



CORPORATE SELECT COMMITTEE

Meeting: Monday, 6 February 2023 at 6.30 pm in Virtual Meeting

Present: Councillor T Ashton (Chair)

Councillors J Collins, O Cross, L Grooby, E Kelly, D Lomax, R McKeown, G Oakley, P Roberts (substitute for P Hardy) and E Thrane

In Attendance: Councillor(s) A Barrow, D Greenhalgh, A McKeown and K Sizeland

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E Siddall and P Hardy

23/53 ANNOUNCEMENT

It was announced that the meeting was being broadcast live to the internet via the Council's website and was capable of repeated viewing. The images and sound recording may be used for training purposes within the Council. All were asked to keep to the speaking guidelines which were outlined. Any views expressed by any speaker in the meeting are the speaker's own and do not necessarily reflect the views of High Peak Borough Council.

23/54 TO RECEIVE DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST ON ANY MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE (Agenda Item 2)

Councillor Thrane declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the Empty Property Premium element of agenda item 7, "Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 23/24 to 26/27" and withdrew from the meeting during the discussion and voting on that element of the report.

23/55 ANY MATTERS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE UNDER THE CALL-IN PROCEDURE (Agenda Item 3)

None

23/56 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2022 be approved as a correct record.

23/57 SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 5)

It was commented that further work was required around the Select Committee Work Programmes for the next 12 months. Outstanding items would be reviewed to ascertain what can be submitted during the next cycle.

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the above comments, the Select Committee Work Programmes be noted.

23/58 THIRD QUARTER FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2022/23

(Agenda Item 6)

The Committee considered a detailed report that provided information of the Council's overall performance and financial position for the period ended 31 December ("Third Quarter 2022/23"). The Executive Councillor also provided members with a summary of the overall position.

Regarding the key performance indicators and benchmarking, members were advised that the full list of measures was set out within the report and that performance was benchmarked against other authorities to compare outturns and targets were stretch targets to ensure that the Council strives towards continually improved performance. Full information would be provided within the Annual Report.

In response to a query around the Capital Receipts for land, and the suggestion that members have sight of detailed information, members were advised that there had been some barriers to disposal this year, including nutrient neutrality, which, until a solution is found to mitigate the effects, had led to some delays in disposals. The MTFP reflects the expectation that a solution would be forthcoming, and it was anticipated that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of Economy & Growth Select Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Third Quarter 2022/23 financial, procurement and performance position detailed in Appendices A, B and C and summarised at paragraph 3.3 of the covering report, be noted.

23/59 2023/24 BUDGET & MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2023/24 TO 2026/27

(Agenda Item 7)

The Committee considered the proposed Budget for 2023/24, updated Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2026/27, Capital Strategy 2023/24, proposed Fees and Charges for 2023/24 and Procurement Forward Plan 2023/24.

The Executive Councillor presented a detailed summary of the information contained within the reports and the Executive Director (Finance and Customer Services) also presented a short summary of the paper which set out the key changes pre and post settlement, the reserves position, the HRA

and reserves position and key decisions around car parking charges, council tax, rents and related income and the 4 year efficiency programme. Regarding reserves, it was noted that it was proposed to retain the match funding allocated for the LUF bid, in anticipation of making a bid during the 3rd round.

Regarding car parking charges, the view was expressed that there are some areas within the borough that charges could be increased and that this should be considered for future years.

Regarding the level of reserves within the HRA, members were advised that, due to the capital works and property refreshment programme and to meet the Decent Homes Standard, these are areas that are being particularly affected by inflation so there is a need to have funds for contingencies. The minimum reserve level could be reviewed to provide more of a buffer.

Regarding rents and other non-rent charges, benchmarking had been undertaken with other authorities and similar authorities had put up charges by between 5% and 7%, with London putting them up significantly more after holding a referendum. The Leader commented that ideally, rents would not have been put up at all, but following detailed advice, a 5% increase was proposed to balance the long-term impact on the HRA. Consideration would also be given throughout the year to the voluntary payments to reduce debt. Reference was also made to the effect of inflation and supply chain issues on the HRA.

(Councillor Thrane left the meeting)

The Executive Councillor explained the proposals around empty homes and the empty property premiums, which were supported by members.

(Councillor Thrane returned to the meeting)

RESOLVED:

That the following recommendations to the Executive be noted:

- That the General Fund Budget for 2023/24 as detailed in Appendix A (section 9) be approved.
- That the revised Medium-Term Financial Plan (2023/24 to 2026/27) as detailed in Appendix A, including the revised Capital Programme (attached at Annex A) be approved.
- That the Capital Strategy 2023/24 as set out in Appendix B be approved.
- That the proposed Fees and Charges for 2023/24 as detailed in Appendix C be approved.

- That the proposed Procurement Forward Plan for 2023/24, providing the Authority to procure based on procurement activity detailed in Appendix D be approved.
- That a Band D Council Tax of £211.36 for 2023/24 (an increase of £5.96 or 2.90% from 2022/23) be approved.
- That the adoption of the Council Tax premium on second homes outlined s7.1.7 and the empty property premium for properties that have remained empty for 1 year s7.1.10. be approved.
- HRA charges as follows:
 - All dwellings rents to increase by 5%, increasing the average rent from £73.96 to £77.78 per week (average rent takes into account new tenancies let over the previous year where the higher formula rent was charged. This gives an arithmetical increase of 5.16%)
 - Garage rents to be increased by 5% from £7.86 to £8.26 average per week
 - Other Charges including service charges to increase by a maximum of 5%
 - Fuel charges at individual blocks have been reviewed and the 2023/24 charge is based on the 2022/23 estimated costs and 2021/22 actual fuel usage/prices, charged on an individual scheme basis.
- That the Chief Finance Officer's view that the level of reserves are adequate for the Council, based on this budget and the circumstances in place at the time of preparing it (Appendix A Annex C) be noted.

23/60 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT FUND 2023-24
(Agenda Item 8)

The Committee considered a report which set out the details surrounding the Council Tax Support Fund Scheme 2023 – 24 announced by the Government in December 2022.

It was commented that sufficient funding should be retained to enable support to be given to those who become eligible throughout the financial year, which officers had confidence would be achievable.

RESOLVED:

That the Executive be recommended to approve the award of up to £25.00 to reduce council tax bills for vulnerable households on Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) s7.1 and to direct the remaining funding during 2023 -24 in line with the proposal at s8.1.

23/61 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2023/24
(Agenda Item 9)

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the proposed revised Council Tax Reduction Scheme with effect from 1 April 2023, following approval by the Executive to implement a banding scheme.

RESOLVED:

That the Executive be recommended to recommend that Council approve the amendments in section 7.15 (m), section 7.14 and the introduction of a new income banded / grid scheme for working age applicants with effect from 1 April 2023 to reduce the administrative burden placed on the Council by the introduction of Universal Credit and to increase the overall level of support for the lowest income families.

23/62 ANY QUESTIONS REFERRED TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER (MEMBER SERVICES TO BE ADVISED OF ANY QUESTIONS AT LEAST 4 DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING)
(Agenda Item 10)

None

23/63 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC
(Agenda Item 11)

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as they contact exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

23/64 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
(Agenda Item 12)

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2022 be approved as a correct record.

23/65 SPRINGS SHOPPING CENTRE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
(Agenda Item 13)

The Committee considered the Council's strategy to managing the Springs Shopping Centre as well as the Key Performance Indicators that will be used to manage its financial performance.

The meeting concluded at 8.20 pm

CHAIR