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| Item No | Referred from: | FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE |
| 6C | Date: | 19 JUNE 2024 |
| | Title of item: | REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN 2023-24 |
| To be considered alongside agenda item: | | AGENDA ITEM 9 |

The report considered by Finance, Audit and Risk Committee at the meeting held on 19 June 2024 can be viewed here [Agenda for Finance, Audit and Risk Committee on Wednesday, 19th June, 2024, 7.30 pm | North Herts Council \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](#)

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET:

- (1) That Cabinet note this report.
- (2) That Cabinet approves a decrease of £194k in the 2023/24 net General Fund expenditure, as identified in section 8 of the report, to a total of £16.494million.
- (3) That Cabinet approves the adjustments to the 2024/25 General Fund budget, as identified in table 4 and paragraph 8.3 of the report, a total £634k increase in net expenditure.

That Cabinet recommends to Council.

- (4) That Council approves the net transfer to earmarked reserves, as identified in table 9 of the report, of £2.028million.

REASONS 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.

- (1) Changes to the Council's balances are monitored and approved.

Audio recording – 57 minutes 9 seconds

The Service Director – Resources presented the report entitled 'Revenue Budget Outturn 2023/24 and highlighted that:

- The report highlighted the year end 2023-24 position of the Revenue Budget however, the data was subject to audit and there may be some amendments as a result of the audit process.
- Table 4 of the report highlights the budget areas with significant variances to the forecasted position at year end, again these figures were subject to audit changes.
- The third item on table 3 related to the External Audit Fees, with a value for the additional audit fees and an estimated ongoing impact of these fees.
- The key sources of income were highlighted in table 5 of the report on page 129, these sources were monitored throughout the year and are linked to performance indicators and

usage.

- Table 6 highlighted the areas that had not achieved the expected budget income.
- There was an assumption made at the beginning of 2023/24 that the interest rate would drop, as they rate remained stable at 5% there had been an increase in the General Fund balance as stated on page 131 of the report.
- The appendix on page 135 detailed the significant revenue budget variances.
- The report was to be referred to Cabinet and Council to agree the transfers to the General Fund and the earmarked reserves.
- There were reserves set aside to purchase new waste vehicles for the new waste contract in May 2025.
- The DLUHC Grant Reserves related to compensation received from policy decision on Business Rates and any surplus gains from pooling Business Rates. This helped to mitigate any timing impacts risks.
- Overtime any surplus reserve funds were released into the General Fund and this helped to balance the uncertainty of the Business rates income.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Paul Ward
- Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason
- Councillor Sean Nolan

In response to questions, the Service Director – Resources stated that:

- The treasury management budget was included in Managing Director total.
- In April 2024 there was a new contract for the Leisure Management Centre fees, and this alleviated any concerns going into 2024-25.
- The budget going forward for Car parking fees had been lowered (for 24/25 onwards) after the impact of post Covid changes and therefore next year this area was expected to be met.
- Planning application fees varied according to the size of the development, it was not currently considered as a concerning item.
- There had been some changes to Commercial waste, bin numbers were stable and overall, this was a small variance to monitor compared with the budgeted income.
- The thresholds for material concerns in relation to income could be changed, if this was agreed by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and Cabinet.
- The Car Parking Fee were the only item to receive new baselining.

Councillor Paul Ward proposed and Councillor Daniel Wright-Mason seconded, and following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee provided comments and recommended to Cabinet the Revenue Budget Outturn 2023/24.

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