

Report to: Policy and Performance Advisory Committee

Date: 30 November 2023

Title: Policy and Performance Advisory Committee – Policy Input and Development.

Exemption: None

Report of: Simon Russell, Head of Democratic Services

Ward(s): All

Purpose of the report: This report outlines the responsibilities of the Policy and Performance Advisory Committee when choosing to consult on reports from the Forward Plan that are due for consideration by the Cabinet and provides details of the recommendations to the Cabinet for each report.

Recommendations to the Committee: The recommendations are detailed at 1.3 of this report

Reasons for recommendations to the Committee: To provide a critical friend challenge to the Cabinet decision and policy making process.

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1 Introduction

1.1 In its role as a provider of public scrutiny and as critical friend, the Policy and Performance Advisory Committee has a duty to provide a challenge to the executive decision and policy makers.

1.2 The Policy and Performance Advisory Committee is able to provide this challenge through the inclusion of the Cabinet's Forward Plan of Decisions as a standing item on each of the Committee's agendas, allowing the Committee to request the inclusion of reports due for consideration by the Cabinet on its agenda and by asking that the relevant officers, heads of service or directors, attend the Committee meetings and discuss the content of the reports.

1.3 Following consideration of each item, where the Members will be able to ask questions of the relevant officers, heads of service, directors and other stakeholders, the Policy and Performance Advisory Committee will provide one of the following three recommendations to the Cabinet:

- 1) To support the recommendations in the report in full; or

- 2) To support the recommendation in the report subject to the consideration by the Cabinet of any amendments agreed by Committee; or
- 3) To not support the recommendations in the report and give reasons.

1.4 The Cabinet will be provided with the recommendations from the Policy and Performance Advisory Committee when it considers the main report.

3 The following Cabinet reports and recommendations are included in the Policy and Performance Advisory Committee agenda for the meeting on the 30 November 2023:

Cabinet report: **Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28**

Purpose of the report: **To agree the interim Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2024/25 to 2027/28, together with the updated Capital Programme position.**

Officer recommendations to the Cabinet:

Cabinet is asked to:

- a) note the updated MTFS forecasts and requirement to identify additional savings of £1.08m for the period 2024/25 to 2027/28.
- b) note that this forecast significantly depends on government funding settlement announcements and demand for services and pressures upon the council.
- c) note that at this stage a forecast £1.08m of savings are required to balance the 2024/25 budget; and
- d) note the planned annual review of earmarked reserves which aims to reallocate them in line with the emerging risks.

Reasons for the recommendations: **To provide Cabinet with and update and early sighting of key MTFS and budgetary implications in preparation for the setting of a revenue budget and associated Council tax for the forthcoming financial year by law.**

Lead Officer **Homira Javadi, Director of Finance and Performance**

Cabinet report: **Revenue & Capital Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2023-24**

Purpose of the report: **The report provides an assessment of the Council's financial performance against it approved 2023-24 budget, incorporating key financial risks, issues and opportunities identified since 2 April 2023 for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

Officer recommendations:

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- i) Note the forecast outturn position for 2023-24 and associated risks.**
- ii) Delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Performance and the portfolio holder for finance to apply any budget virements required to effectively manage the overall budget.**

Note Appendices 1 & 2

Reasons for the recommendations:

To update members on the financial position of the Council and ensure that the Authority complies with its financial regulations.

Lead Officer

Homira Javadi, Director of Finance and Performance

Cabinet report:

Portfolio progress and performance report 2023/24 - Quarter 2

Purpose of the report:

To consider the council's progress and performance in respect of service areas for the Second Quarter of the year (July-September 2023) as shown in Appendix 1 to the Cabinet report

Officer recommendations to the Cabinet:

To note progress and performance for Quarter 1 2023/24

Reasons for recommendations:

To enable Cabinet members to consider specific aspects of the council's progress and performance.

