

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

6 FEBRUARY 2017

Present: Councillor P D Simpson, Chair

Councillors: S Bagshaw
T P Brindley
E Cubley
S Easom
D A Elliott (substitute)
R I Jackson
P Lally
G Marshall
P J Owen
K E Rigby (substitute)
A W G A Stockwell

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S J Carr and M Radulovic MBE.

62. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor P Lally declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 12, as he rents a garage from the Council, minute no. 72 refers.

63. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2017 were confirmed and signed.

64. **BUSINESS PLANS AND FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2017/18 – 2019/20**

The Committee considered the proposals for business plans, detailed revenue budget estimates for 2017/18, capital programme for 2017/18 to 2019/20 and proposed fees and charges for 2017/18 in respect of the Council's priority areas.

RESOLVED that the Business Plans in respect of ICT and Business Transformation; Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services and Resources be approved.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the following be approved:

- 1) The detailed revenue budget estimates for 2016/17 (revised) and 2017/18 (base) including any revenue development submissions.
- 2) The capital programme for 2017/18 to 2019/20.
- 3) The fees and charges for 2017/18.

65. BUDGET PROPOSALS AND ASSOCIATED STRATEGIES

Members were circulated with an updated recommendation to the report and considered the capital and revenue budget proposals, together with the prudential indicators, treasury management strategy, investment strategy and general fund medium term financial strategy and delivery plans.

Members debated the report and commented that there appeared to be significant risk generated within the proposals, centred predominantly around employee savings targets. The Labour Group would put forward an amendment to full Council to avoid compulsory redundancies since it considered there were alternative methods of achieving savings. It was also stated that e-agendas would be difficult to manage.

In respect of rent arrears, it was stated that this was being addressed by the appointment of a new post which would be tasked with implementing the Tenancy Sustainment Strategy.

Following discussion a recorded vote was requested. The voting was as follows:

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstention</u>
T P Brindley	S A Bagshaw	P Lally
E Cubley	D A Elliott	K E Rigby
S Easom	G Marshall	
R I Jackson		
P J Owen		
P D Simpson		
A W G A Stockwell		

RESOLVED that the business plans for the Council's corporate priorities and support functions be approved, subject to amendment as a result of any budget decisions still to be taken by Council recommended by the relevant policy committees; and

RECOMMENDED to Council that:

1. The Housing Revenue Account budget as submitted be approved (appendix 3).
2. The estimated pay award of approximately 1.2% per annum be set within the Housing Revenue Account (appendix 3).
3. An employee savings target of £34,800 be set within the Housing Revenue Account in 2017/18 (appendix 3).

4. The capital submissions and priorities within them be approved (appendix 4).
5. The Deputy Chief Executive be authorised to arrange the financing of the capital programme as necessary (appendix 4).
6. The General Fund revenue budgets as submitted be approved (appendix 5).
7. An employee savings target of £406,226 be set within the General Fund in 2017/18 (appendix 5).
8. An amount of £25,000 be provided for a General Contingency in 2017/18 (appendix 5).
9. The council tax requirement for 2017/18 including special expenses (but excluding local precepting requirements) be £5,386,570 (appendix 5).
10. An amount of £860,374 be withdrawn from general non-earmarked reserves in 2017/18 (appendix 5).
11. A Beeston Square Capital Fund Reserve be created and an amount of £25,000 be added to the reserve in 2017/18.
12. The prudential indicators as set out be approved (appendix 6).
13. The Minimum Revenue Provision policy as set out be approved (appendix 7).
14. The treasury management strategy statement be approved (appendix 7).
15. The investments strategy be approved (appendix 8).
16. The General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved (appendix 9).

66. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2016/17 UPDATE

The Committee noted the capital expenditure incurred in 2016/17 up to 31 December 2016, along with the planned financing of the 2016/17 capital programme, and were asked to approve a number of capital budget variations in the current financial year.

RESOLVED that the capital budget variations for 2016/17 set out in appendix 3 of the report be approved with £585,000 to be carried forward to 2017/18.

67. SECTION 106 ITPS ALLOCATIONS

The Committee was updated with progress on the ITPS schemes approved by Cabinet on 15 March 2016 and were asked to recommend the addition of a new scheme.

RESOLVED that the proposal to install real time bus displays mostly in the south of the Borough in conjunction with the County Council, as set out in appendix 2 of the report, be approved.

68. MEMBER ALLOWANCES

The Committee was asked to consider the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel regarding the level of allowances payable to members following the introduction of a new governance structure of the Council and to recommend to Council the preferred option.

RECOMMENDED to Council that, in accordance with Option 4 in the appendix to the report, no changes to the existing remuneration policy or remuneration levels be made to members' allowances.

69. APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS

The Committee considered the options for appointing external auditors following the closure of the Audit Commission and at the end of the transitional arrangements at the conclusion of the 2017/18 audit.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the preferred approach be to opt into a Sector Led Body as set out in Option 3 of the appendix to the report.

70. PAY AWARD AND REVIEW OF ALLOWANCES

The Committee considered the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel regarding the application of the proposed pay award for 2017/18 to allowance rates for members.

RECOMMENDED to Council that no award be made to the allowance rates for members.

71. UPDATE – ASSET DISPOSAL

The Committee was updated on sites being considered for disposal and were asked to consider approval to progress marketing to the point of sale where appropriate.

Members debated the report and it was stated that the proposal to dispose of garage sites did not follow the Council's approved Garage Strategy. It was considered that garages were of benefit to the Council's residents and that demand outweighed supply and the criteria for disposal of the garages was therefore queried. Residents were concerned about the potential loss of garages and it was stated there had been a lack of consultation. The report made no mention of providing affordable housing and assurances were sought that, should the garage sites be developed, proportionate affordable housing and sheltered living accommodation would be provided.

The Director of Housing, Leisure and Property Services stated that discussions were due to take place with social housing providers in respect of development of the sites.

RESOLVED that the sites for disposal as listed in the appendix to the report which are recommended as 'proceed with sale' be approved and that final terms for disposal be delegated to the Director of Housing, Leisure and Property Services in consultation with the Director of Legal and Planning Services.

72. FURTHER UPDATE – ASSET DISPOSAL

Members were updated on the garage site at Princess Avenue/Read Avenue, Beeston which was being considered for disposal, and were asked to consider granting approval to progress marketing to the point of sale.

RESOLVED that the site for disposal at Princess/Read Avenue be approved and that final terms for disposal be delegated to the Director of Housing, Leisure and Property Services in consultation with the Director of Legal and Planning Services.

(Having declared a pecuniary interest in the item Councillor P Lally left the meeting before discussion or voting thereon.)

73. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered items for inclusion in its future Work Programme

RESOLVED that the Work Programme, amended to include the Corporate Plan Review for its 20 March 2017 meeting, be approved.

74. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that, under Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

75. CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF CORPORATE INSURANCE COVER AND ASSOCIATED SERVICES

RESOLVED that the contract for the provision of corporate insurance cover and associated services be award to Zurich Municipal and Ocaso S.A. as set out in the appendix to the report form 1 April 2017.