

CABINET

**REMOTE MEETING HELD
ON THURSDAY 5TH NOVEMBER, 2020**

PRESENT: Councillors Atkinson, Cummins, Hardy,
John Joseph Kelly, Lappin, Moncur and Veidman

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Sir Ron Watson viewed the meeting
remotely

54. NOMINATION OF CHAIR

In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Maher and the Vice Chair, Councillor Fairclough the Democratic Services Manager requested nominations for Chair of the Meeting. It was moved by Councillor Lappin, seconded by Councillor Atkinson and agreed that Councillor Hardy Chair the meeting of the Cabinet.

Decision Made: Councillor Hardy, in the Chair

55. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from the Chair, Councillor Maher and the Vice Chair Councillor Fairclough.

56. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests were received.

57. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Decision Made:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2020 be approved as a correct record.

58. PROCUREMENT OF TELEPHONY SOLUTION

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services in relation to the current telephony solution and the proposed procurement route for a new cloud telephony service.

Decision Made:

- (1) that the Executive Director for Corporate Resources and Customers Services be authorised to conduct a procurement exercise for cloud telephony solution(s) with a view to entering into a contract for a maximum period of 2 years plus one year; and
- (2) that the Executive Director for Corporate Resources and Customers Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services be granted delegated authority to award the contract(s) resulting from the procurement and to award any extension thereof.

Reason for the Decisions:

To have an appropriate and best value contract(s) in place for telephony service provision.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

To continue with existing telephony solution, however this requires significant investment, does not support the Councils move to cloud based telephony and does not support agile working (soft telephony).

59. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2020/21

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services in relation to the Treasury Management activities undertaken to 30 September 2020. The report set out that it was the second of the ongoing quarterly monitoring reports provided to the Audit and Governance Committee and the mid-year report to the Cabinet and Council, in order that the treasury management policies and practices maybe scrutinised.

Decision Made:

That the Treasury Management update to 30 September 2020 be noted; the effects of decisions taken in pursuit of the Treasury Management Strategy be reviewed; and the implications of changes resulting from regulatory, economic and market factors affecting the Council's treasury management activities be considered.

Reasons for the Decision:

To ensure that Members are fully appraised of the treasury activity undertaken to 30 September 2020 and to meet the reporting requirements set out in Sefton's Treasury Management Practices and those recommended by the CIPFA code.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

60. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT 2020/21 TO 2023/24 AND FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE 2020 - REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE 2020/21 INCLUDING THE FINANCIAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE 2020/21 BUDGET

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director for Corporate Resources and Customer Services that advised of:

- (1) the current estimated financial impact of COVID-19 on the 2020/21 Budget;
- (2) the current forecast revenue outturn position for the Council for 2020/21;
- (3) the current forecast on Council Tax and Business Rates collection for 2020/21; and
- (4) the monitoring position of the Council's capital programme to the end of September 2020 relating to:
 - the forecast expenditure to year end;
 - variations against the approved budgets and an explanation of those variations for consideration by Members;
 - updates to spending profiles and proposed amendments to capital budgets necessary to ensure the efficient delivery of capital projects are also presented for approval.

The Executive Director for Corporate Resources and Customer Services highlighted the significant pressure the Council continues to face in responding to Covid-19. He referred to the scheme that had been introduced by Central Government to cost share the income losses being incurred by the Council from sales, fees and charges. It was reported that the Council would make three claims relating to 2020/2021 and explained that the conditions criteria set out by Central Government for the scheme and further changes made to the criteria had meant that the Council would be required to fund the overall shortfall of £9.3m due to now not meeting those conditions within the amended criteria.

The Executive Director for Corporate Resources and Customer Services drew Members attention to the 2020/21 Medium Term Financial Plan and emphasised the difficulty of forecasting due to the lack of clarity regarding the Spending Review.

The Cabinet Member for Regulation, Compliance and Corporate Services, Councillor Lappin extended her appreciation to all the staff who were working incredibly hard in such difficult circumstances.

Decision Made:

That:

- (A) in respect of the Revenue Budget:
- (1) the current estimated impact of COVID-19 on the 2020/21 Budget together with the key issues that will influence the final position, be noted;
 - (2) the financial risks associated with the delivery of the 2020/21 revenue budget and the material variations that are to be expected to the current estimates contained in the report be recognised, and it be agreed that subsequent reports provide updates and where appropriate remedial action plans as appropriate;
 - (3) the Government grant funding that has been received to support individuals and businesses with the response to the pandemic, and which has been distributed in accordance with central government guidance, and the Liverpool City Region Hospitality and Leisure Support Grant which is providing additional help to local businesses, be noted;
 - (4) the current forecast revenue outturn position for 2020/21 be noted;
 - (5) it be acknowledged that the forecast outturn position will continue to be reviewed to ensure a balanced forecast outturn position and financial sustainability can be achieved; and
- (B) in respect of the Capital Budget:
- (1) the spending profiles across financial years for the approved Capital Programme (paragraph 7.1.1 of the report) be noted;
 - (2) the latest capital expenditure position as at 30 September 2020 of £9.551m (paragraph 7.2.1 of the report) with the latest full year forecast of £39.388m (paragraph 7.3.1 of the report) be noted;
 - (3) the explanations of variances to project budgets (paragraph 7.2.3 of the report) be noted;
 - (4) the capital programme outputs to the end of September (paragraph 7.4 of the report) be noted;

- (5) the Council be recommended to approve the supplementary capital estimate of £1.2m for an Essential Maintenance Programme at Dunes Splashworld, to be funded from Council resources (paragraph 7.5 of the report); and
- (6) the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services will manage capital resources to ensure the capital programme remains fully funded and that capital funding arrangements secure the maximum financial benefit to the Council (paragraph 7.6.3 of the report), be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure Cabinet are informed of the forecast outturn position for the 2020/21 Revenue Budget as at the end of September 2020, including delivery of a remedial action plan, and to provide an updated forecast of the outturn position regarding the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates.

To keep Members informed of the progress of the Capital Programme against the profiled budget for 2019/20 and agreed allocations for future years.

To progress any changes that are required in order to maintain a relevant and accurate budget profile necessary for effective monitoring of the Capital Programme.

To approve any updates to funding resources so that they can be applied to capital schemes in the delivery of the Council's overall capital strategy.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

61. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Decision Made:

That, under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The Public Interest Test has been applied and favours exclusion of the information from the Press and Public.

62. PHASE 1 ASSET DISPOSALS

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services in relation to exempt information regarding Phase 1 Asset Disposals.

Decision Made:

That the exempt information be considered as part of the public report in relation to this matter, reference Minute No: 64 refers.

Reason for the Decision:

The exempt information is required to be considered with the information in the public report in order that an informed decision may be made.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

63. RE-ADMIT PRESS AND PUBLIC

Decision Made:

That the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting.

64. PHASE 1 ASSET DISPOSALS

Further to Minute No's. 97 and 99 of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 9 January 2020 in relation to Asset Maximisation, the Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that detailed the first phase of potential Asset Disposals.

Decision Made: That:

- (1) The disposal of the assets detailed in the report, with a view to generating capital receipts to support the Growth and Investment Programme and the Council's Framework for Change Programme, be approved;
- (2) authority be granted to Officers to negotiate terms and conditions for each disposal in line with the usual delegations set out in the Council's Asset Disposal Policy; and
- (3) the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services be requested to provide a progress report to the meeting of the Cabinet scheduled to take place on 1 April 2021.