

# CABINET

Meeting held on Tuesday, 26th April, 2022 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

## **Voting Members**

Cllr D.E. Clifford, Leader of the Council  
Cllr K.H. Muschamp, Deputy Leader and Customer Experience and Improvement  
Portfolio Holder

Cllr Marina Munro, Planning and Economy Portfolio Holder  
Cllr A.R. Newell, Democracy, Strategy and Partnerships Portfolio Holder  
Cllr M.L. Sheehan, Operational Services Portfolio Holder  
Cllr P.G. Taylor, Corporate Services Portfolio Holder  
Cllr M.J. Tennant, Major Projects and Property Portfolio Holder

The Cabinet considered the following matters at the above-mentioned meeting. All executive decisions of the Cabinet shall become effective, subject to the call-in procedure, from **10th May, 2022**.

### 78. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –**

Having regard to the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors, no declarations of interest were made.

### 79. **MINUTES –**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 15th March, 2022 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

### 80. **P3 REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING DRAFT OUTTURN REPORT 2021/22 –**

(Cllr Paul Taylor, Corporate Services Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. FIN2220, which set out the anticipated financial position for 2021/22, based on the monitoring exercise carried out with budget officers during March, 2022 and actual spend data from 1st April, 2021 to 28th February, 2022. Members were informed that the Covid-19 pandemic had continued to have a widespread impact on local authority budgets, particularly in relation to a significant loss of income from services and an uncertain income recovery during the current financial year. It was noted that the forecast variation of £0.392 million would be funded from reserves in the short term but that, with the Council committed to several significant projects, such as the Union Yard regeneration scheme, the future utilisation of reserves would need to be addressed in the Budget Strategy for 2023/24 to ensure balances and reserves would remain adequate. Members were informed that the achievement of the Savings Plan was integral to the Medium Term Financial Strategy forecast and would need to be reviewed in terms of savings profile and whether the savings could be delivered in the current economic climate.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED** that

- (i) the draft outturn report and anticipated financial position for the 2021/22 financial year, as set out in Report No. FIN2201, be noted, with regard to the risks highlighted within the Report, the latest revenue forecasts and the impact on reserve balances;
- (ii) the update on in-year savings achieved, as set out in Section 5 of the Report, be noted;
- (iii) the £250,000 assumed level carry forwards included in the draft outturn forecast for 2021/22 be noted, with a detailed list of budget carry forwards to be presented for approval by the Cabinet, along with the final outturn report for the year, subject to external audit;
- (iv) the addition to the Medium Term Financial Strategy Equalisation Reserve of any unspent budgets from 2021/22 that contributed positively to the Council's General Fund be approved, in order to contribute positively to the Council's financial stability; and
- (v) the latest Capital Programme position, as set out in Section 9 of the Report, be noted.

**81. SUPPORT FOR ENERGY BILLS - THE COUNCIL TAX REBATE 2022/23 –**  
(Cllr Paul Taylor, Corporate Services Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. FIN2219, which set out the Council's Council Tax Rebate 2022/23, which was part of the Government's announced package of support known as the Energy Bills Rebate.

Members were informed that the Government had provided funding of £5,077,200 to allow households in the Borough in Council Tax bands A to D to receive a £150 non-repayable rebate. A further £134,550 had been provided to allow the Council to set up a discretionary fund which was required to be distributed by 30th November, 2022. The Cabinet was informed that residents that made Council Tax payments by direct debit had already received this rebate and that an exercise to seek bank account details for the remaining residents that paid by other methods was in progress. Members were informed that, in an amendment to the published recommendations in the Report, approved below as resolutions (ii) and (iii), authority would be delegated to either the Executive Director and Deputy Chief Executive or the Executive Head of Finance to carry out the actions listed.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED that**

- (i) the Council Tax Rebate Scheme, as set out in Report No. FIN2219, be noted and endorsed;
- (ii) the Executive Director and Deputy Chief Executive or the Executive Head of Finance, in consultation with the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder, be authorised to develop a discretionary Council Tax Rebate Scheme and associated policy and to make the necessary arrangements to assess eligibility and determine the award of funding to eligible households; and

- (iii) the Executive Director and Deputy Chief Executive or the Executive Head of Finance be authorised to make any further technical amendments to the Scheme where further Government advice is issued and to ensure that the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder is kept informed of any such amendments required.

82. **STRATEGIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK –**  
(Cllr Marina Munro, Planning and Economy Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Report No. EPSH2215, which set out the Council’s Strategic Economic Framework.

Members were informed that the purpose of the Framework was to help to grow the local economy and assist local businesses in recovering from the Coronavirus pandemic. It had been developed in consultation with key delivery partners and businesses. In discussing the document, the Cabinet expressed strong support for the approach taken in developing the Strategic Economic Framework. It was confirmed that areas of concern for Members, including local youth unemployment rates and local public transport services, were addressed in the Framework.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED** that the Strategic Economic Framework and Action Plan 2022 – 2025, as set out in Report No. EPSH2215, be approved.

83. **VOTE OF THANKS - CLLR K.H. MUSCHAMP –**

It was confirmed that Cllr K.H. Muschamp was standing down at the forthcoming Borough elections and the Cabinet wished to place on record its thanks for his excellent service to the Council and to the Cabinet, for many years as the Deputy Leader of the Council.

84. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC –**

**RESOLVED:** That, taking into account the public interest test, the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the under mentioned item to avoid the disclosure of exempt information within the paragraph of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 indicated against the item:

<b>Minute No.</b>	<b>Schedule 12A Para. No.</b>	<b>Category</b>
85	3	Information relating to financial or business affairs

**THE FOLLOWING ITEM WAS CONSIDERED  
IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC**

85. **NO. 168 HIGH STREET, GUILDFORD - INVESTMENT PROPERTY PORTFOLIO - AGREEMENT OF REVISED RENTAL OFFER –**  
(Cllr Martin Tennant, Major Projects and Property Portfolio Holder)

The Cabinet considered Exempt Report No. PETS2203, which set out details of a revised rental offer in relation to No. 168 High Street, Guildford, which was owned by the Council.

Members were informed that, following a difficult trading period, a series of discussions had taken place with the tenant of the property. The tenant had built up rent arrears since September, 2019. Officers had worked with Lambert Smith Hampton Investment Management (LSHIM), the Council's Asset Managers, and had negotiated a further revised rental offer that represented a good solution for both the tenant and the Council, considering the continuing difficult trading environment.

The Cabinet was supportive of the suggested approach and considered this to be the best available option.

**The Cabinet RESOLVED** that, in order to secure an income stream to the Council from 1st March, 2022 for the longest period possible, the package of changes to the existing lease, agreed in principle with the tenant and set out in the Summary and Recommendations box of Exempt Report No. PETS2203, and the associated budgetary adjustments resulting from the reduced rent, be approved.

The Meeting closed at 7.56 pm.

CLLR D.E. CLIFFORD, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

-----