

London Borough of Islington

Executive - 11 February 2021

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Executive held via Zoom on 11 February 2021 at 7.00 pm.

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

Also Present: **Councillors:** Khondoker and Poyser

Councillor Richard Watts in the Chair

781 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

782 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

783 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 January 2021 be approved as a correct record and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

784 **FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020**

RESOLVED:

- a) That the breakdown of the forecast General Fund outturn by individual variance at Appendix 1 to the report, and by service area at Appendix 2 to the report, be noted, and that the currently assumed approach to balancing the General Fund budget in 2020/21 be noted. (Section 3 and Table 1 of the report)
- b) That officers will work up proposals for the allocation of the Contain Outbreak Management Fund for inclusion in the month 10 report be noted. (Paragraph 3.32 of the report)
- c) That the forecast in-year HRA deficit of (+£2.822m) be noted. (Section 4 and Appendix 2 of the report).

- d) That the revised capital budget, reflecting slippage agreed at month 8, is £124.657m with a revised in-year capital forecast of £93.109m, be noted; and to note that approval for further slippage will be sought at year-end as part of the 2020/21 financial outturn report. (Section 5 and Appendix 3 of the report)
- e) That £0.070m be added to the current year (2020/21) capital programme for works on CCTV replacement at the Town Hall, to be funded from a revenue contribution to capital, be agreed. (Paragraph 5.5 of the report)

Reasons for decision – in order to ensure the financial resilience of the council
Other options considered – none
Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

785

BUDGET PROPOSALS 2021/22 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

RESOLVED:

The General Fund Budget 2021/22 and MTFS

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

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- g) That the policy on GF contingency and reserves, including the target level of GF balances be approved and recommended to council, and the movements to/from earmarked reserves assumed as part of the 2021/22 revenue budget be agreed. (Paragraphs 3.64-3.72 and Table 7 of the report)
- 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 be allocated to service budgets if and when the need materialises and approved by the Section 151 Officer be approved and recommended to Council. (Paragraph 3.9 of the report)

The HRA Budget and MTFS

- j) That the balanced HRA 2021/22 budget be approved and recommended 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, that are unchanged from those approved by the Executive on 21 January 2021, be noted. (Paragraphs 4.4-4.30, Tables 9-12 and Appendix D2 of the report)

Capital Investment and Treasury and Investment Management

- l) That the proposed 2021/22 to 2023/24 capital programme, including investment in projects related to the council's net zero carbon priority, be approved and recommended to Council, and the latest indicative capital programme for 2024/25 to 2030/31 be noted. (Paragraph 5.1-5.5, Table 13 and Appendix E1 of the report)
- m) That the estimated funding of the 2021/22 to 2023/24 capital programme be noted, and to 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. (Paragraphs 5.6-5.7 and Table 14 of the report)
- n) That the Capital Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement, Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy be approved and recommended to Council. (Paragraph 5.3 and Appendices E2-E5 of the report)

Council Tax and Retained Business Rates

- o) That the 2020/21 council tax and business rates forecasts and budgetary impact over the medium term be noted. (Paragraphs 6.1-6.3, Table 15, Paragraph 6.17 and Table 23 of the report)

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- p) That the calculations required for the determination of the 2021/22 council tax requirement and the level of council tax be approved and recommended to Council, as detailed in Section 6 of the report and summarised below:
- 1) 2021/22 council tax requirement of £99,248,682.10. (Paragraph 6.6 and Table 16)
 - 2) The relevant basic amount of Islington Band D council tax of £1,276.72, a 4.99% increase compared to 2020/21 (comprising 3.00% for expenditure on adult social care and 1.99% for other expenditure), and that this is not 'excessive'. (Paragraphs 6.7-6.8 and Table 17)
 - 3) The basic amount of Islington Band D council tax for dwellings to which no special item relates (i.e. outside of the Lloyd Square Garden Committee area) of £1,276.48. (Paragraph 6.9 and Table 18)
 - 4) The amount of 2020/21 council tax (excluding the GLA precept) for each valuation band over each of the Council's areas. (Paragraph 6.11 and Table 19)
 - 5) The total amount of 2020/21 council tax (including the GLA precept) for each valuation band over each of the Council's areas. (Paragraph 6.13 and Table 21)
- q) That the council's estimated retained business rates funding in 2021/22, as per the 2021/22 NNDR1 return estimate, be noted. (Paragraph 6.14-6.15 and Table 22 of the report)
- r) That the London Business Rates Pool will not continue in 2021/22 be noted. (Paragraph 6.16 of the report)
- s) That the significant funding risk for the council in relation to Material Change in Circumstance (MCC) business rates appeals due to COVID-19, and that additional appeals provision for this threat in 2020/21 or 2021/22 was not included in the 2021/22 NNDR1 return, be noted. (Paragraphs 6.18-6.21 of the report)

Matters to Consider in Setting the Budget

- t) To have regard to the Section 151 Officer's report on the robustness of the estimates included in the budget and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves 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)
- u) That the Monitoring Officer comments be noted. (Paragraphs 7.10-7.14 of the report)

- v) That the Equality Impact Assessment be noted and to take fully account of it in approving the overall budget and related proposals. (Paragraphs 7.15-7.17 and Appendix F of the report)
- w) That the council invited business rate payers or representatives of business rate payers in Islington to comment on the draft 2021/22 budget proposals, as required under Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, and that no responses were received, be noted. (Paragraphs 7.18-7.20 of the report)
- x) That the Annual Pay Policy Statement 2021/22 be approved and recommended to Council. (Paragraph 7.21 and Appendix G)

Reasons for decision – to allow members to set the budget

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

786

COMMENTS OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET PROPOSALS AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

RESOLVED:

That the comments of the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee be received.

Reasons for decision – to consider the comments of the committee

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

787

EXECUTIVE MEMBER RESPONSE TO THE HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE CAPITAL MAJOR WORKS SCRUTINY REVIEW

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Executive responses to the recommendations of the Housing Scrutiny Committee, as set out in Section 4 of the report, be agreed.
- b) That officers report back on progress to the Housing Scrutiny Committee in six months' as well as twelve months' time be agreed.

Reasons for decision – to respond to the review undertaken by the Housing Scrutiny Committee

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

788 **SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2022/23**

RESOLVED:

- a) That the co-ordinated schemes and timetables for admission to Islington primary and secondary schools and academies in 2022/23, and in-year admission protocols for 2022/23, be agreed as set out in Appendices 1, 4 and 7 of the report.
- b) That the policy and oversubscription criteria for admission to community primary and secondary schools and Islington Sixth Form Consortium for admission in 2022/23, be agreed as set out in Appendices 2, 5, 8 and 9 of the report.
- c) That the proposed admission numbers for Islington community primary and secondary schools, and for external applicants to the Islington Sixth Form Consortium in 2022/23, be agreed as set out in Appendices 3, 6 and 10 of the report.

Reasons for decision – to promote fair access to educational opportunity and to ensure compliance with the mandatory provisions of the School Admissions Code

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

789 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - BEHAVIOUR CHANGE SCRUTINY REVIEW**

Councillors Poyser and Khondoker introduced the report on behalf of the Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the report of the Environment & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee be received.
- b) That the Executive Member's response be reported to a future meeting of the Executive, including having due regard to any relevant implications of the Environment & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee's recommendations.

Reasons for decision – to receive the report of the committee

Other options considered – none

Conflicts of interest / dispensations granted – none

MEETING CLOSED AT 7.20 pm