Lead Officer

Luke Dreeling, Performance Lead

Cabinet report:

Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024/25

Purpose of the report:

To gain Cabinet's recommendation to Full Council that the 2023/24 Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme is adopted as the 2024/25 scheme.

Officer recommendations to the Cabinet:	<p>(1) Cabinet recommend to Full Council that the 2023/24 Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme is adopted as the 2024/25 scheme.</p> <p>(2) Subject to Full Council adoption of the Scheme, Cabinet grants the Director of Service Delivery delegated authority–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) to implement the Scheme, such delegated authority to include any measures necessary for or incidental to its management and administration; and (b) if necessary, and in accordance with paragraph 2.3, to amend the Scheme in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Assets and Finance <p>(3) That the Exceptional Hardship Scheme continues in 2024/25 subject to funds being available.</p>
Reasons for recommendations:	<p>The Council must review the scheme each year and adopt a scheme for the coming financial year.</p>
Lead Officer	<p>Bill McCafferty, Lead for Income Maximisation and Welfare</p>
Cabinet report:	<p>Council Tax Discounts and Premiums</p>
Purpose of the report:	<p>To determine the level of certain Council Tax discounts and Council Tax premiums with effect from 1 April 2024 and 1 April 2025</p>

Officer recommendations to the Cabinet:

That Cabinet recommend to full Council the approval and implementation of the following:

1. From 1 April 2024

- (a) The adoption of a standard 0% discount for all Class D chargeable dwellings; and**
- (b) Levying the maximum level of premium i.e.:**

- (a) Premium of 100% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) after 1 years up to 5 years of becoming empty;**

- (b) Premium of 200% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) between 5 years and up to 10 years; and**

- (c) Premium of 300% for dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished (Empty Homes Premium) for 10 years or more.**

2. From 1 April 2025

- (a) The continued application of 0% discount for Class D and Empty Homes premiums at 100% effective when dwellings have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 1 year; and**

- (b) The application of a premium (Second Homes Premium) of 100% for all dwellings that are no one's sole or main residence and which is substantially furnished.**

3. Exception to premiums

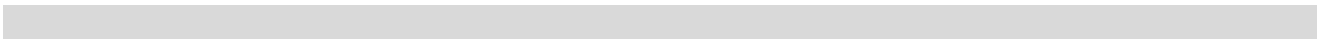
Where premiums are to be applied, the Council is mindful of the current consultation by government which recommends exceptions in certain circumstances outlined within this report. Subject to the outcome of that consultation, it is recommended that the Section 151 Officer is given delegated powers to implement the Council's policy on premiums in line with statute, the Council's requirements and any guidance given by the Secretary of State.

Reasons for recommendations:

- (a) To reduce the number of empty homes within the District in line with the Council's Empty Homes Strategy; and**
- (b) To encourage the use of premises as main residences by local residents rather than second homes.**

Lead Officer

Nick Ducatel, Lead for Income Maximisation and Welfare



Cabinet report:	Council Tax Base and Non-Domestic Rates income for 2024/25
Purpose of the report:	To approve the Council Tax Base and net yield from Business Rate Income for 2024/25 in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
Officer recommendations to the Cabinet:	<p>(a) Agree the provisional Council Tax Base of 38,538.3 for 2024/25 for the whole area and that the Council Tax Base for each of the Town and Parish areas of the District shall be set out in Appendix 2 of this report.</p> <p>(b) Agree that the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Financial Services, determine the final amounts for the Council Tax Base for 2024/25; and</p> <p>(c) Agreed that the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, determine net yield from Business Rate income for 2024/25.</p>
Reasons for recommendations:	Cabinet is required to approve the Tax Base which will be used for the purposes of calculating the 2024/25 Council Tax.
Lead Officer	Homira Javadi, Director of Finance and Performance

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- 2 Financial / Legal / Risk Management / Equality Analysis/ Environmental Sustainability Implications/ Background Papers**
- 2.1 All implications are addressed in the Cabinet reports
- 3 Appendices: None**