

# 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 Garden City, SG6 3JF  
on Wednesday, 13th December, 2023 at 7.30 pm

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Terry Tyler.

### 2 MINUTES - 8 NOVEMBER 2023

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 8 November 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 that section 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution applied to this meeting.

### 5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation at this meeting.

### 6 SAFS PROGRESS UPDATE ON 2023-2024 ANTI-FRAUD PLAN

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee noted the work of the Council and the Shared Anti-Fraud Service in delivering the 2023/24 Anti-Fraud Plan.

### 7 MID YEAR UPDATE ON RISK MANAGEMENT GOVERNANCE

**RESOLVED:** That Finance, Audit and Risk Committee:

- (1) Noted and provided comments to Cabinet on the mid-year Risk Management Governance update, including progress made with completion of audit recommendations.
- (2) Commented on the type of Risk Management training they would like to receive going forward.
- (3) Noted the review of the Performance and Risk Management Group Terms of Reference.

**RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:** That Cabinet consider the comments provided from Finance, Audit and Risk Committee on the mid-year Risk Management Governance update, including progress made with completion of audit recommendations.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

- (1) The responsibility for ensuring the management of risks is that of Cabinet.
- (2) This Committee has responsibility to monitor the effective development and operation of Risk Management.

## **8 SECOND QUARTER REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24**

### ***RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET:***

- (1) That Cabinet note this report.
- (2) That Cabinet approves the adjustments to the 2023/24 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.2, a £450k decrease in net expenditure.
- (3) That Cabinet notes the changes to the 2024/25 General Fund budget, as identified in table 3 and paragraph 8.2, a total £769k increase in net expenditure. These will be incorporated in the draft revenue budget for 2024/25

***REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:*** 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.

## **9 SECOND QUARTER INVESTMENT STRATEGY (CAPITAL AND TREASURY) REVIEW 2023/24**

### ***RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET:***

- (1) That Cabinet notes the forecast expenditure of £8.185M in 2023/24 on the capital programme, paragraph 8.3 refers.
- (2) That Cabinet approves the adjustments to the capital programme for 2023/24 onwards, as a result of the revised timetable of schemes detailed in table 2 and 3, increasing the overall estimated spend in 2024/25 and beyond by £3.898M.
- (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) That Cabinet recommends to Council that it notes the position of Treasury Management activity as at the end of September 2023 including the new Capital items. Page 10
- (5) That Cabinet recommends to Council that it confirms the addition of the Local Authority Housing Fund Phase 2 to the capital programme for 2023/24 and approves the reprofiling of Bancroft & Priory Splash Pads from 2024/25 into 2023/24.

### ***REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:***

- (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.

## **10 DRAFT BUDGET 2024/25**

### ***RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET:***

- (1) That Cabinet note the latest funding forecasts for 2024/25 onwards and the significant uncertainty that still remains.
- (2) That Cabinet confirm that it will be necessary to increase Council Tax by the maximum amount allowed without a local referendum, as this is what will be assumed by Government in determining the Business Rates that the Council can retain and calculating the Council's Core Spending Power.
- (3) That Cabinet note the comments made at the budget workshops, and comment on the inclusion of the revenue savings and investments in the budget to be brought back for consideration in February, for referral on to Council at the end of February.
- (4) That Cabinet note the comments made at the budget workshops, and comment on the inclusion of the capital investments in the Investment Strategy to be brought back for consideration in February, for referral on to Council at the end of February.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:** To ensure that all relevant factors are considered in arriving at a proposed budget, Investment Strategy and Council Tax level for 2024/25, to be considered by Full Council on 29 February 2024.

## **11 POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Chair led a discussion regarding possible agenda items for future meetings and an update on the recruitment and retainment of staff and associated risks was proposed. This was agreed between the Committee, however being mindful not to duplicate any work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Joint Staff Consultative Committee.