

Electoral division(s) affected:

All

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide information to the Council on issues considered by the Cabinet at its meetings held on 15 June and 13 July 2022 to enable Members to ask related questions by no later than midday 3 working days before the day of the meeting

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15 June 2022

1. Climate Emergency Response Plan 2022-24, Key Decision No: NCC/01/22

Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Mark Wilkes

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change which provided the second and final annual update on progress of the Council's first Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP1). The report also presented the subsequent second Climate Emergency Response Plan for the period 2022-24 (CERP2) and sought agreement for its adoption.

We give formal consideration to the introduction of new targets in CERP2, net zero.

- (a) achieve net zero by 2030 by retaining the CERP1 80% actual carbon reduction target for Council emissions by 2030 whilst offsetting or further reducing remaining emissions;
- (b) net zero by 2045 for countywide emissions (improved from 2050).

Decision

We:

- (a) Noted progress against CERP1 projects which had helped to achieving 58% Council reduction in tCO₂e from 2008/9 and countywide a 54% reduction (2019) in tCO₂e from 1990 levels;
- (b) Agreed to the adoption of CERP2 and assist with the delivery of targets as set out in the report;
- (c) Agreed to give formal consideration to the introduction of new targets in CERP2, net zero:
 - (i) achieve net zero by 2030 (against 2008/09 levels) by retaining the CERP1 80% actual carbon reduction target for Council emissions by 2030 whilst offsetting or further reducing remaining emissions;
 - (ii) net zero by 2045 (against 1990 levels) for countywide emissions (improved from 2050).
- (d) Noted that the CERP2 targets would require access to funding from external sources and advances in technology in some areas in order to be fully delivered;
- (e) Noted that any resources required to achieve the climate change targets outside of those costed plans included in the CERP2 action plan would be considered in future MTFP planning cycles with a value for money outcome-based focus alongside other projects and programmes.

2. Levelling Up Fund: Round 2, Key Decision No: REG/05/22 Cabinet Portfolio Holders – Councillors Elizabeth Scott and James Rowlandson

In accordance with paragraph 19(a) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Levelling Up Fund Round 2, Key Decision was exempt from the call-in procedure due to the urgent nature of the decision being made.

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth which provided an overview of the guidance and bidding requirements to access Round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund.

This report sought approval for the submission of five proposals across County Durham for the following parliamentary constituencies: City of Durham, Easington, North Durham, North West Durham and Sedgefield and outlined each submission for Round 2 identifying a match funding requirement, including £10 million of Council funding to lever an initial £92 million Levelling Up Fund investment towards the five Levelling Up schemes with a total expenditure of £117 million.

Decision

We

- (a) Agreed the draft outline approach for the Levelling Up submission for Round Two and support the five proposals for investment across the City of Durham, Easington, North Durham, North West Durham and Sedgefield parliamentary constituencies;
- (b) Noted the anticipated bid costs estimated of £117.4 million, including £92 million of LUF government grant to be bid for;
- (c) Utilise £5 million of Capital funding approved in February 2022 as part of the MTFP(12) process and if all Levelling Up bids were successful, recognise that a further £5 million would be required in MTFP(13) to meet match funding requirements;
- (d) £11.4 million of match funding required and how this would be funded;
- (e) Noted that earmarked reserves were available to develop submitted bids to ensure that they were delivery ready if funding was awarded. This meets the requirement to commence delivery prior to March 2023;
- (f) Recognised that further design work and costings was to be finalised and this could influence the final LUF request for government grant. The business case development underway would further shape proposals and time scales were very tight and pressured to develop all five proposals in time for the deadline; and

- (g) Delegated authority to the Corporate Director for Regeneration, Economy and Growth and Corporate Director of Resources, in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economy and Partnerships and the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Resources Investments and Assets and Deputy Leader and Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance to take all such decisions necessary to progress and finalise Levelling Up proposals for Round 2 ready for the submission deadlines on 6 July 2022.

3. Cyber Security Strategy Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Susan McDonnell

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources which highlighted the importance and provided an overview of the Councils cyber security arrangements and proposed the adoption of a new corporate cyber security strategy for Durham County Council.

Decision

We noted the contents of the report and agreed the adoption of the Cyber Security Strategy

13 July 2022

1. Proposal to close Forest of Teesdale Primary School on 31 August 2022, Key Decision: CYPS/03/2022 Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Ted Henderson

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services which sought approval to close Forest of Teesdale Primary School on 31 August 2022, taking account of the Local Authority's duties as prescribed in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to secure sufficient places and to ensure good outcomes for all children and young people in the local area.

