

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Gernon Road,
Letchworth
on Thursday, 23rd February, 2023 at 7.30 pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Carol Stanier, Kay Tart, Faye Frost, Juan Cowell, Sam Collins, Clare Billing, George Davies, Ian Moody and Raj Bhakar.

2 MINUTES - 19 JANUARY 2023

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 19 January 2023 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

3 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

4 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (2) Members were reminded that this Council had declared a Climate Emergency. This was a serious decision and meant that, as this was an emergency, all of us, officers and Members had that in mind as we carried out our various roles and tasks for the benefit of our District.
- (3) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct any declarations of interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.
- (4) The Chair clarified the rules of debate for Members.
- (5) The Chair advised that for the purposes of clarification that 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution did not apply to this meeting.
- (6) The Chair advised that the Chair's Civic Event scheduled for 19 March 2023 had been cancelled.
- (7) The Chair advised that the North Herts Heroes Award Ceremony would take place on Friday 3 March 2023 and would be available to watch on the North Herts Council YouTube channel.
- (8) The Chair advised that the Council meeting scheduled for 30 March 2023 had been moved to 18 April 2023.
- (9) The Chair encouraged Members to promote the requirement of Photo ID for voting using the flyers and posters provided.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation at this meeting.

6 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

There were no questions submitted by Members.

7 NOTICE OF MOTIONS

There were no motions submitted.

8 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

8a) Referral from Cabinet on 31 January 2023 – Revenue Budget 2023/24

The Chair advised that this referral would be taken with Item 10 'Revenue Budget 2023/24'.

8b) Referral from Cabinet on 31 January 2023 – Investment Strategy (Integrated Capital and Treasury)

The Chair advised that this referral would be taken with Item 11 'Investment Strategy (Integrated Capital and Treasury)'.

8c) Referral from Overview and Scrutiny on 24 January 2023 – Women's Safety Charter

RESOLVED: That Council continued to support the work of Community Safety Partnerships and other partner agencies and work on the delivery of a Women's Safety Charter alongside these agencies.

REASON FOR DECISION: To highlight and enable Full Council to consider the important work of the Community Safety Partnerships and other partner agencies as well as the delivery of a Women's Safety Charter alongside these agencies.

9 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Council approved the 2023/24 Pay Policy Statement attached at Appendix 1.
- (2) That Council delegated authority for revisions made in year to the pay Policy Statement to the Service Director – Resources, in consultation with the Leader of the Council. Revisions which might arise in the year included changes in structure, changes to employment benefits, subsequent pay awards agreed nationally and new legislative requirements.

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To comply with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011, Statutory Guidance issued under s40 and the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

10 REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24

RESOLVED: That Council:

- (1) Noted the position on the Collection fund and how it will be funded.
- (2) Noted the position relating to the General Fund balance and that due to the risk identified a minimum balance of £2.5million was recommended.

- (3) Noted the net revenue savings that are likely to be required in future years, combined with the Chief Finance Officer's commentary on the reliability of estimates and the resilience index.
- (4) Approved the revenue savings and investments as detailed in Appendix B.
- (5) Approved a net expenditure budget of £18.123m, as detailed in Appendix C.
- (6) Approved a Council Tax increase of 2.99%, which was in line with the provisions in the Medium term Financial Strategy.
- (7) Approved that the revenue investment for leisure centre condition surveys (as detailed in Appendix B, reference R13) and £10k of the consultancy and legal support for the leisure contract (as detailed in Appendix B, reference R37) is brought forward so that it can be spent in 2022/23.
- (8) Approved an additional revenue investment (for 2023/24 only) to create a Community Wealth Fund of £100k to support the local community in delivering projects that have wider community benefits.
- (9) Noted the staff resourcing issues that the Council faces, particularly in relation to planning and the strategic implementation of the Local Plan. Council further notes that Cabinet and the Head of Paid Service will look at options to make use of available resources (such as carry-forward of unspent salary budgets) to support the delivery of key Council functions and priorities.

REASON FOR DECISION: To ensure all relevant factors are considered in arriving at a budget and Council Tax level for 2023/24. To ensure that the budget is aligned to Council priorities for 2023/24 as set out in the Council Plan.

11 INVESTMENT STRATEGY (INTEGRATED CAPITAL AND TREASURY)

RESOLVED: That Council:

- (1) Approved the adoption of the Investment Strategy (as attached at Appendix A as amended), including the capital programme and prudential indicators. This incorporates the changes referenced in paragraph 5.4.
- (2) Approved the adoption of the four clauses in relation to the Code of Practice on Treasury Management (as detailed in Paragraphs 8.11 to 8.16).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- (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 Council's compliance with the CIPFA code of practise on Treasury Management, the Local Government Act 2003, statutory guidance from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the CIPFA Prudential Code. As well as determining and managing the Council's risk appetite in respect of investments.