

Electoral division(s) affected:

All

Purpose of the Report

To provide information to the Council on issues considered by the Cabinet at its meetings held on 12 October and 16 November 2022 to enable Members to ask related questions by no later than midday 3 working days before the day of the meeting

12 October 2022

Contents

Item 1 – Medium Term Financial Plan(13) 2023/24-2026/27 [Key Decision: CORP/R/22/01]

Item 2 - Concessionary Fares (ENCTS) Budget [Key Decision: REG/09/22]

Item 3 - Director of Public Health Annual Report 2022

Item 4 – Road Safety Strategy 2022-2032

Item 5 – Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report 2021-22

Item 6 - Humanitarian Support in County Durham

1. Medium Term Financial Plan(13) 2023/24 – 2026/27 [Key Decision: CORP/R/22/01] – Cabinet Portfolio Holders - Councillor Richard Bell, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance Councillor Richard Bell and Councillor Amanda Hopgood, Leader of the Council

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.

Decision

We:

- a) noted the updated MTFP forecasts and the requirement to identify additional savings of £52.569 million for the period 2023/24 to 2026/27, but also noted that this forecast could change significantly

- based upon outcome of future government funding settlements, the ongoing impact of the pandemic, demand for services and inflationary pressures upon the council;
- (b) noted that at this stage a forecast £37.389 million of savings were required to balance the 2023/24 budget;
 - (c) noted the expected challenges in balancing the capital programme in light of increased cost of borrowing and construction price inflation;
 - (d) agreed the savings included at Appendix 3 of the report to support MTFP(13) be consulted on;
 - (e) noted the planned review of earmarked reserves and the need to replenish corporate reserves should these forecasts prevail; and
 - (f) agreed the MTFP(13) consultation process as outlined in the report.

2. Concessionary Fares (ENCTS) Budget [Key Decision: REG/09/22] – Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Elizabeth Scott, Portfolio Holder for Economy and Partnerships

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth which set out the proposal to redirect funding during 2023/24 to sustain public transport services, subject to annual review.

Currently a number of bus services across County Durham are not commercially viable. This reflects a number of compounding issues including the forthcoming ending of Government support, increased operational costs and continued reduced passenger numbers as a result of the Covid pandemic.

In March 2022, we approved redirecting funding from the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) budget to assist DCC in funding additional local bus service contracts during 2022/23. Reflecting the continued trends in bus usage, the report set out the proposal to redirect funding during 2023/24 to sustain public transport services subject to annual review.

Decision

We agreed:

- a) that the forecast savings from the ENCTS budget to be redirected during 2023/24 to support bus services across the county, and subsequently reviewed annually;
- b) that the County Council transfer to the local bus services the revenue support to procure the previously commercial services, wherever resources allow;
- c) to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Economy and Partnerships to finalise the service proposals.

3. Director of Public Health Annual Report 2022 – Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Chris Hood, Portfolio Holder for Adult and Health Services

We considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Adult and Health Services and the Director of Public Health County Durham which presented the 2022 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health for County Durham.

Decision

We agreed:

- a) to receive the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2022;
- b) to publish the annual report.

4. Road Safety Strategy 2022-2032 – Cabinet Portfolio Holders - Councillor Elizabeth Scott, Portfolio Holder for Economy and Partnerships and Councillor John Shuttleworth, Portfolio Holder for Rural Communities and Highways

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth which sought approval to adopt a Road Safety Strategy 2022-2032 embedding a strategic partnership approach to engage with all road user groups to promote safer use on roads to better safeguard the county's road users and to establish a reporting mechanism for the recording of casualties and associated interventions to reduce the impact that road traffic accidents have on society.

Decision

We noted the report and authorised the implementation of the new Road Safety Strategy.

5. Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report 2021-22 - Cabinet Portfolio Holders - Councillor Chris Hood, Portfolio Holder for Adult and Health Services and Councillor Ted Henderson, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services

We considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Adult and Health Services, the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services and the Director of Public Health which presented the Health and Wellbeing Board Annual Report 2021-22 for endorsement.

