

COUNCIL MEETING – 22ND FEBRUARY 2018

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2018/21

Cabinet recommends to Council the items at Appendix A to the report.

Extract from the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting on 6th February 2018

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MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2018/21

Cabinet considered a report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy for Cheshire East Council for the years 2018/19 to 2020/21.

The Portfolio Holder referred to an error in the report at paragraph 1.6 in that the term 'Band D' should be deleted from the final sentence as this related to an average property. The increase per week for an average Band D property was £1.53.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Communication reported the comments of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appended to these minutes. The Committee's comments were considered by Cabinet.

Earlier in the meeting, Councillor S Pochin had asked the Portfolio Holder for Health to reconsider the decision to withdraw the refunding of parking fees for users of the Council's leisure facilities. The Portfolio Holder for Health responded that the matter was under consideration and she was unable to comment further at this stage.

Caroline O'Brien had raised a question earlier in the meeting regarding the use of New Homes Bonus funding to support the delivery of early help and prevention services until the new framework was in operation. The Portfolio Holder for Adult Care and Infrastructure envisaged the new framework becoming operational in April or May. Support mechanisms were in place to assist voluntary organisations whose contracts would be ending at the end of March. The Leader stressed the need to have the new model framework in relation to New Homes Bonus funding ready before the next Council meeting and asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Communication to set up an urgent task and finish group in liaison with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for this purpose. [Later in the meeting, following consideration of an item on the Early Help Framework, the Leader undertook to lead on the task and finish group.]

RESOLVED

That Cabinet

1. recommends to Council the items at Appendix A to the report; and

2. notes:

- (a) the summary results of the Budget Consultation, attached at Appendix B and the Budget Engagement exercise undertaken by the Council, as set out in the attached (Appendix C, Annex 2);
- (b) the comments of the Council's Interim Executive Director of Corporate Services (Section 151 Officer), contained within the MTFs Report, regarding the robustness of estimates and level of reserves held by the Council based on these budget proposals (Appendix C, Comment from the Interim Executive Director of Corporate Services);
- (c) the risk assessment detailed in the MTFs Report (Appendix C, Annex 5);
- (d) the development of a Capital Strategy as set out in the attached (Appendix C, Annex 10). This is linked to the Treasury Management and Investment Strategies and these will continue to be developed in accordance with the revised guidance for local authority investments during 2018/19. The strategy contains the programme of capital investment for 2018/19 to 2020/21. The programme may vary to take advantage of external funding opportunities, maximise private sector investment, prudential borrowing considerations, operational capacity and to ensure optimal delivery of the overall programme;
- (e) that the Council's Finance Procedure Rules will always apply should any changes in spending requirements be identified (Appendix C, Annex 10); and
- (f) that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee supports the proposal to earmark £2m to create a specific "New Homes Bonus Community Fund" to be used over the next two financial years. To also note that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is willing to assist Cabinet by working on the details of a specific scheme to allocate funds.

COUNCIL IS ASKED TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATION AT 1 ABOVE.