significant changes arise from the consultation these are to be reported back to Cabinet in due course.

- (2) Subject to the completion of a 6-week period of consultation with key stakeholders, that Cabinet approves the current Heritage at Risk Register at Appendix 5 and notes that it will be subject to future updates. Should any significant changes arise from the consultation these are to be reported back to Cabinet in due course.
- (3) That Cabinet approve delegation to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, to update the Risk Register as and when new buildings become at risk or works to remove the risk have been undertaken.
- (4) That Cabinet approves the use of the Heritage at Risk Register to inform prioritising actions and resources to address the potential deterioration and loss of heritage assets.

27. TRANSPORT CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND NEIGHBOURHOOD ROAD SAFETY PROGRAMME MID -YEAR SCHEME APPROVALS

Consideration was given to the report which was further to reports in December 2020 and March 2021 to approve the current year transport programme additional schemes which had been identified for delivery during 2021/22.

The Neighbourhood Road Safety Programme was a 3-year programme with a fixed budget ceiling. 2021/22 was the final year of the programme and it was expected that the full budget will have been utilised if Cabinet approved the schemes set out in Appendix 2. There were 7 schemes proposed for delivery: Duke of Norfolk Estate; Boston Castle Grove; Hellaby Village; Ravenfield Lane; The Green, Whiston; Poplar Avenue/Pingles Crescent and Ivanhoe Avenue, Kiveton Park. The Schemes had been identified following invitation of requests from Ward Councillors in July 2020 and had undergone assessment for feasibility.

Resolved:-

That Cabinet approves the Neighbourhood Road Safety Schemes listed in Appendix 2 for delivery in 2021-22 and delegates the decision on any necessary changes to the programme to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment.

28. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Consideration was given to the circulated report, the contents of which were included as part of the relevant items and the details included accordingly.

29. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:-

That the next meeting of the Cabinet be held on Monday, 16th August, 2021, commencing at 10.00 a.m. in Rotherham Town Hall.