

**Executive - 21 January 2021**

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held via Zoom on 21 January 2021 at 7.00 pm.

**Present:**                    **Councillors:**    Watts, Champion, Gill, Lukes, Ngongo, O'Halloran, Shaikh, Turan, and Ward

**Councillor Richard Watts in the Chair**

**773        APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

The Executive welcomed Cllr Michelline Safi Ngongo, who had been appointed as Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families.

**774        DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**775        MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 November 2020 be agreed as a correct record and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

**776        FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2020**

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That the breakdown of the forecast General Fund outturn by individual variance at Appendix 1 of the report, and by service area at Appendix 2 of the report, and the currently assumed approach to balancing the General Fund budget in 2020/21 (Section 3 and Table 1 of the report), be noted.
- b) That a transfer to earmarked reserves at the end of the financial year for the estimated net budget impact of 2020/21 council tax and business rates losses on future year budgets (Paragraph 3.38 of the report) be agreed.
- c) That any unallocated balance on the 2020/21 corporate contingency budget at the end of the financial year be transferred to General Fund balances, in line with the MTFS strategy, to increase resilience in the

council's balance sheet and reserves (Paragraph 4.39 of the report), be agreed.

- d) That the forecast in-year HRA deficit of (+£3.235m) (Section 5 and Appendix 2 of the report) be noted.
- e) That the revised in-year capital forecast of £124.351m be noted, and slippage of £65.135m to future financial years be agreed, and that the significant risk of further slippage over the remainder of the financial year (Section 6 and Appendix 3 of the report) be noted.

Reasons for decision – in order to ensure the financial resilience of the council

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

**777 BUDGET PROPOSALS 2021-22 AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That the latest assumed MTFs and balanced 2021/22 budget, including the underlying principles and assumptions (Paragraphs 3.1-3.30, Table 1 and Appendix A) be approved and recommended to Council.
- b) That the unprecedented level of uncertainty in the estimates due to COVID-19 and the wider local government funding outlook (Paragraphs 3.31-3.41 of the report) be noted.
- c) That the latest draft 2021/22 net budgets by directorate (Paragraph 3.5, Table 2 and Appendix A of the report) be approved and recommend to Council.
- d) That the 2021/22 savings (Paragraphs 3.42-3.45, Table 6 and Appendices B1-B2 of the report), be approved and recommended to Council, subject to consideration of individual consultations before implementation in some cases.
- e) That the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) settlement for 2021/22 and related funding assumptions (Paragraphs 3.46-3.55 of the report) be noted.
- f) That the fees and charges policy and the GF fees and charges for 2021/22 (Paragraphs 3.56-3.63 and Appendices C1-C5 of the report) be approved.
- g) That the policy on GF contingency and reserves, including the target level of GF balances, and the movements to/from earmarked reserves assumed as part of the 2021/22 revenue budget (Paragraphs 3.64-3.72 and Table 7

of the report) be approved and recommended to Council.

- h) That the Section 151 Officer be delegated responsibility for any technical adjustments required to be made to the 2021/22 budget (in line with the council's Financial Regulations) be approved and recommended to Council.
- i) That centrally held demographic growth funding be allocated to service budgets if and when the need materialises and approved by the Section 151 Officer. (Paragraph 3.9 of the report) be approved and recommended to Council.

#### **The HRA Budget and MTFS (Section 4)**

- j) That the balanced HRA 2021/22 budget be approved and recommend to Council, and the latest estimates over the 3-year MTFS period be noted (Paragraphs 4.1-4.3, Table 8 and Appendix D1 of the report).
- k) That the HRA rents and other HRA fees and charges for 2021/22 (Paragraphs 4.4-4.30, Tables 9-12 and Appendix D2 of the report) be approved.

