

Council

Tuesday, 21 February 2023

Decisions

Set out below is a summary of the decisions taken at the meeting of the Council held on Tuesday, 21 February 2023. The wording used does not necessarily reflect the actual wording that will appear in the minutes.

If you have any queries about any matters referred to in this decision sheet please contact Democratic Services.

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-2028 (Cabinet 12 December 2022)

Council

Agreed to

- A)** Acknowledge the projected changes in service spending and the overall resources available to the Council over the medium-term to 2025/2028.
- B)** Approve the refreshed Medium Term Financial Strategy at Appendix A and updated financial forecast at Appendix B.

New Build Council Housing Strategy 2020-25 (Cabinet, 6 February 2023)

Council

Agreed to approve the updates to the New Build Council Housing Strategy 2020-25, including

- A)** Setting the target annual completions for 2023-24 and 2024-25 at 75 homes per year; and
- B)** Increasing the modelling period for payback from 35 to 45 years.

Business Plan Action Plan - 2023-24 (Cabinet 6 February 2023)

Council

Agreed to

- A)** Consider and approve the proposed Business Plan Action Plan for 2023-24 at Appendix A.
- B)** Authorise the Chief Executive to make any minor wording changes required to final draft, in consultation with the Leader.

Capital Strategy (Cabinet 6 February 2023)

Council

Agreed to approve the updated Capital Strategy attached at Appendix A

to the report, which sets the policy framework for the development, management and monitoring of capital investment, including Prudential Indicators.

Treasury Management Strategy (Cabinet 6 February 2023)

Council

Agreed to approve the updated Treasury Management Strategy attached at Appendix A to the report which sets the policy framework for the Council's treasury management activity, including (i) the Treasury Management Policy Statement, (ii) Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and (iii) Treasury indicators.

Review of Revenue Reserves and Provisions (Cabinet 6 February 2023)

Council

Agreed

- A)** That the Reserves as summarised at paragraph 11 of the report be released to the General Fund, or transferred to other Earmarked Reserves as shown, on 31 March 2023.
- B)** That the IT software and hardware reserves be amalgamated at 31 March 2023 to provide the necessary flexibility.
- C)** That the movement in Reserves in 2022/2023 as set out in Appendix A, and the estimated balance of Reserves of £29.830 million (+), be noted.

Capital Programme 2023/24 - 2027/28 (Cabinet 6 February 2023)

Council

Agreed to approve the General Fund Capital Programme following a detailed review of the rolling programme by Cabinet at its meeting on 06 February 2023.

Localised Council Tax Support 2023/24 (Cabinet 6 February 2023)

Council

Agreed to approve Scheme Option 1 which comprised the LCTS Income Band scheme currently in operation and increased working age scheme to a maximum 100% reduction for all working age claimants, with an uprating of calculation annually in line with CPI in September adjustment to earnings disregarding increasing support to those who are working.

General Fund Budget 2023/24 (Cabinet 6 February 2023)

Council

Agreed to

- A)** Take into account the detailed budgets presented at Appendix B, and summarised at Appendix A, with an estimated General Fund Gross Operating Expenditure for 2023/2024 of £84.868 million, estimated Gross Operating Income of £54.622 million and estimated General Fund Net Operating Expenditure of £30.246 million.
- B)** Acknowledge the key factors which have led to the proposed 2023/2024 General Fund Revenue Budget, with service pressures summarised at Appendix C and offsetting efficiency savings/policy options summarised at Appendix D.
- C)** Acknowledge that the 2023/2024 General Fund Revenue Budget gross expenditure is covered by forecast income sources (assuming no change in Government grant) and, therefore, any addition(s) to expenditure that are made by the Cabinet or Council will need to be met from the General Fund Balance.
- D)** Approve the 2022/2023 General Fund Revenue Budget taking into account the statement by the Chief Finance Officer on the risks and robustness of the estimates as required under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 (reproduced at Appendix F).
- E)** Set the Council Tax Requirement for 2023/2024 at £11,130,440.
- F)** Approve an increase in the District element of the Council Tax of £5 per annum, giving an average Band D Council Tax of £165.31, plus the relevant amounts required by the precepts of the Parish Councils, Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Commissioner, and the Cambridgeshire Fire Authority.
- G)** Approve the estimates of the amounts required to be made under the Non-domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013 as set out in paragraphs 38 and 39.
- H)** Approve the use of the additional income from the Business Rate Pool, estimated at £1,000,000 in 2023/2024, for transfer to the established Renewables Reserve for priority projects.
- I)** Council approved:
- 1) The 2023/2024 General Fund Revenue Budget based on known commitments at this time and planned levels of Service/functions resulting in a Budget Requirement of £32.918 million.
 - 2) The District Council Precept on the Collection Fund (Council Tax Requirement) of £11.130 million in 2023/2024 (based on the Provisional Government Settlement) and a Band D Council Tax of £165.31.

