

CABINET EXECUTIVE

Minutes of a meeting held in the Council Chamber.

MONDAY, 5 JULY 2021

Present:

Councillor Terry Richardson (- Leader of the Council) (Leader)
Councillor Maggie Wright (- Finance, People & Performance Portfolio Holder) (Deputy Leader)

Cllr. Sharon Coe	- Health, Wellbeing, Community Engagement & Business Support Portfolio Holder
Cllr. Nigel Grundy	- Neighbourhood Services & Assets Portfolio Holder
Cllr. Les Phillimore	- Housing, Community & Environmental Services Portfolio Holder
Cllr. Ben Taylor	- Planning Delivery and Enforcement & Corporate Transformation Portfolio Holder

Also in attendance:

Cllr. Geoff Welsh – Scrutiny Commissioner
Cllr. Roy Denney – Scrutiny Commissioner
Cllr. Sam Maxwell – Scrutiny Commissioner

Officers present:-

Jane Toman	- Chief Executive
John Richardson	- Strategic Director
Colin Jones	- Corporate Services Group Manager
Katie Hollis	- Accountancy Services Manager
Sandeep Tiensa	- Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer
Nicole Cramp	- Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer
Katie Saunders	- Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer

41. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

No disclosures were received.

42. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2021, as circulated were signed as correct record.

43. PUBLIC SPEAKING PROTOCOL

No requests were received.

44. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2020/21

Considered – Report of the Accountancy Services Manager.

Other options considered: None

Cllr. Les Phillimore, Housing, Community & Environmental Services Portfolio Holder expressed his thanks to the Finance department for their continued hard work throughout the pandemic.

DECISIONS

1. That the financial performance for 2020/21 be accepted.
2. That £1,140,000 from General Fund balances to earmarked reserves be approved.

Reasons:

1. Following the Redmond Review, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has put in place revised regulations that came into force on 31st March 2021. The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2021 extend the statutory audit deadlines for 2020/21 and 2021/22 for all local authorities. As a result, the publication date for audited accounts has moved from 31st July to 30th September for the two financial years in question. The public inspection period must now commence on or before the first working day of August, effectively requiring the unaudited accounts to be signed off and published by 31st July.
2. Members will be aware that the audit of the 2019/20 accounts has still not been finalised, some 9 months after it commenced. There is no doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on the audit process but our auditors have also experienced resourcing issues, as have others in the public sector audit market, and this has also played a part in the delay in sign-off. Ultimately this means that there will be a corresponding impact on the timing of the 2020/21 audit. EY have already indicated that some of their audit work in respect of 2020/21 will not be scheduled until after 30th September, the statutory deadline. Clearly this is disappointing but is outside of the Council's control. Naturally, if there is any change to the financial performance, due to amendments arising from the audit, this will be reported to Cabinet as soon as practically possible following completion of the audit.
3. In the interests of transparency the surplus for 2020/21 has been transferred to General Fund balances in its entirety. However, it is recognised that Cabinet Executive might wish to set aside some of that surplus in earmarked reserves, in order to prepare for and mitigate against future spending and funding pressures.

45. TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN 2020/21

Considered – Report of the Strategic Director (Section 151 Officer), presented by the Accountancy Services Manager.

Other options considered: None. It is a legislative requirement that the Council receives an annual report covering its treasury activities for the financial year.

DECISIONS

1. That the treasury management activities for 2020/21 be approved.
2. That the prudential and treasury indicators for 2020/21 be approved.

Reasons:

1. The regulatory framework governing treasury management activities includes a requirement that the Council should produce an annual review of treasury activities undertaken in the preceding financial year. It must also report the performance against the approved prudential indicators for the year.
2. This report fulfils the requirement above and incorporates the needs of the Prudential Code to ensure adequate monitoring of capital expenditure plans and the Council's prudential indicators. The treasury strategy and prudential indicators for 2020/21 were contained in the report approved by Council on 20th February 2020.

46. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2020/21

Considered – Report of the Strategic Director (Section 151 Officer), presented by the Corporate Services Manager.

Other options considered: Not to produce for the Cabinet Executive a separate report on the Annual Governance Statement. This option was dismissed given it of utmost importance that the Cabinet Executive are fully informed and assured by the completion of the Corporate Assurance Review and the production of the Governance Statement.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

That the Annual Governance statement in respect of 2020/21 financial year, be approved.

Reason:

It is a requirement of the Account and Audit Regulations 2015 for the local authority to prepare and approve an Annual Governance Statement.

**47. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO SERVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES
2021/2022**

Considered – Report of the Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Services Officer, presented by Cllr. Terry Richardson.

Other options considered: None.

DECISIONS

1. That the preferences and changes to appointments to Outside Bodies as proposed at Appendix 1 of this report be approved.
2. That unless otherwise stated at Appendix 1, all appointments to be until the Cabinet Executive meeting following the Annual Council meeting in 2022.
3. That all appointments be endorsed as approved duties for the payment of allowances.
4. That the Constitution be amended accordingly.

Reason:

It is appropriate to give effect to the wishes of the political groups.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6.03 P.M.