

REPORT OF CABINET

(Meeting held on 19 February 2020)

1. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN / ANNUAL BUDGET 2020/21 (MINUTE NO 69)

The Cabinet, having considered the development of the Medium Term Financial Plan, is reporting to Council on the General Fund Revenue and Capital Budget requirements for 2020/21, as outlined in Cabinet Report 4 of the Cabinet Agenda.

The Cabinet is pleased to note the continued priority placed on Smarter Working initiatives and the Council's ICT Infrastructure investment.

The Council's Chief Finance Officer is satisfied with the robustness of the process that has been followed in order to produce an accurate budget for 2020/21. Furthermore, he considers that the adequacy of reserves to be suitable and appropriate based on the proportionality against the Council's budget.

RECOMMENDED:

(a) That there is a General Fund Net Budget Requirement in 2020/21 of £19,194,110 as set out in Appendix 5 to Cabinet Report 4 of the Cabinet Agenda, including the transfers to and from reserves, as outlined in Appendix 5d to Cabinet Report 4 of the Cabinet Agenda;

(b) That the Band D Council Tax for 2020/21 shall be £178.36;

(c) That the General Fund Capital Programme for 2020/21 of £9.894m, as set out in Appendix 6 to Cabinet Report 4 of the Cabinet Agenda, be approved; and

(d) That the site licence fees and service charges at Stillwater Park be increased by 2.4% in line with RPI inflation.

2. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET AND HOUSING PUBLIC SECTOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME 2020/21 (MINUTE NO 70)

The Cabinet, having approved the proposed planned maintenance and improvement works programme for 2020/21 – 2022/23, is reporting to Council on the proposed Housing Revenue Account budget for 2020/21, as outlined in Cabinet Report 5 of the Cabinet Agenda.

The Cabinet are delighted with the significant progress made in the Housing Services Portfolio and welcome the news that newly let void properties will have freshly painted walls, a raise in standards from previous arrangements but also not standard practice for many Housing Authorities. The positive comments from tenant representatives are outlined at section 11 of Cabinet Report 5 of the Cabinet Agenda.

A £45 million capital project budget over the next three years is proposed, specifically for the delivery of Council dwellings.

RECOMMENDED:

(a) That the HRA budget as set out in Appendix 1 to Cabinet Report 5 of the Cabinet agenda, be agreed;

(b) That from 05 April 2020, an increase in rents of 2.7% from the 2019/20 weekly rent level, in accordance with Government guidelines, be agreed;

- (c) That from 05 April 2020, an increase in service charges of 1.7% from the 2019/20 weekly service charge level, be agreed;*
- (d) That from 05 April 2020, an increase of 30p per week (plus VAT where applicable) in garage rents, be agreed; and*
- (e) That a Housing Capital Programme to 2022/23, as set out in Appendix 3 to Cabinet Report 5 of the Cabinet Agenda, be agreed.*

3. ELECTORAL REVIEW OF NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL – WARDING PATTERN PROPOSALS (MINUTE NO 71)

The Cabinet, having considered the work of the Electoral Review of the District Council Task and Finish Group, is recommending that the Council submit a formal response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) consultation in respect of a proposed warding pattern for the New Forest District.

The response is outlined in full at Appendix 1 to Cabinet Report 6 of the Cabinet Agenda.

The Cabinet would like to thank the Task and Finish Group, alongside the local ward councillors who engaged in the zone workshops, in bringing forward this matter for consideration by the Council.

The Cabinet anticipates that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) will publish draft recommendations for consultation at the end of May 2020.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) That the Warding Pattern Proposal – Electoral Review (Appendix 1 to Cabinet Report 6 of the Cabinet Agenda) be approved and submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) as the Council’s official response to the LGBCE consultation; and*
- (b) That authority be delegated to the Executive Head of Governance and Housing, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make further editing changes, corrections and updates to the document and maps prior to submission.*

**COUNCILLOR B RICKMAN
CHAIRMAN**