Decision

We agreed to close Forest of Teesdale Primary School on 31 August 2022.

2 2021/22 Final Outturn for the General Fund and Collection Fund Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Richard Bell

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources which provided information on the final revenue and capital outturn for the General

Fund for 2021/22, the final outturn for the Council's Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Fund for 2021/22, the use of and contributions to earmarked, cash limit and general reserves in year and at year end together with the closing position regarding balances held at 31 March 2022 and achievement of Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) (11) savings targets in 2021/22.

Decision

We noted:

- (a) the final revenue outturn underspend of £11.425 million which represented 2.48% of the revised net expenditure budget of £461.251 million;
- (b) the net decrease in the Cash Limit Reserves of £4.208 million during 2021/22 (following General Fund funding of CYPS in year Cash limit overspend), with closing Cash Limit Reserves of £11.565 million. These sums would continue to be held as Earmarked Reserves and be available for Service Groupings to manage their budgets effectively;
- (c) the closing General Reserve balance of £25.898 million, which was within the council's general reserves policy of retaining a balance of between 5% and 7.5% of the net budget requirement;
- (d) the closing balance on Earmarked Reserves (excluding Cash Limit and Schools Reserves) was £223.964 million, which included the creation and replenishment of earmarked reserves at year end;
- (e) the closing balance on Schools Reserves of £34.276 million;
- (f) the outturn position for the Collection Funds in respect of Council Tax and Business Rates.
- (g) the amount of savings delivered during 2021/22 of the MTFP(11) period. (h) The emerging inflationary pressures that had been managed within contingencies during 2021/22 and the requirement to manage via reserve and service cash limits going forward.

We agreed:

- (a) that the capital budget underspend of £15.911 million be carried forward into 2022/23;
- (b) that service groupings continue to regularly review capital profiles throughout 2022/23, reporting revisions to Cabinet as necessary

3 Medium Term Financial Plan(13), 2023/24 – 2026/27 and Review of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme, Key Decision CORP/R/22/01

Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Richard Bell

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources which provided an update on the development of the 2023/24 budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP(13)) covering the period 2023/24 to

2026/27. The report also considered a review of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2023/24.

Decision

We

- (a) noted the updated MTFP forecasts and the requirement to identify additional savings of £54.7 million for the period 2023/24 to 2026/27, and also noted that this forecast could change significantly based upon outcome of future government funding settlements, the Fair Funding Review and the ongoing impact of the pandemic, demand for services and inflationary pressures upon the council;
- (b) noted that at this stage a forecast £21.9 million of savings were required to balance the 2023/24 budget;
- (c) agreed the high level MTFP(13) and 2023/24 budget setting timetable contained in the report;
- (d) agreed the approach outlined for consultation on the 2023/24 budget and MTFP(13);
- (e) agreed the proposals to build equalities considerations into decision making; and
- (f) agreed that Cabinet recommend to Full Council that the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme should remain unchanged for 2023/24.

4 Storm Arwen review

Portfolio Holder – Councillor John Shuttleworth

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change which considered a review of the response to Storm Arwen and an improvement plan for managing future incidents.

Decision

We

- (a) noted the contents of the report and the feedback from the different elements of the review outlined in Appendices 4 to 8;
- (b) noted the comments from the Stronger and Safer Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 20 May 2022 outlined in paragraphs 128 to 131
- (c) approved the improvement plan outlined in Appendix 9
- (d) within this, agreed to support the expansion of community resilience support across the county and the provision of improved training for elected Members and officers on emergency planning
- (e) agreed to share the report with NPg and the LRF to inform their own reviews and multi-agency planning.

5 UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan Portfolio Holder – Councillor Elizabeth Scott

We considered a report of the Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth which provided an update on the approach and progress made so far in the development of an Investment Plan for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and sought approval for the submission of the UKSPF Investment Plan for Durham.

Decision

We

- (a) noted the approach and progress that was being made to develop investment plans for UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the emerging priority areas;
- (b) noted the implications and risks to the Council as EU funding came to an end and give further consideration on how to ensure an effective transition arrangement from EU funding and UKSPF;
- (c) delegated authority to the Council's Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer and Leader to approve the investment plan's submission to Government before the deadline of 1 August 2022.

Background Papers

Cabinet Agenda and Reports – 15 June 2022

[Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday 15 June 2022, 9.30 am - Durham County Council](#)

Cabinet Agenda and Reports – 13 July 2022

[Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday 13 July 2022, 9.30 am - Durham County Council](#)

Councillor A Hopgood,
Leader of the Council
13 September 2022