

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

11 January 2024

PRESENT:

Labour Group

Councillor R Pearson (Chair), Councillor L Singh (Vice-Chair) and Councillors D Pegg (substitute for Cllr S Harrison) G Rhind, M Mulgrew, B Stuart, S Taylor and N Tilley.

Conservative Group

Councillors D Corbin, M Fitzpatrick, M Ford and S Meghani.

Liberal Democrats

Councillor G Andrew.

In Attendance

Councillor A Wheelton
Councillor P Watson

FM/80 **APOLOGIES**

The Committee was informed that apologies had been received from Councillor S Harrison (Labour Group).

FM/81 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Committee was informed that Councillor Corbin declared a personal in item FM/90.

FM/82 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 10**

The Committee was informed that no questions from members of the public had been received.

FM/83 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

The Committee was informed that no questions from members of the council had been received.

FM/84 **REPORTS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

The Committee was informed that no reports from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been received.

FM/85 **SERVICE BASE BUDGET 2024-25**

The Head of Finance presented the report to the Committee noting that there were no changes since the draft budget and that the Levelling Up Funding received would be subject to a separate report to the Committee.

Councillor Watson raised a query regarding the Management Restructure costs.

The Chief Executive informed the Committee that the figure within the report was an indicative figure and that a full report regarding the restructure would be presented to the Committee and the next meeting.

Members raised concerns regarding the budget deficit and sought clarity regarding the Microsoft TEAMS telephone service, the additional service costs, and procurement costs.

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) informed the Committee that that the deficit reserves were covering the short term and that the financial sessions with Members were developing the Medium Term Financial Strategy how the Council could deal with the historical deficit. It was noted that the budget proposals had been through a high degree of scrutiny, with officers, Senior Management and Senior Leadership as well as approval by the relevant Committees.

The Strategic Director clarified that the proposed Microsoft TEAMS telephone service would be more expensive than the current softphones used but would be a more robust system. The Committee was informed that additional service and procurement costs would be subject to separate exempt reports to be presented to the next Committee meeting.

Members supported the budget plan and noted the increased involvement of Members in the budget and commended the reduction of the deficit.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 The Committee considered the proposed revenue budget for this Committee's services for 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report and recommended for Council approval.***
- 1.2 The Committee considered the proposed fees and charges for 2024/25, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report and recommended to for Council approval.***
- 1.3 The Committee considered the proposed Capital budget for the Committee's services for 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report and recommended for Council approval.***

FM/86 **COUNCIL TAX BASE 2024-25 AND SURPLUS FOR 2023-24**

The Head of Finance presented the report to the Committee and sought approval of the recommendations.

Councillor Corbin sought clarity regarding how the council tax base was worked out.

The Strategic Director addressed the Committee and explained that granted planning development permissions were used to arrive at the Council Tax base.

Councillor Fitzpatrick raised a query regarding the figure for the projected deficit.

The Head of Finance informed the Committee that the in-year projected deficit took into account any fluctuations in council tax reduction schemes.

RESOLVED:

1.1 The Committee approved the Council Tax Base for 2024/25 of 38,809 (equivalent Band D) properties as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

1.2 The Committee approved that a Council Tax Surplus of £550,000 for 2023/24 be declared on the Collection Fund and that the Council's proportion of £55,000 be transferred to the General Fund in 2023/24.

FM/87 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the report.

RESOLVED:

The Committee considered and approved the updated work programme.

FM/88 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.

QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11

The Committee was informed that no questions had been received.

LEISURE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT PROCUREMENT

RESOLVED:

The Committee approved the recommendations of the report.

The meeting terminated at 19:00 hours.

COUNCILLOR R PEARSON

CHAIR