Decision

We:

- (a) noted the work that has taken place in 2021-22 by the Health and Wellbeing Board;
- (b) endorsed the Health and Wellbeing Annual Report 2021-22.

6. Humanitarian Support in County Durham - Cabinet Portfolio Holder - Councillor Alan Shield, Portfolio Holder for Equality and Inclusion

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change which provided an update on County Durham's support for vulnerable individuals and families under Government schemes to assist refugee resettlement, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, Afghan resettlement and relocation programmes and the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme and to confirm the Council's future approach.

The report also informed us of changes to mandate all local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales to participate in a new system of full asylum accommodation dispersal, the development of a regional plan of anticipated asylum dispersal into local authority areas and the implications for County Durham.

Decision

We:

- (a) agreed the establishment of two partnership working groups; County Durham Migration and Cohesion Multi Agency Group, to act as the forum for asylum support in the county; and a Refugee and Resettlement Working Group, to focus on relevant programmes;
- (b) noted the challenges in providing placements for unaccompanied asylum seeking children, particularly given the increased threshold that the county could be requested to accommodate, and a reduction in the transfer deadline for unaccompanied children accommodated in hotels; (c) agreed expansion of the county's resettlement programme to accommodate three phases each year when capacity allows;
- (d) agreed that future phases of resettlement support should, where possible, continue to focus on working with social landlords and aim to resettle refugees in main towns;
- (e) agreed that the Council should not opt into the Afghan Find Your Own Accommodation pathway at this time;
- (f) agreed the introduction of a private sector incentive scheme for Homes for Ukraine arrivals, to reduce the impact on the Council's homeless service and overcome barriers in offering accommodation;
- (g) noted the update on Hong Kong British National (Overseas) status holders;
- (h) noted that Mears has commenced efforts to secure properties in County Durham to accommodate asylum seekers as part of the

- Government's efforts to disperse asylum seekers in a more proportionate way across the country;
- (i) agreed that the first priority for utilisation of the funding allocated to support the asylum accommodation programme should be targeted at developing the community and voluntary sector infrastructure to assist asylum seekers dispersed to accommodation in County Durham.

16 November 2022

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Item 1 - Council Tax Base 2023/24 and Forecast Deficit on the Council Tax Collection Fund as at 31 March 2023

Item 2 - Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2022/23 – Period to 30 September 2022 and Update on Progress towards achieving MTFP(12) savings

Item 3 - Growing Up in County Durham Strategy 2023-25

Item 4 - Poverty Strategy and Action Plan

Item 5 - County Durham Local Development Scheme and Publication Draft Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations Document

1. Council Tax Base 2023/24 and Forecast Deficit on the Council Tax Collection Fund as at 31 March 2023 [Key Decision: CORP/R/22/02] – Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Richard Bell, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance

We Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources which determined the council's tax base for domestic properties liable to pay council tax, which is an important component in the council's budget setting process for 2023/24 and to report on the estimated collection fund deficit as at 31 March 2023.

Decision

We:

- (a) approved the council tax base for the financial year 2023/24 for the county, which has been calculated to be 145,675.9 band D equivalent properties;

- (b) noted the impact on individual Town and Parish council tax bases and the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme grant allocations for the financial year 2023/24;
- (c) noted the forecasted council tax Collection Fund position at 31 March 2023, which will be updated and formally declared in January.

2. Forecast of Revenue and Capital Outturn 2022/23 – Period to 30 September 2022 and Update on Progress towards achieving MTFP(12) savings - Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Richard Bell, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance

We Cabinet considered a report of the Corporate Director of Resources which provided Cabinet with updated information on the:

- (a) forecast revenue and capital outturn for 2022/23, based on the position to September 2022;
- (b) forecast dedicated schools grant and schools position as at 31 March 2023, based on the position to 30 September 2022;
- (c) forecast for the council tax and business rates collection fund position at 31 March 2023, based on the position to 30 September 2022; and
- (d) details of the forecast use of and contributions to earmarked, cash limit and general reserves in 2022/23 and the estimated balances that will be held at 31 March 2023.

