

COUNCIL – 18 OCTOBER 2018

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

This report set out the extracts from the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 11 October 2018. The Council is invited to consider the recommendations

EXECUTIVE – 11 OCTOBER 2018

7c MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS) INVESTMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

Following approval of the current Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) by Council in April 2018, the Executive received a report which provided an update on the outlook and which recommended to Council a strategy to continue to move towards a sustainable medium term position. The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Financial Planning and Policy, Councillor Azad, reported that the Council had made good progress in securing income to reduce cost pressures and lost sources of funding. The Executive noted that the MTFS assumed continued funding reductions throughout the period to 2021/22. Councillor Azad explained that the MTFS recommended further investment in strategic property and detailed proposals were set out in the confidential report to be considered under Part II of the agenda.

Regarding the proposed acquisition of CMS House, Officers advised that it was an investment property and no development was planned at the current stage. Following a question concerning the next Business Rates pilot, the Executive was informed that Surrey County Council (SCC) had submitted a strong case for delivering a successful pilot and that the result of the bid was awaited.

Councillor Barker questioned the options for music, orchestra and dance groups when the lease for HG Wells ended in 2020. The Executive was informed that Officers had been engaging with community users of HG Wells and that recommendations would be received by the Executive following the work undertaken to identify needs.

Discussion ensued on SCC support and it was noted that the MTFS assumed that Woking would lose its remaining income in 2019/20, with the exception of waste funding which was assumed to be lost in 2021/22. The risk of SCC withdrawing its funding to community and voluntary groups in Woking was raised and Officers advised that a risk analysis was being undertaken.

Following a question regarding leases expiring during the MTFS period, the Executive was advised that risks would largely be mitigated through the use of reserves whilst properties were re-let.

The Executive discussed the Hoe Valley Flood Alleviation and Enhancement Scheme and it was noted that it had not been possible to secure grant funding for the whole scheme as yet. However, Officers would continue to seek grant funding. Schemes which could be delivered in the current Municipal Year were highlighted, such as Rainwater Gardens in Sheerwater. Councillor Hughes asked whether the results of the Hoe Valley Scheme consultation had been published and Officers agreed to check that Councillors had been made aware of the results.

RECOMMENDED to Council

That (i) the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Investment Strategy Update report be approved and the Executive be authorised to continue to prepare an Investment Strategy for future consideration which would generate sufficient income to avoid reduction in services for local people; and

RESOLVED

That (ii) the acquisition of CMS House, initially funded by the opportunity purchases budget, be allocated to the Investment Programme MTFS Investment Strategy budget.

Reason: The decision is sought to set the framework for Officers to develop the detailed budget for 2019/20 and further proposals for consideration, in due course, by the Council to ensure the medium term financial stability of the Council in the context of its objective to support growth and to maintain services for local people.

7d PROPOSED RESTRICTIONS TO CONTROL THE REPAIR OF VEHICLES

The Executive received a report which sought approval of the Executive to recommend to Council the introduction of a fixed penalty notice for nuisance parking offences relating to repairing a car on the road in the course of a business. It was confirmed that the proposals included individuals where the carrying out of restricted works gave reasonable cause for annoyance to persons in the vicinity. Following a question, the Executive was advised that there was no legislation preventing a car being legally parked on the highway which had been, or was awaiting being, repaired at a garage.

RECOMMENDED to Council

That the level of fixed penalty notices shall be set at £100 per penalty notice where it is considered that a person has committed an offence under Part 2 of section 4 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.

Reason: The proposed penalty of £100 is in accordance with the requirements of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.

7e HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Executive received a report which sought approval of the Executive to recommend to Council the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bittleston, reported that all Conservative Leaders' had been asked by Lord Porter of Spalding, the Chairman of the Local Government Association (LGA) to co-sign a letter to the Government asking the Prime Minister and the Chancellor to remove the HRA cap straightaway. The Leader added the caveat that removing the HRA cap was only helpful if the Council was able to mitigate the position with the Right to Buy.

Recommendations of the Executive – Supplementary Report

RECOMMENDED to Council

That the Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Strategy report be approved.

Reason: To approve the proposed use of HRA resources and set a framework for preparing the detailed revenue and Housing Investment Programme budgets for 2019/20 onwards.

Background Papers:

None

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Date Published:

18 October 2018

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