

NOTICE OF DECISIONS

Meeting:	Executive	
Date:	Wednesday, 15 November 2023	
Place:	Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage	
Members Present:	Councillors:	Richard Henry (Chair), Jeannette Thomas (Vice-Chair), Sandra Barr, Lloyd Briscoe, Jackie Hollywell, Loraine Rossati and Simon Speller.

THE DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN OF ANY OF THE DECISIONS BELOW IS FRIDAY, 24 NOVEMBER 2023. SUBJECT TO THERE BEING NO CALL-IN THE ATTACHED DECISIONS MAY BE IMPLEMENTED WITH EFFECT FROM MONDAY, 27 NOVEMBER 2023.

1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd. There were no declarations of interest.	
2	MINUTES - 12 OCTOBER 2023	
	It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 12 October 2023 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.	
3	MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SELECT COMMITTEES	
	In respect of the Minutes of the Environment & Economy Select Committee held on 10 October 2023 relating to the scrutiny of Bus Services in the Borough, the Portfolio Holder for Co-operative Council and Neighbourhood Communities commented that a knock-on effect of the successful petition to improve bus services in Bedwell had resulted in a reduction of the existing services to north-eastern parts of the town (St. Nicholas, Martins Wood and Chells wards).	

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Performance thanked Members of the Environment & Economy Select Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Committee, together with the Portfolio Holders for Co-operative Council & Neighbourhood Communities and Economy & Transport for their support in driving forward the Council's Climate Change agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** that the following Minutes of meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Select Committees be noted –

Community Select Committee – 19 September 2023
Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 26 September 2023
Environment & Economy Select Committee – 10 October 2023
Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 17 October 2023

4

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUSINESS PLAN REVIEW 2023

**C. Fletcher
B. Moldon**

The Executive considered a report in respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan review 2023.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the 2023 revision of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 year Business Plan, as set out in the report and its appendices, be approved.
2. That the revised approach to borrowing principles, as set out in Paragraph 4.3 of the report, be approved.
3. That the level of balances for the HRA Business Plan, set as a minimum £10Million (uplifted for inflation for future years), and as set out in Paragraph 4.4.14 of the report, be noted.
4. That the assumptions used for the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (as set out in Paragraph 4.4.1 of the report) and the growth and saving proposals (as set out in Paragraph 4.4.3 of the report) be incorporated into the 2024/25 budget.
5. That the Capital Programme assumptions contained within the report be approved for the housing stock and new build

	<p>properties and incorporated into the 2024/25 budget.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. That prudential borrowing to fund capital projects in 2024/25 of £18.8Million be approved, and that future years be considered annually in line with future anticipated expenditure. 7. That additional HRA revenue budget of £176,000 in 2023/24 be approved to extend fixed term contracts for staff to the end of the 2023/24 financial year (as set out in Paragraph 4.4.5 of the report), and it be noted that this is within current Executive delegated limits. 8. That the Trade Unions and staff be consulted on the key messages contained within the Medium-Term Financial Strategies and more specifically when drawing up any proposals where there is a risk of redundancy. <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i> <i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	
5	HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2023 - 2028	A. Garside
	<p>The Executive considered a report in respect of a proposed Housing Asset Management Strategy 2023 – 2028.</p> <p>In response to a question from the Leader regarding surveying of the Council’s Housing Stock, it was confirmed that 94% of the actual stock had been surveyed. Access difficulties had prevented surveys of the remaining 6% thus far.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Housing Asset Management Strategy 2023 - 2028, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved. 2. That delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director (RP), after consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Housing Development, to finalise the Strategy and related action plan. <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i></p>	

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

6

SECOND QUARTER REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24

**C. Fletcher
B. Moldon**

The Executive considered a report in respect of the Second Quarter Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24.

It was **RESOLVED:**

General Fund

1. That the 2023/24 Second Quarter projected net increase in General Fund expenditure of £1,850 be approved.
2. That it be noted that the cumulative changes made to the General Fund net budget remains within the £400,000 increase variation limit delegated to the Executive.
3. That the proposed movement on reserves, as detailed in Paragraph 4.2.1 of the report, be noted.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

4. That the 2023/24 Second Quarter projected net budget underspend in the HRA of £1,229,920 be approved.
5. That it be noted that the cumulative increases made to the HRA net budget remains within the £400,000 variation limit delegated to the Executive in the January 2023 budget report.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

