

# 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, Herts, SG6 3JF on Tuesday, 10th February, 2026 at 7.30 pm

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ruth Brown, Sarah Lucas and Steven Patmore and from Independent Member John Cannon.

### 2 MINUTES - 7 JANUARY 2026

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 7 January 2026 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 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 did not apply to this meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee placed on record its sincere thanks and appreciation to Councillor Sean Nolan for his service as Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

### 5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation at this meeting.

### 6 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2024/25 AND ACTION PLAN FOR 2025/26

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Committee approved the AGS, as amended, at Appendix A.
- (2) That the Committee noted the current position of the actions within the AGS Action Plan, outlined in Appendix B.

**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 for 2025-26 will provide the Committee with assurances that the Council is examining and where necessary improving its governance arrangements.

## **7 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2024/25**

### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Committee noted the KPMG Annual Report as attached at Appendix B and the KPMG Year End Report (ISA 260) to the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee at Appendix C.
- (2) That the Committee approved the 2024/25 Statement of Accounts as attached at Appendix A (with the Auditors Report to be added), and that they can be signed by the Chair of the Committee.
- (3) That the Committee approved the signing of a Management Representation letter by the Director – Resources, as attached at Appendix D.
- (4) That if there are minor changes required to the Statement of Accounts or the Management Representation letter then these can be approved by the Chair of the Committee.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To ensure that the Council abides by the Audit and Account Regulations 2015, which require the approval and publication of audited Statement of Accounts. Furthermore, to meet the back-stop deadlines set out in the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2024.

## **8 BUDGET 2026/27 (REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS)**

**REFERRED TO CABINET:** That Finance, Audit and Risk comments on the budget process, assumptions and risks contained within this report, in the context that Cabinet recommend to Council that:

- (1) Notes the position on the Collection Fund and how it will be funded.
- (2) Notes the position relating to the General Fund balance and that due to the risks identified a minimum balance of £3.5 million is recommended.
- (3) Notes the Chief Finance Officer's section 25 report (Appendix D) which provides a commentary on the risks and reliability of estimates contained in the budget.
- (4) Approves the revenue savings and investments as detailed in Appendix B.
- (5) Approves the capital programme as detailed in Appendix C.
- (6) Approves a net expenditure budget of £27.321m, as detailed in Appendix E.
- (7) Approves a Council Tax increase of 2.99%, which is in line with the provisions in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- (8) Approves bringing forward the capital budget for pool covers at the outdoor pools to 2025/26.

**REASON FOR REFFERAL:** To ensure that all relevant factors are considered in arriving at a budget (revenue and capital) and Council Tax level for 2026/27. To ensure that the budget is aligned to Council priorities for 2024-28 as set out in the Council Plan.

**9 INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2026/27**

**REFERRED TO CABINET:** That Finance, Audit and Risk Committee make recommendations to Cabinet on this Strategy, and in relation to Cabinet's recommendations which are:

That Cabinet recommends to Council that they:

- (1) Approve the adoption of the Investment Strategy (as attached at Appendix A).
- (2) That Council approve the adoption of the four clauses in relation to the Code of Practice on Treasury Management (as detailed in paragraphs 8.10 to 8.16).

**REASON FOR REFFERAL:** To ensure the Council's compliance with CIPFA's code of practice on Treasury Management, the Local Government Act 2003, statutory guidance from 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 led a discussion regarding possible agenda items for future meetings and no items were suggested. The Chair advised Members to contact him outside of the meeting if there were any suggested topics.