

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee held as a Virtual Meeting
on Monday, 18th January, 2021 at 7.30 pm

1 WELCOME AND REMOTE/PARTLY REMOTE MEETINGS PROTOCOL SUMMARY

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer undertook a roll call to ensure all those present could hear and be heard and drew attention to the Remote/Partly Remote Meetings Protocol which was noted.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

3 MINUTES - 16 MARCH 2020 - 3 DECEMBER 2020

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee held on 16 March 2020, 15 June 2020, 20 July 2020, 7 September 2020 and 3 December 2020 be approved as a true record of the proceedings; and
- (2) That, with the authorisation of the Chair, her electronic signature and initials be attached to the Minutes approved in (1) above.

4 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

5 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chair welcomed those present at the meeting;
- (2) The Chair announced that, in accordance with Council policy, this meeting was being audio recorded as well as filmed. The audio recordings would be available to view on Mod.gov and the film recording via the NHDC Youtube channel; and
- (3) Members were reminded to make declarations of interest before an item, the detailed reminder about this and speaking rights was set out under Chair's Announcements on the agenda.

6 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

7 ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2019/2020

RESOLVED: That the Annual Audit Letter 2019/2020 be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To communicate to Members the key issues arising from Ernst and Young's audit work for 2019/2020.

8 REVENUE BUDGET 2021/22

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the decrease in the 2020/21 working budget of £129k, as detailed in table 5, be approved.

That Cabinet recommend to Council:

- (2) That the position on the Collection Fund and how it will be funded be noted;
- (3) That the position relating to the General Fund balance and that due to the risks identified a minimum balance of £3.7 million is recommended, be noted;
- (4) That the savings and investments as detailed in Appendix B be approved;
- (5) That a net expenditure budget of £16.390m, as detailed in Appendix C, be approved. In the event of a £10 band D increase being allowed, then Appendix D would apply.
- (6) That a Council Tax increase by the maximum allowed without the need for a local referendum in 2021/22 (as per the Medium Term Financial Strategy), be approved. This is likely to be an amount of £5 for a band D property, with other increases pro-rata to this. However in response to the consultation on the Local Government settlement, a £10 increase for a band D property (other bands pro-rate) may be allowed.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To ensure that all relevant factors are considered in arriving at a proposed budget and Council Tax level for 2021/22, to be considered by Full Council on 11 February 2021.
- (2) To ensure that Cabinet recommends a balanced budget to Full Council on 11 February 2021.

9 INVESTMENT STRATEGY (INTEGRATED CAPITAL AND TREASURY)

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

That Cabinet recommend to Council:

- (1) That it adopts the Investment Strategy (as attached at Appendix A), including the capital programme and prudential indicators; and
- (2) That it adopts the four clauses in relation to the Code of Practice on Treasury Management (as detailed in paragraphs 8.12 to 8.17).

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To ensure that the capital programme meets the Council's objectives and officers can plan the implementation of the approved schemes;
- (2) To ensure the Council's compliance with CIPFA's code of practice on Treasury Management, the Local Government Act 2003, statutory guidance from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the CIPFA Prudential Code. As well as determining and managing the Councils risk appetite in respect of investments.

10 POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chair asked Members if they had in mind any possible agenda items for future meetings.

The following items were raised:

- Grant Schemes in relation to Covid-19 and how much funding has been distributed; and
- An update on Grants and how they were being awarded.

The Service Director – Resources responded that:

- Grant Schemes in relation to Covid-19 and how much funding had been distributed could be added to the Third Quarter Revenue Budget Monitoring Report;
- An update on Grants and how they were being awarded would be added to all future Quarterly Revenue Budget Monitoring Reports until no longer considered necessary.