The report also sought approval of the revised capital programme 2022/23, other budget adjustments and proposed sums treated as outside of the cash limit in year and provided Cabinet with an update on progress towards achieving MTFP(12) savings in 2022/23.

Decision

We:

- (a) noted the council's overall forecast financial position for 2022/23 and the continuing uncertainty associated with the outturn forecast resulting from the significant inflationary cost pressures and ongoing covid-19 impacts on income as set out in the report;
- (b) agreed the proposed 'sums outside the cash limit' and movement on general contingencies for approval as set out in the report;
- (c) agreed the revenue and capital budget adjustments outlined in the report;
- (d) noted performance against the various prudential indicators agreed by Council in February 2022;

- (e) noted the forecast use of earmarked reserves in year;
- (f) noted the forecast end of year position for the cash limit and general reserves;
- (g) noted the inflationary pressures which are forecast to be managed from the Budget Support Reserve and from the General Reserve;
- (h) noted the Dedicated Schools Grant and Schools position;
- (i) noted the position on the capital programme and the Collection Funds in respect of Council Tax and Business Rates; and
- (j) noted the amount of savings delivered to 30 September 2022 against the 2022/23 targets and the total savings that will have been delivered since 2011

3. Growing Up in County Durham Strategy 2023-25 - Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Ted Henderson Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People’s Services

We considered a report of the Corporate Director of Children and Young People’s Services and Chair of Children, Young People and Families Partnership Board to present Cabinet with the Growing Up in County Durham (GUICD) 2023-25 Strategy for endorsement.

Decision

We endorsed the Growing Up in County Durham Strategy 2023-25.

4. Poverty Strategy and Action Plan - Cabinet Portfolio Holders – Councillor Alan Shield Portfolio Holder for Equality and Inclusion and Councillor Ted Henderson Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People’s Services

We Cabinet considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Resources and Corporate Director of Children and Young People’s Service which presented the revised Poverty Strategy and Action Plan for approval, following a consultation exercise undertaken April to August 2022.

The report presented the updated Child Poverty Action Plan as a separate document which focusses on addressing child poverty and is aligned with the wider Poverty Strategy and Action Plan.

Decision

We:

- (a) noted the contents of the report;
- (b) approved the new Poverty Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2026;
- (c) endorsed the underpinning Child Poverty Action Plan; and

- (d) agreed to receiving annual updates on the progress of the new Poverty Strategy and Action Plan and Child Poverty Action Plan.

5. County Durham Local Development Scheme and Publication Draft Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations Document - Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Elizabeth Scott Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration and Partnerships

We considered the report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth which sought approval to commence consultation on the Publication Draft Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations Development Plan Document (M&WDPD) which supports the policies and provisions of the County Durham Plan which was adopted in October 2020. It also sought approval of a new Local Development Scheme (LDS) which sets out the timetable for the preparation of planning documents including the M&WDPD.

Decision

We:

- (a) Agreed the Local Development Scheme; and
- (b) Agreed the Publication Draft Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations Development Plan Document for consultation for a period of 7 weeks from 28 November 2022 to 13 January 2023;
- (c) Agreed the supporting documents to the Publication Draft Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations Development Plan Document which are:
 - Statement of Consultation;
 - Site Assessment Document;
 - Heritage Impact Assessment;
 - Sustainability Appraisal;
 - Habitat Regulations Assessment;
 - Equality Impact Assessment.

Background Papers

Cabinet Agenda and Reports – 12 October 2022

[Cabinet - Wednesday 12 October 2022](#)

Cabinet Agenda and Reports – 16 November 2022

[Cabinet - Wednesday 16 November 2022](#)

Councillor A Hopgood,
Leader of the Council
29 November 2022