

CABINET

9 OCTOBER 2018

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MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (REVENUE AND CAPITAL) 2018 - 23

1. Decision:

The Cabinet:

- 1.1 Noted the progress that had been made on identifying savings and additional income to close the Funding Gap from 2019/20 onwards.
- 1.2 Recommend to Council the extension of the Assistant Chief Executive Post for a further year from Mid-April 2019 to Mid-April 2020 and to update the Medium Term Financial Strategy based on the financial implications identified in this report.
- 1.3 Recommend to Council the appointment of a Major Developments Projects Manager and Major Developments Projects Officer in a Major Projects Team and to update the Medium Term Financial Strategy based on the financial implications identified in this report.
- 1.4 Noted the requirement to produce a Capital Strategy that will be need to be approved by Full Council.
- 1.5 Approved the commencement of the Budget Consultation Exercise for 2019/20 to comply with the statutory requirement.
- 1.6 Noted Strategic (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee will scrutinise the proposals and options identified for closing the Funding Gap at its meeting on 22 November 2018.
- 1.7 Delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Democracy and the Head of Finance and Procurement (Section 151 Officer) the ability to make minor changes to the Budget Consultation prior to its issue.

2. Statement of Reasons:

The Medium Term Financial Strategy

- 1.1 The ability to deliver the outcomes set out in the Lichfield District Council Strategic Plan 2016-20 is dependent on the resources available in the MTFS.
- 1.2 The Council has a statutory duty to set a balanced budget and to calculate the level of Council Tax for its area. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) has a statutory duty to ensure the figures provided for estimating and financial planning are robust and will stand up to Audit scrutiny.
- 1.3 The Local Government Act 2003 places duties and requirements on the Authority on how it sets and monitors its budgets, including the CFO's report on the Robustness of the Budget and adequacy of Reserves and this report forms part of the MTFS.

The Revenue Budget

- 1.4 The Approved Revenue Budget with a transfer to general reserves in 2018/19 and Funding Gaps in later years is shown in detail at APPENDICES A and B of the report.
- 1.3 The Council is legally required to balance the budget in the first year (2019/20) of the MTFS and to set out its proposals to balance the further financial years - 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23.

- 1.4 The Council will need to make significant levels of savings or achieve additional income to close the Funding Gap by 2022/23.

Options for Closing the Funding Gap

- 1.5 Leadership Team are currently reviewing revenue base budgets to identify options to close the Funding Gap.

The Capital Strategy and the Capital Programme

- 1.6 The Council will, under the revised Prudential Code, be required to approve a more comprehensive Capital Strategy.
- 1.7 The Approved Capital Programme is shown at APPENDIX C of the report and Leadership Team has been requested to submit new or additional capital bids for consideration in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Budget Consultation

- 1.8 The Council will undertake consultation on the 2019/20 budget during October 2018 and November 2018 to enable the results to be reported to Strategic (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee on 31 January 2019 and Cabinet on 12 February 2019 as part of the process for approving the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 1.9 The draft content based on the 2018/19 budget consultation is shown at APPENDIX D of the report.

3. Any Alternative Options:

- 3.1 Where alternative options exist, they are identified within the background section of the report.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY DELIVERY PLAN 2018 - 2020
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1. Decision:

- 1.1 The Cabinet approved the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2020 and Delivery Plan.

2. Statement of Reasons:

- 2.1 The Council's first Health and Wellbeing Strategy (HWS), explores the ways in which the Council has an impact on the health and wellbeing of residents through our services. It identifies service areas that impact on the wider determinants of health and highlights existing Council activities which contribute to good health and wellbeing. It builds on the evidence contained in our Strategic Plan, provides a picture of the key local health and wellbeing indicators and highlights areas for improvement.
- 2.2 The vision of the HWS is that 'we want local people to live healthy fulfilled lives, have access to opportunities to be active and experience improved health and wellbeing'. To achieve this, the Strategy proposes four priorities for action. The first is the development of a Health in All Policies approach (HiAP) which will enable us to better understand our contribution to and measure our impact on health and wellbeing and will inform and influence our policy making and decisions. It will also provide a foundation for delivering future activities to maintain or improve health and wellbeing, in partnership with the Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Board, Freedom Leisure, other organisations and local communities.
- 2.3 Our other priorities are to encourage people of all ages to have more active and healthy lifestyles and take control of their own health and wellbeing, support older and vulnerable people in our communities to live and age well and improve workplace health, wellbeing and safety.