7	FIRST AND SECOND QUARTER CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24	C. Fletcher B. Moldon
<p>The Executive considered a report in respect of First and Second Quarter Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/24.</p> <p>The Strategic Director (CF) confirmed that £447,000 of the increased budget costs for 2023/24 related to additional third party (including grants) funding received by the Council.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the net capital budget increases of £447,000 (2023/24 - £316,000, 2024/25 - £131,000), as set out in Paragraph 4.4 of the report, be approved. 2. That the reprofiling of £15.016Million from 2023/24 to 2024/25, as set out in Paragraph 4.5 of the report, be approved. 3. That the contents of Appendix C to the report (Treasury Management Update Quarter Ended 30 June 2023) be noted, and it be further noted that the 2021 Prudential Code and TM Code had introduced a new requirement that monitoring of the treasury management indicators should be reported quarterly (along with the other prudential indicators) as part of the authority's general revenue and capital monitoring, and that Quarter 2 will be reported in the 2023/24 Mid-Year Treasury Management Review and Prudential Indicators report. <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i></p> <p><i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>		
8	MID YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW 2023/24	C. Fletcher B. Moldon
<p>The Executive considered a report in respect of the Mid-Year Treasury Management Review 2023/24.</p> <p>The Assistant Director (Finance) confirmed that the report had been considered by the Audit Committee, at its meeting held on 8 November 2023. At that meeting, officers had responded to a number of Members' questions, and the Committee had</p>		

recommended that the Review be agreed by the Executive for approval by Council on 20 December 2023.

It was **RESOLVED** that the 2023/24 Mid-Year Treasury Management Review and prudential indicators, as set out in the report, be recommended to Council for approval.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

9

BALANCING THE BUDGET OPTIONS 2024/25

C. Fletcher
B. Moldon

The Executive considered a report in respect of a proposed range of General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget options to be incorporated into the 2024/25 Revenue Budget process.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Performance was pleased to note that the growth proposals for 2024/25 included the creation of a new Graduate/Trainee Planner post and the establishment of a post dedicated to woodland and new tree management.

The Strategic Director (CF) commented that balancing the budget continued to be challenging, with a savings target of £1 Million per year for the foreseeable future. The Council would proceed with its Transformation Programme in order to assist in identifying and realising future savings opportunities. She confirmed that the budget included the impact of the recently approved NJC Pay Award for staff.

It was **RESOLVED**:

1. That the Balancing the Budget options, as set out in the report, totalling £1,223,851 (saving) for the General Fund and £77,134 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) respectively for 2024/25, be approved and incorporated into the Council's budget setting processes.
2. That the Growth options included in Section 4.6.2 of the report be approved for inclusion (subject to the savings shortfall

being identified) in the 2024/25 - General Fund (£131,710) and HRA (£46,960) budgets.

3. That £40,000 be approved for the costs associated with implementation of the Balancing the Budget options within the 2023/24 budgets, as set out in Paragraph 4.9.4 of the report, with the General Fund and HRA sharing the costs 50:50.
4. That the revised General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy financial summary, as shown in Section 4.11 of the report, be noted.
5. That the completion of the Business Rates for 2024/25 (NDR 1) be delegated to the Strategic Director (Section 151 Officer), after consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Transformation, as set out in Paragraph 4.3.4 of the report.
6. That the increase in the two Planning fees, as detailed in Paragraph 4.9.3 of the report, and amounting to an additional £1,500 income, be agreed.
7. That the Council's recognised trade unions be consulted regarding the proposed budget package.
8. That key partners and other stakeholders be consulted and their views considered as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process.

Reason for Decision: As contained in report.

Other Options considered: As contained in report.

10	URGENT PART I BUSINESS	
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None.		
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11	EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC	
	<p>It was RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006. 2. That the reasons for the following reports being in Part II were accepted, and that the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure. 	
12	PART II MINUTES - EXECUTIVE - 12 OCTOBER 2023	
	<p>It was RESOLVED that the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 12 October 2023 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chair.</p>	
13	MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (KENILWORTH CLOSE) UPDATE	A. Ahmed S. Nuttall
	<p>The Executive considered a Part II report in respect of an update on the Kenilworth Close development scheme, including a review of Phase 2 of the project.</p> <p>Executive Members commented on the report and officers answered a number of Members' questions.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the recommendations contained in the report be approved.</p>	

	<p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i> <i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	
14	REVIEW OF SHARED ICT SERVICE RESOURCING (SOCITM REPORT)	M. Canterford
	<p>The Executive considered a Part II report in respect of recommended proposals and costs for an enhanced Shared ICT Service.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the recommendations contained in the report be approved.</p> <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i> <i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	
15	GENERAL FUND CAPITAL STRATEGY OVERVIEW - PRIORITIES VERSUS FUNDING REQUIREMENT 2023/24 - 2029/30	C. Fletcher B. Moldon
	<p>The Executive considered a Part II report in respect of an overview of the General Fund Capital Strategy for 2023/24 – 2029/30, including proposals to fund the Council’s approved priorities during that period.</p> <p>Executive Members commented on the report and officers answered a number of Members’ questions.</p> <p>It was RESOLVED that the recommendations contained in the report be approved.</p> <p><i>Reason for Decision: As contained in report.</i> <i>Other Options considered: As contained in report.</i></p>	

16	URGENT PART II BUSINESS	
	None.	