

**EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

HELD: Thursday, 12 January 2023

Start: 7.00 pm

Finish: 8.55 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor: A Owens (Chairman)

Councillors: J Finch (Vice-Chair) P Burnside
I Eccles A Fowler
S Gregson R Molloy
E Pope I Rigby
D Westley D Whittington

Officers: Kathryn Sephton, Head of Environmental Services
Tom Dickinson, Principal Solicitor
Peter Quick, Principal Finance Business Partner (Virtually)
Gillian Wossick, Environmental Sustainability Manager (Virtually)
Peter Gregory, Estates & Valuations Manager (Virtually)
Nicola Bradley, Tenancy Service Manager
Julia Brown, Democratic Services Officer

1 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence received.

(Note: Councillor Fowler left the meeting following Agenda Item 7)

2 URGENT BUSINESS, IF ANY, INTRODUCED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There were no urgent items of business.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. Councillor Rigby declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Agenda Item 17 'Draft Housing Allocations Policy' having a close relative that is currently active on 'Homefinder'.
2. Councillor Finch informed that in relation to Agenda Item 14 'Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2030' that he is a Member of 'The Friends of Tawd Valley' and would not participate in any discussions relating to this if they should arise.

4 DECLARATIONS OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of Party Whip.

5 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2022 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6 PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no items under this heading.

7 RELEVANT MINUTES OF CABINET

Consideration was given to the Minutes of Cabinet held on 15 November 2022 as contained on pages 531 to 536 of the Book of Reports.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of Cabinet held 15 November 2022 be noted.

8 DRAFT HRA BUDGET REPORT 23-24

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Finance, Procurement and Commercial Services as contained on pages 663 to 678 of the Book of Reports, which was to obtain feedback from the Committee to enable the Council to set its Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget and Capital Investment Programme for the next financial year 2023/24.

The Principal Finance Business Partner outlined the report and responded to comments and questions raised by Members of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the budget position be considered and noted.

(Note: This item was heard in Part 2 - Financial / Business Affairs – Paragraph 3, following Agenda Item 18 – exclusion of press and public)

9 DRAFT GRA BUDGET REPORT AND MTFS UPDATE 23-24

This item was withdrawn from the Agenda.

10 DRAFT GRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME 23-24 - 25-26

This item was withdrawn from the Agenda.

11 DRAFT CAPITAL STRATEGY REPORT 23-24

This item was withdrawn from the Agenda.

12 DRAFT TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 23-24

This item was withdrawn from the Agenda.

**13 CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2030: PROGRESS
UPDATE, ACHIEVEMENTS AND 2023/24 PRIORITIES**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Place and Community as contained on pages 537 to 548 and 679 to 680 of the Book of Reports, which provided an update on the Council's progress towards delivering the

actions set out in the Climate Change Strategy (Strategy) and Action Plan 2030, and to approve the Council's Priorities for 2023/24. The Environmental Sustainability Manager outlined the report and responded to questions and comments raised by Members.

Comments and questions were raised in respect of the following:

- Why use a consultant in respect of calculating carbon pathways for the Council's carbon footprint to 2030, and borough carbon footprint to National targets? - Due to the complexity of this work, the Environmental Sustainability Team are unable to complete it.
- Geothermal energy/disused mines– Skelmersdale Energy Group have investigated this and was found not favourable
- Helpful to receive more Information in respect of what risks are identified – Risk Workshop/Service Areas/Teams
- Seven Priorities/targets and progress
- EV Charging Infrastructure – Importance of being in place in advance
- The carbon footprint will be calculated to identify the Council's biggest emissions

The Vice-Chair asked for it to be noted that in respect of paragraph 5.3.2 point 3 of the report that "the Friends of Tawd Valley created community food growing areas in the community orchard section of the park, funds were contributed by Asda and Postcode Lottery" and not Tesco as stated.

RESOLVED: That the content of the report be noted, and that the Committee endorse the recommendation to Cabinet as detailed at paragraph 3.2 of the report.

14 **DRAFT DECANT POLICY**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing and Resources as contained on pages 549 to 564 of the Book of Reports, which was to consider and agree the decant Policy.

The Tenancy Services Manager outlined the report and responded to comments and questions raised by Members.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and supported for consideration by Cabinet.

15 **DRAFT GARAGE ALLOCATIONS & MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing and Resources as contained on pages 564 to 580 of the Book of Reports, which was to consider and agree the Garage Allocations and Management Policy.

The Tenancy Services Manager outlined the report, she informed that a consultation had taken place with existing garage tenancies and applicants currently on the garage waiting list. It was noted that the most important factor to customers was the proximity of the garage to the applicants' home.

The following comments and questions were raised by Members.

- Is 2 days sufficient to receive and make a written decision? - The 2 day timescale has been used for some years and mirrors that used in property lettings. Offers are usually made by telephone or email, in situations where post is used, the 2 days would be calculated from the expected delivery date
- Apprentice to undertake project to review waiting list and reduce vacant garages

RESOLVED: That the content of the Policy and report be noted and passed to Cabinet for their consideration.

16 DRAFT HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing and Resources as contained on pages 581 to 636 of the Book of Reports, which was to consider and agree the Housing Allocations Policy subject to statutory consultation.

The Tenancy Services Manager outlined details of the report, including a summary of the main changes.

Comments and questions were raised in respect of the following:

- Lathom South Parish Council – not a local connection area – would like rural local connection area added to the Allocations Policy

RESOLVED:

- A. That the content of the Policy and Report be supported and noted.
- B. That the Committee agreed comment to request that a rural local connection area be added to the Allocations Policy for all rural villages not already listed in the policy.

17 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 part 1 of Schedule 12A outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

18 A CORPORATE STRATEGY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF GENERAL REVENUE ACCOUNT (GRA) PROPERTY ASSETS

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing and Resources as contained on pages 637 to 662 of the Book of Reports, which set out an approach for the Council to improve the corporate management of its property assets. The report presents the need to procure assistance from an external provider to collect and present data and to advise on the Council's non-housing property portfolio, and seeks approval, subject to funding to advertise the

project to suppliers.

The Interim Estates and Valuations Officer outlined the report and responded to comments and questions raised by Members.

Comments and questions were raised in respect of the following:

- Whether the use of a fixed term post would be more effective than using an external provider
- The need for further work to refine and focus the project requirements and scope
- That elements of the work could be dealt with internally e.g. GIS
- That some data for premises in relation to CAD plans and asbestos management reports should be available already

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and passed to Cabinet for their consideration.

(Note: Councillor Pope left the meeting during consideration of this item).

19 **ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT OF LAND IN SKELMERSDALE**

This item was withdrawn from the Agenda.

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Chairman