3. Any Alternative Options:

- 3.1 To do nothing and not have a Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY: EXEMPTION FOR RESIDENTIAL EXTENSIONS

1. Decision:

The Cabinet:

- 1.1 Agreed to cease applying CIL to domestic extensions in order to reduce the administrative burden on the Authority, applicants and planning agents.
- 1.2 Approved the update to the Exemptions, Relief and Exception Circumstances Policy as set out in Appendix A of the report.
- 1.3 Agreed that the Domestic Extension Policy will apply to any domestic extension application validated on/after 1 January 2019.

2. Statement of Reasons:

- 2.1 On the 19 April 2016 Full Council approved the adoption of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule. Full Council also agreed to commence charging CIL on 13 June 2016.
- 2.2 The Charging Schedule sets a CIL rate for residential development including extensions to domestic properties of £55 per square metre in high value zones, £25 per square metre in lower value zones and £14 per square metre in Strategic Development Areas.
- 2.3 In accordance with the CIL Regulations there are a number of exemptions to the CIL levy for domestic extensions and to date the Authority has not received any CIL income from residential extensions.
- 2.4 It is proposed that the Council no longer applies CIL to residential extensions given the high cost to the authority of implementing this part of the Regulation.

3. Any Alternative Options:

- 3.1 Cabinet decide not to cease applying CIL to domestic extensions and the Council continues to assess each householder application for extensions to determine whether it is CIL liable development, issue a liability notice, determine applications for relief from CIL, record CIL liability as a Land Charge and subsequently record exemption relief. This will result in a continued drain on the Council's resources.

ELFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - REFERRAL TO REFERENDUM

1. Decision:

The Cabinet:

- 1.1 Accepted and agreed to the making of modifications as set out in the 'Decision Statement regarding Elford Neighbourhood Plan proceeding to referendum' hereby referred to as the Decision Statement. This will enable the Plan to be proceed to the referendum stage.
- 1.2 Approved the publication of the Decision Statement for the Elford neighbourhood plan.

2. Statement of Reasons:

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan covering Elford which has recently been the subject of formal examination by an Independent examiner.
- 2.2 The examiner of the Elford neighbourhood plan is recommending that subject to a number of modifications being made to the plan that it can proceed to referendum. The District Council now has to consider the examiner's report and recommendations and if it so wishes resolve to progress the Elford Neighbourhood Plan to referendum by way of issuing a Decision Statement.

3. Any Alternative Options:

- 3.1 Lichfield District Council declines to send the Elford Neighbourhood Plans to referendum. This would mean the Neighbourhood Plan would retreat to an earlier stage of development.
- 3.2 The Qualifying Body withdraws the Neighbourhood Plan prior to Lichfield District Council making a formal decision as outlined within the Decision Statement. Again this would mean the Neighbourhood Plan would retreat to an earlier stage of development.

ARMITAGE WITH HANDSACRE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - FINAL DECISION STATEMENT

1. Decision:

The Cabinet:

- 1.1 Noted the results of the referendum for the Armitage with Handsacre Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2 Agreed to the making of the Armitage with Handsacre Neighbourhood Plan and that this decision be reported to Full Council.

2. Statement of Reasons:

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan covering Armitage with Handsacre which has recently been subject to referendum. The Armitage with Handsacre Neighbourhood Plan received a majority Yes vote at its referendum held on 5 September 2018. The District Council now has to formally 'make' the Armitage with Handsacre Neighbourhood Plan, following which it will form a part of the Development Plan in Lichfield District.