#### **Capital Investment and Treasury and Investment Management (Section 5)**

- l) That the draft 2021/22 to 2023/24 capital programme, including investment in projects related to the council's net zero carbon priority, be approved and recommend to Council, and the latest indicative capital programme for 2024/25 to 2030/21 be noted (Paragraph 5.1-5.5, Table 13 and Appendix E of the report).
- m) That the estimated funding of the 2021/22 to 2023/24 capital programme be noted, and authority be delegated to the Section 151 Officer, where necessary, to apply capital resources to fund the capital programme in the most cost-effective way for the council be agreed and recommended to Council (Paragraphs 5.6-5.7 and Table 14 of the report).
- n) That the final version of the budget report to the Executive on 11 February 2021 and Full Council on 25 February 2021 will include the Capital Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy, be noted (Paragraph 5.8 of the report).

#### **Council Tax and Retained Business Rates (Section 6)**

- o) That the detailed, statutory council tax calculations and the recommendations for the final 2021/22 council tax, including the GLA precept, will be included for agreement in the final budget report to the

## Executive - 21 January 2021

Executive on 11 February 2021 and Full Council on 25 February 2021 be noted (Paragraphs 6.1-6.2 of the report).

- p) That authority be delegated to the Section 151 Officer to finalise the council's 2021/22 NNDR1 (detailed business rates) estimate ahead of the 31 January 2021 statutory deadline be agreed (Paragraph 6.3 of the report).
- q) That if applicable, any matters relating to the London Business Rates Retention (Non-Pilot) Pool in 2021/22 will be included for agreement in the final budget report to the Executive on 11 February 2021 and Council on 25 February 2021 be noted (Paragraphs 6.5-6.6 of the report).
- r) That the significant funding risk for the council in relation to Material Changes in Circumstances business rates appeals due to COVID-19 (Paragraphs 6.7-6.9 of the report) be noted.

### **Matters to Consider in Setting the Budget (Section 7)**

- s) That the Section 151 Officer's report on the robustness of the estimates included in the budget and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves would be considered when making decisions about the budget and the level of council tax, as required under Section 25(2) of the Local Government Act 2003 be agreed (Paragraphs 7.1-7.9 of the report).
- t) That the Monitoring Officer comments be noted (Paragraphs 7.10-7.14 of the report).
- u) That the Equality Impact Assessment (Paragraphs 7.15-7.17 and Appendix F of the report) be noted and to fully take account of it in approving the overall budget and related proposals.
- v) That the council is inviting business rate payers or representatives of business rate payers in Islington to comment on the draft 2021/22 budget proposals in this report, as required under Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 be noted (Paragraphs 7.18-7.20 of the report).

Reasons for decision – to allow members to set the budget

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

778 **PROCUREMENT STRATEGY FOR SPECIALIST ADAPTATIONS INCLUDING INSTALLATIONS AND REPAIRS FOR DISABLED RESIDENTS**

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That the procurement strategy for Specialist Adaptations including Installations and Repairs for Disabled Residents be approved as outlined in the report.
- b) That authority to award the contract be delegated to the Corporate Director of Housing in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Development.

Reasons for decision – to allow the continuity of service for the delivery of Specialist Adaptations including Installations and Repairs for Disabled Residents.

Other options considered – other options considered included delivering the service in-house, collaboration with neighbouring boroughs, and use of an external framework.

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

779 **PROCUREMENT STRATEGY FOR MENTAL HEALTH ACCOMMODATION PATHWAY SERVICES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the procurement strategy for mental health accommodation services be approved, specifically Option 4 (re-procure via competitive procedure with negotiation) as outlined in the report.

Reasons for decision – to meet current and future needs, increase efficiency, and enable people currently placed in expensive out of area residential care placements to return to borough.

Other options considered – other options considered included re-procuring services in their current form, in-house service delivery, and re-procuring with another borough.

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

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**PROCUREMENT STRATEGY FOR THE PARKING PAY BY PHONE SERVICE CONTRACT**

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That the procurement strategy for Parking Pay by Phone Service contract be approved as outlined in the report.
- b) That authority to award the contract be delegated to the Corporate Director of Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment and Transport.

Reasons for decision – to allow continuation of the service.

Other options considered – other options considered included the use of an external framework agreement, and a full competitive process solely for Islington.

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

MEETING CLOSED AT 19.20