Housing Revenue Account Budget 2023/24 (Cabinet 6 February 2023)

Council

Agreed to

Housing Revenue Account (HRA): Revenue

- A)** Approve the HRA revenue budget for 2023/2024 as shown in the HRA Budget Summary as presented at **Appendix A**.

HRA: Review of Rents and Charges

- B)** Approve that council dwelling rents for all social rented properties be increased by 7%, recognising that inflation measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) at September 2022, plus 1% would result in an increase of 11.1%, but that the government has introduced a cap on rent increases at 7% from April 2023.
- C)** Approve that affordable rents (inclusive of service charge) are also increased by 7% in line with the increase for social rents.
- D)** Approve that rents for affordable shared ownership properties are increased by 7% or RPI at January 2023 plus 0.5% whichever is the lower, from April 2023, recognising that although the government rent cap does not apply to this tenure, an increase of in excess of 7% may put undue financial pressure on these households.
- E)** Approve that garage rents be increased by 7% in line with the increase for social rents.
- F)** Approve the proposed service charges for HRA services and facilities provided to both tenants and leaseholders, as shown in **Appendix D**.

HRA: Capital

- G)** Approve the required level of funding for new build investment between 2023/2024 and 2027/2028 to ensure that commitments can be met in respect of the investment of all right to buy receipts currently retained or anticipated to be received by the authority for this period. This expenditure will take the form of HRA new build, with the 60% top up met by other HRA resources.
- H)** Approve the HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy forecasts as shown in **Appendix B**.
- I)** Approve the Housing Capital Programme as shown in **Appendix C**.

Council Tax Resolution

Council

Agreed to approve the formal Council Tax resolution for 2023/24.

Swavesey Byeways Rate 2023/24

Council

Agreed to retain the level of the Swavesey Bye-ways rate at £1.20 per hectare for land with the charge paying area for the period 2023/24 in order to fund the required level of maintenance.

Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel - Members' Allowances Scheme 2022/23

Council

Agreed to

- A)** Approve a revised Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2022/23 (see Appendix A) and, agreed the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, to approve the implementation of:-
- 1) The increase in the Basic Allowance to £5,501 (equivalent to a 4.25% increase) retrospectively with effect from 1 April 2022; and
 - 2) The increase to all the Special Responsibility Allowances of 4.25%, retrospectively with effect from 1 April 2022.
- B)** Authorise the Head of HR, Transformation and Corporate Services to implement and advertise the new scheme and make any consequential amendments required to the Scheme of Members' Allowances in Part 6 of the Constitution.

Calendar of Meetings 2023/24

Council

Agreed to approve the Calendar of Meetings for 2023/24.

Update on the Ox Cam Regional Partnership

Council

Endorsed South Cambridgeshire District Council Cabinet's intention to confirm its membership of the Oxford to Cambridge Partnership as it becomes formally recognised and funded by Government as a Pan-Regional Partnership (PRP) and the appointment of the Leader as the Council's representative on the PRP.

Standing in the names of Councillors Bridget Smith and Heather Williams

Council

Agreed the following motion:

The intimidation and abuse of councillors, in person or otherwise, undermines democracy; preventing elected members from representing the communities

they serve, deterring individuals from standing for election, and undermining public life in democratic processes.

This council notes that increasing levels of toxicity in public and political discourse is having a detrimental impact on local democracy and that prevention, support and responses to abuse and intimidation of local politicians must improve to ensure councillors feel safe and able to continue representing their residents.

This council therefore commits to challenge the normalisation of abuse against councillors and uphold exemplary standards of public and political debate in all it does. The council further agrees to sign up to the LGA's Debate Not Hate campaign. The campaign aims to raise public awareness of the role of councillors in local communities, encourage healthy debate and improve the response to and support for local politicians facing abuse and intimidation.

In addition, the council resolves to:

- Use the LGA template letter to write to the local Members of Parliament to ask them to support the campaign
- Use the LGA template letter to write to the Government to ask them to work with the LGA to develop and implement a plan to address abuse and intimidation of politicians
- Regularly review the support available to councillors in relation to abuse and intimidation and councillor safety
- Work with the local police to ensure there is a clear and joined-up mechanism for reporting threats and other concerns about the safety of councillors and their families
- Take a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of councillors and officers