3. Any Alternative Options:

- 3.1 The District Council can only refuse to make the Neighbourhood Plan if it considers it would breach, or be incompatible with any EU Obligation or any of the Convention Rights.
- 3.2 Following the making of the Neighbourhood Plan, Lichfield District Council can decide to modify or revoke the Neighbourhood Plan, in line with the Regulations.

ALREWAS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - FINAL DECISION STATEMENT
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1. Decision:

The Cabinet:

- 1.1 Noted the results of the referendum for the Alrewas Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2 Agreed to the making of the Alrewas Neighbourhood Plan and that the decision be reported to Full Council.

2. Statement of Reasons:

- 2.1 The preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan covering Alrewas has recently been subject to referendum. The Alrewas Neighbourhood Plan received a majority Yes vote at its referendum held on 5 September 2018. The District Council now has to formally 'make' the Alrewas Neighbourhood Plan, following which it will form a part of the Development Plan in Lichfield District.

3. Any Alternative Options:

- 3.1 The District Council can only refuse to make the Neighbourhood Plan if it considers it would breach, or be incompatible with any EU Obligation or any of the Convention Rights.
- 3.2 Following the making of the Neighbourhood Plan, Lichfield District Council can decide to modify or revoke the Neighbourhood Plan, in line with the Regulations.

LONGDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - FINAL DECISION STATEMENT

1. Decision:

The Cabinet:

- 1.1 Noted the results of the referendum for the Longdon Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2 Agreed to the making of the Longdon Neighbourhood Plan and that this decision be reported to Full Council.

2. Statement of Reasons:

- 2.1 The preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan covering Longdon has recently been subject to referendum. The Longdon Neighbourhood Plan received a majority Yes vote at its referendum held on 5 September 2018. The District Council now has to formally 'make' the Longdon Neighbourhood Plan, following which it will form a part of the Development Plan in Lichfield District.

3. Any Alternative Options:

- 3.1 The District Council can only refuse to make the Neighbourhood Plan if it considers it would breach, or be incompatible with any EU Obligation or any of the Convention Rights.
- 3.2 Following the making of the Neighbourhood Plan, Lichfield District Council can decide to modify or revoke the Neighbourhood Plan, in line with the Regulations.

HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME

1. Decision:

The Cabinet agreed:

- 1.1 That the revised allocation scheme at Appendix A of the Cabinet report be approved.
- 1.2 That delegated authority for any minor changes to the scheme be approved by the Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services, Housing and Wellbeing.
- 1.3 That the proposals to move away from Homes Direct and to review the Service Level Agreement with Bromford to continue to manage and administer the housing register on the Council's behalf be approved

2. Statement of Reasons:

- 2.1 The Council is required to have an allocation scheme in place that determines who is eligible and qualifies for social housing¹ in the District and how priority is determined between applicants. The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the imminent review of the Homes Direct IT platform that operates the current housing register has given the Council the opportunity to review its allocation scheme and also consider how to replace the operating system of the register with an IT platform that better meets our needs.
- 2.2 This report sets out issues with the current allocation scheme and housing register and proposes a revised scheme that reflects current legislation, guidance and local priorities. It also proposes that the Council continue to work in partnership with Bromford to manage and administer the housing register on our behalf and jointly develop a bespoke housing register that will be built around our revised allocation scheme and other specific requirements.

3. Any Alternative Options:

- 3.1 To do nothing: this isn't an option as it is a legal requirement for the local authority to have an allocation scheme in place as a way of prioritising applicants to vacancies in social housing.
- 3.2 Continue with the existing allocation scheme: this is outdated and does not reflect the Council's new duties under the HRA or emerging local priorities.
- 3.3 Housing register management options are set out in Appendix C of the report.

¹ Social housing in this context refers to both social rented and affordable rented homes.