

CABINET

HELD: Tuesday, 6 February 2024

Start: 7.00 pm

Finish: 7.12 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors:

Portfolio

Councillor Yvonne Gagen	Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Legal & Democratic
Councillor Gareth Dowling	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning & Community Safety
Councillor Carl Coughlan	Portfolio Holder for Leisure; and Youth Champion
Councillor Vickie Cummins	Portfolio Holder for Health & Wellbeing
Councillor Anne Mary Fennell	Portfolio Holder for Communities; and Dementia Champion
Councillor Neil Furey	Portfolio Holder for Street Scene
Councillor Rob Molloy	Portfolio Holder for Finance
Councillor Nicola Pryce-Roberts	Portfolio Holder for Housing
Councillor Adam Yates	Deputy Leader & Portfolio Holder for Green Growth

Officers:

Jacqui Sinnott-Lacey, Chief Operating Officer
Chris Twomey, Corporate Director of Housing, Transformation & Resources
James Pierce, Head of Finance, Procurement and Commercial Services Section 151 Officer
Lisa Windle, Head of Corporate and Customer Services
Paul Charlson, Head of Planning & Regulatory Services
Kay Lovelady, Head of Legal & Democratic Services
Jacky Denning, Democratic Services Manager
Peter Quick, Principal Finance Business Partner (Virtual)
Nicola Bradley, Tenancy Service Manager(Virtual)
Jonathan Mitchell, Housing Strategy & Development Programme Manager(Virtual)
Rebecca Spicer, Repairs & Servicing Manager(Virtual)

137 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

138 SPECIAL URGENCY (RULE 16 ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROCEDURE RULES)/URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of special urgency.

139 PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no items under this heading.

140 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. Councillor Coughlan declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda items relating to his Council garage tenancy (nothing in these reports relates particularly to his interests arising from that tenancy).
2. Councillors Carl Coughlan, Vicki Cummins and Yvonne Gagen declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda items relating to Lancashire County Council (LCC) as employees of Lancashire County Council and did not enter into detailed discussions, which affected LCC.

141 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 21 November 2023 be received as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

142 MATTERS REQUIRING DECISIONS

Consideration was given to report relating to the following matters requiring decisions and contained on pages 1 to 240 of the Book of Reports.

143 HRA BUDGET REPORT 24-25

Councillor N Pryce-Roberts introduced the report of the Head of Housing, Procurement & Commercial Services, which sought feedback to enable the Council to set its Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget and capital investment programme for the next financial year 2024/25.

The Minutes of the Landlord Services Committee (Cabinet Working Group) and the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee had been circulated prior to the meeting.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the report before it and the recommendations contained therein.

RESOLVED:

- A. That the financial position be noted and consideration given to the budget matters set out in this report.
- B. That the use of the Director of Transformation, Housing & Resources delegated authority in relation to rent and service charge changes be noted.
- C. That consideration be given to the comments received from the committees

and working group above when finalising the HRA budget proposals to be approved by Council on 28 February 2024.

- D. That the Housing Portfolio Holder be given delegated authority to submit firm proposals to Council on 28 February 2024 to enable the budget to be set.

144

GRA BUDGET REPORT AND MTFS UPDATE 24-25

Councillor R Molloy introduced the report of the Head of Finance, Procurement & Commercial Services, which sought to set a balanced Revenue Budget for the forthcoming financial year 2024/25, presented the updated Medium-Term Financial Forecast (MTFF) for the following financial years 2025/26 to 2026/27, noting the latest forecast budget gap of £1.348m, comprising:

- £1.620m in 2025/26
- (£0.272)m in 2026/27

and detailed the reserves position as at 31 March 2023 and the forecast position to 2026/27.

The Minute of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee had been circulated prior to the meeting.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the report before it and the recommendations contained therein.

RESOLVED:

- A. That the General Revenue Account (GRA) budget for 2024/25 be approved based on the proposals to be presented at the Council meeting.
- B. That the latest GRA Medium-Term Financial Forecast (MTFF) budget gap for 2025/26 to 2026/27 be noted.
- C. That the latest GRA reserves position as at 31 March 2023 and forecast to 2026/27 be noted and the GRA reserves policy be approved.
- D. That delegated authority be given to the Chief Operating Officer and the Corporate Director to take all necessary action to implement the changes resulting from the budget proposals.

145

GRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME & STRATEGY 24-25 - 26-27

Councillor Molloy introduced the report of the Head of Finance, Procurement & Commercial Services, which set the framework for capital financing and treasury management operations for the next financial year.

The Minute of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee had been circulated prior to the meeting.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the report before it and the recommendations contained therein.

RESOLVED: That the Capital Strategy and Programme for 2024/25 be noted.

