

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth on Wednesday, 8th March, 2023 at 7.30 pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Terry Hone.

2 MINUTES - 25 JANUARY 2023

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 25 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) 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.
- (3) The Chair advised for the purposes of clarification for that 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution did not apply to this meeting.
- (4) The Chair led a Minute's silence in memory of former Councillor John Bishop, who passed away on 2 March 2023.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation at this meeting.

6 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

RESOLVED: That the Committee approved the amended AGS and Action plan (Appendix A).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

1. The AGS must be considered and approved by this Committee before the approval of the Statement of Accounts under Regulation 6(4)(a) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations ('AAR' 2015/234).
2. The Committee is the legal body with responsibility for approval of the AGS.
3. Reviewing the AGS Action Plan during 2022-23 will provide the committee with assurances that the Council is examining and where necessary improving its governance arrangements.

7 LOCAL CODE OF GOVERNANCE

RESOLVED: That the Committee approved the Local Code of Corporate Governance 2023 (Appendix A).

REASON FOR DECISION: It is recommended practice to review the Local Code of Corporate Governance each year to ensure it remains up to date and relevant.

8 AUDIT RESULTS REPORT

RESOLVED: That the Audit Results Report was noted.

9 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2021/22

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee noted the 2020/21 Annual Statement of Accounts (addendum version), as set out in Appendix A (addendum).
2. That the Committee noted the audit work completed to date, the findings from that work and the resultant changes made to the Statement of Accounts.
3. That, subject to the final audit work not requiring any substantial changes to the Statement of Accounts, the Committee delegated to the Chair of the Committee the final approval of the 2021/22 Annual Statement of Accounts. This will include confirming that the Chair of the Committee can sign the Statement of Accounts to confirm that they have been approved by the Committee.

REASON FOR DECISIONS:

1. To ensure that the Council abides by the Audit and Account Regulations 2015, which require the approval and publication of audited Statement of Accounts.

10 SAFS PROPOSED ANTI-FRAUD PLAN 2023/24 AND PROGRESS WITH DELIVERY OF 2022/23 AUDIT PLAN

RESOLVED:

1. That the report was noted.
2. That the Committee reviewed and approved the Anti-Fraud Plan 2023/24

11 AUDIT PLAN 2023/24

RESOLVED: That the Committee approved the proposed North Herts Council Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24.

12 Q3 2022/23 AUDIT UPDATE REPORT

RESOLVED:

1. Noted the SIAS Progress Report for the period to 17 February 2023.
2. Approved the plan amendments to the 2022/23 Internal Annual Audit Plan.

13 THIRD QUARTER REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2022/23

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

1. That Cabinet note this report.
2. That Cabinet approves the changes to the 2022/23 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.3, a £1.090 million decrease in net expenditure.
3. That Cabinet approves the charges to the 2023/24 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.3, a total £549k increase in net expenditure.
4. That Cabinet approves the use of £140k of salary budget carry-forward for additional Service Director capacity for an 18- month period, and that the allocation of the remainder (if needed) will be delegated to the Managing Director (as Head of Paid Service), in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance and IT.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

1. Members are able to monitor, make adjustments within the overall budgetary framework and request appropriate action of Services who do not meet the budget targets set as part of the Corporate Business Planning process

14 THIRD QUARTER 2022/23 INVESTMENT STRATEGY (CAPITAL AND TREASURY)

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

1. That Cabinet notes the forecast expenditure of £8.370M in 2022/23 on the capital programme, paragraph 8.3 refers.
2. That Cabinet approves the adjustments to the capital programme for 2022/23 onwards, as a result of the revised timetable of schemes detailed in table 2 and 3, increasing the estimated spend in 2023/24 by £1.554M.
3. That Cabinet notes the position of the availability of capital resources, as detailed in table 4 paragraph 8.6 and the requirement to keep the capital programme under review for affordability.
4. Cabinet is asked to note the position of Treasury Management activity as at the end of December 2022.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

1. Cabinet is required to approve adjustments to the capital programme and ensure the capital programme is fully funded.
2. To ensure the Council's continued compliance with CIPFA's code of practice on Treasury Management and the Local Government Act 2003 and that the Council manages its exposure to interest and capital risk.

15 POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

This item was not considered at the Committee.