

**5f REFERRAL FROM CABINET: 15 SEPTEMBER 2020 – MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:** That the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-26 as attached at Appendix A be adopted.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:** Adoption of a MTFs and communication of its contents will assist in the process of forward planning the use of Council resources and in budget setting for 2021/2022 to 2025/2026, culminating in the setting of the Council Tax precept for 2020/21 in February 2021.

The Executive Member for Finance and IT presented the report entitled Medium Term Financial Strategy together with the following appendix:

- Appendix A- Medium Term Financial Strategy.

He advised that:

- It was vital to have a Medium Term Financial Strategy;
- Government funding remained uncertain;
- The spending review and funding arrangements had yet again been postponed;
- There was unlikely to be any additional funding from Government;
- This had made medium term financial planning extremely difficult;
- The timing of projects would need to be considered carefully;
- There would be an impact, due to Covid-19, on Council Tax and Business Rate income, although this would effect the 2021-22 financial year;
- The MTFs assumed that the Local Plan would be adopted, although there would be a time lag to when people would move into new housing and start paying Council Tax;
- Thanks were due to the Service Director – Resources and his team for their hard work in preparing this and other financial documents.

The Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee presented the referral from that Committee and advised that:

- The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee had held a detailed discussion particularly regarding the Council Tax reductions scheme and the effect on collection rates;
- They acknowledged the difficulties in preparing the document with the many uncertainties;
- The Committee also acknowledged the incredibly difficult and challenging job that the Service Director – Resources and his team have done.

It was proposed by Councillor Ian Albert, seconded by Councillor Martin Stears-Handscorn and:

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*NB: The report considered by Cabinet at the meeting held on 15 September 2020 can be viewed here:*

<https://democracy.north-herts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=2403&Ver=4>