

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

Executive Summary

The Council is invited to consider the recommendations from the meeting of the Executive held on 14 January 2021 and 4 February 2021, as set out in this report. The minutes of the Executive held on 4 February 2021 will be published in due course. The extract from the minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2021 is set out in this report.

Procedure to be followed.

The Mayor will take the report on Council Tax 2021-22 (Agenda Item 8) first, together with the recommendations of the Executive meeting on 4 February 2021 relating to the following:

- A. General Fund, Service Plans, Budgets and Prudential Indicators 2021-22.
- B. Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2021-22.
- C. Investment Programme 2020-21 to 2024-25.
- D. Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies.

The items above will be debated after the Leader of the Council's Budget Statement.

The remaining recommendations from the Executive, listed below and set out in detail later in this report, will be considered once the Council Tax for 2021-22 has been agreed.

The Executive held on 4 February 2021:

- E. Housing Management and Maintenance Service.

The Executive held on 14 January 2021:

- F. Notice of Motion – Cllr T Aziz – Viability of Affordable Homes.

Recommendations of the Executive

EXECUTIVE – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

A. GENERAL FUND, SERVICE PLANS, BUDGETS AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2021-22

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL That

- i) the Revenue Estimates and Human Resource requirements for 2021/22 be approved;**
- ii) a Band D Council Tax for the Borough of Woking for 2021/22 of £250.46 be approved; and**
- iii) the Prudential Indicators at Appendix 3 to the report be approved, subject to any changes arising from consideration of the Investment Programme, revenue budgets and Final Government Settlement.**

B. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGETS 2020-21

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL That

- (i) the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved; and**
- (ii) with effect from 5 April 2021, rents be increased by 1.5%.**

C. INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2019-20 TO 2023-24

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL That

- (i) the Investment Programme 2020/21 to 2024/25 be approved subject to reports on projects where appropriate;**
- (ii) the proposed financing arrangements be approved;**
- (iii) Thameswey Developments Ltd be authorised to take long term annuity funding, up to 50 years, for the Sheerwater project through its £115m facility with loans permitted to transfer to Thameswey Housing Ltd as the project progresses. The total long term loans drawn by the Thameswey Group for the Sheerwater project should not exceed the long term facility of £290m previously agreed (excluding THL revolving facility and TEL facility); and**
- (iv) a capital grant of £300,000 and revenue grant of £150,000 for 2021/22 be approved for Brookwood Cemetery.**

D. CAPITAL, INVESTMENT AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL That

- (i) the Capital and Investment Strategies for 2021/22 be approved; and**
- (ii) the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators set out in table 1 of Section 4 of the Treasury Management Strategy and**

the MRP policy set out in Appendix A be approved, subject to any changes arising from consideration of the Investment Programme, revenue budgets and Revenue Support Grant Settlement.

EXECUTIVE – 4 FEBRUARY 2021

E. HOUSING MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE SERVICE

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL That

the proposal to bring Housing Management and Asset Management services back in-house and procure Housing Repairs and Maintenance works and services through third party contractors from 1 April 2022 be approved.

EXECUTIVE – 14 JANUARY 2021

F. NOTICE OF MOTION - CLLR T AZIZ - VIABILITY OF AFFORDABLE HOMES

At its meeting on 3 December 2020, the Council referred the following Notice of Motion to the Executive.

Councillor T Aziz

“Motion on viability of affordable homes

Since 2012 WBC has been relying on the opinion of a sole company to determine viability of affordable homes on site for developments. This has resulted in almost all cases being declared unviable by that company.

It’s good practise to seek multiple opinions and not limit to sole opinion.

This motion calls that WBC to employ services of more than one company to determine the viability of affordable homes in future developments before being presented to planning committee.”

Councillor Aziz attended the meeting and spoke in support of the Motion. It was noted that a Member Briefing on Viability Assessments in Planning Applications had been arranged on 1 February 2021. Regarding on site delivery of affordable homes, Officers advised that the Council’s policy had express provisions to set out the circumstances whereby developers could proceed without the full amount of affordable housing. The Executive was broadly supportive of the Motion and its purpose to maintain a panel of consultants, rather than to rely on a single consultant to determine viability. It was agreed that the Motion would be re-drafted outside of the meeting, including removal of criticism. The amended Motion would be agreed with the Leader of the Council and Councillor Aziz ahead of Council on 11 February 2021.

The Executive agreed that the Motion, as amended and agreed outside of the meeting by the Leader of the Council and Councillor Aziz, be supported. The revised wording of the Motion was agreed as “This Motion proposes that the Council maintains a select list of at least three suitably qualified companies to undertake the viability assessments of Planning Applications and ensure that they are used equally provided they have not been used by the applicant” accordingly the agreed revised Motion is set out in the recommendation below.

RECOMMENDED to Council

That the Council maintains a select list of at least three suitably qualified companies to undertake the viability assessments of Planning Applications and ensure that they are used equally provided they have not been used by the applicant.

Background Papers:

None.

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