146 **QUARTER 2 COUNCIL PERFORMANCE DELIVERY**

Councillor Molloy introduced the report of the Corporate Director Transformation, Housing & Resources, which presented performance monitoring data for the quarter ended 30 September 2023.

The Minute of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee was circulated prior to the meeting.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the report before it and the recommendations contained therein.

- RESOLVED: A. That the Council's performance for its key performance indicators for the quarter ended 30 September 2023 be noted.
- B. That the call-in procedure is not appropriate for this item as the report was submitted to the meeting of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 25 January 2024.

147 **DRAFT TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 24-25**

Councillor R Molloy introduced the report of the Head of Finance, Procurement & Commercial Services, which set the framework for capital financing and treasury management operations for the next financial year.

The minute of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee had been circulated prior to the meeting.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the report before it and the recommendations contained therein.

RESOLVED: That Council be recommended to approve:

- A. That the projected position in respect of the Prudential Indicators for 2023-24 set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.
- B. That the Treasury and Prudential Indicators for the next three years, set out in Appendix 1, be agreed.
- C. That the capital expenditure projections in Appendix 1 be agreed.
- D. That the Capital Financing Requirement projections, set out in Appendix 1, be agreed.

- E. That the Minimum Revenue Position policy, as set out in section 4.5 of the report, be agreed.

148 **DAMP AND MOULD POLICY AND GOODWILL AND DISCRETIONARY PAYMENT POLICY**

Councillor N Pryce-Roberts introduced the report of the Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing & Resources, which sought approval of two new policies:

- Damp and Mould Policy
- Goodwill and Discretionary Payment Policy

The Minute of the Landlord Services Committee (Cabinet Working Group) had been circulated prior to the meeting.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the report before it and the recommendations contained therein.

RESOLVED: That the policies detailed in Appendix A Damp and Mould Policy and Appendix B Goodwill and Discretionary Payment Policy, be approved.

149 **DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY 2024-2029**

Councillor N Pryce-Roberts introduced the report of the Corporate Director Transformation, Housing & Resources, which sought approval for the publication of the Housing Strategy 2024-2029 and associated Action Plan.

The Minutes of the Landlord Services Committee (Cabinet Working Group) and the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee had been circulated prior to the meeting.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the report before it and the recommendations contained therein.

RESOLVED:

- A. That the agreed comments of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee, set out in Appendix F to the report, be noted.
- B. That the Housing Strategy 2024-2029 and associated Action Plan, attached at Appendix A and B to the report, be approved for consultation purposes.
- C. That the Head of Housing, in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder, be given delegated authority to make drafting changes, arising from any consultation responses received and publish any such revised and final version of the Housing Strategy and Housing Strategy Action Plan in May 2024.
- D. That the Head of Housing, in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder,

be given delegated authority to make any changes to the Housing Strategy and Action Plan throughout the operating term of the Housing Strategy to ensure it reflects the Councils operating structures and resource capacity, any legislative and/ or regulatory amendments and/or emerging housing need issues and/or any other related matter that needs to be considered in order to ensure the Housing Strategy and Action Plan remains relevant throughout its operating term.

150

DEMOLITION OF FLAT BLOCKS IN BLYTHEWOOD & BANKSBARN TO FACILITATE PHASE 2 OF DIGMOOR REVIVAL SCHEME

Councillor Pryce-Roberts introduced the report of the Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing & Resources, which sought approval to proceed with the development of Digmoor area of Skelmersdale in accordance with the Digmoor Revival Scheme, to demolish the existing blocks of flats in Blythewood and Banksbarn, shown in the current site plan attached at Appendix 1, and thereafter take all steps necessary to develop the site, in order to facilitate the development of 45 new Council homes for affordable/social rent.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the report before it and the recommendations contained therein.

RESOLVED:

- A. That the proposed development, details of which are contained within the report, (including the demolition of the flat blocks in Blythewood and Banksbarn) be approved, subject to Council approval where appropriate.
- B. That the Head of Housing, following discussion with the relevant Portfolio Holder, be given delegated authority to take all steps necessary (subject to Council approval where necessary) to implement the development outlined within the report, this will include, but not limited to, instructing Tawd Valley Developments Ltd, obtaining planning permission, entering into grant funding arrangements with Homes England, contracts with design and build businesses, demolition of existing properties, relocation of tenants and repurchase of leaseholds.
- C. That the Head of Housing, following discussion with the relevant Portfolio Holder, be given delegated authority to, as a last resort, use the power of compulsory purchase.
- D. That the Head of Housing be given delegated authority to make on going adjustments to the delivery of the scheme following discussions with the relevant Portfolio Holder.
- E. In respect of matters reserved to Council the report be noted and any agreed comments be referred to Council for consideration.

CABINET

HELD: Tuesday, 6 February 2024

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Leader