

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 30 MARCH 2021

Present: Councillor G Marshall, Chair

Councillors: S A Bagshaw
B C Carr
S J Carr (Vice-Chair)
E Cubley
S Easom
J M Owen
P J Owen
P D Simpson
M Radulovic MBE
P Lally
E Kerry
E Williamson

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P Roberts-Thomson.

66 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

67 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

68 COVID - 19 BUSINESS SUPPORT GRANTS TO TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

The Committee noted how Parish and Town Councils have utilised the various Covid-19 grant funding received in 2020/21 for use in the local area.

69 GRANT AID REQUEST FROM KIMBERLEY TOWN COUNCIL

The Committee considered a request for grant assistance in accordance with the protocol for the consideration of grant aid to parish and town councils.

Kimberley Town Council had requested funding of up to £1,200 towards the purchase of a defibrillator to be located in the Swingate area of Kimberley.

RESOLVED that a grant of £1,200 be approved.

70 CASH PAYMENT FACILITIES

The committee considered the introduction of an additional cash payment facility for council house tenants and council tax payers.

Following the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic in March 2020 and the resulting closure of the Council Offices to members of the public, council house tenants and council tax payers wishing to pay their rent and council tax by cash have been unable to use the kiosk based in Main Reception for this purpose. With the likelihood of restrictions continuing, steps have been taken to seek other options to allow them to continue to make cash payments.

RESOLVED that a supplementary capital estimate of £5,140, be included in the capital programme 2021/22 for the purchase of the Allpay cash payment facility and funded from capital contingencies.

71 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CODE

Members were informed of the implementation of the CIPFA Financial Management Code as a framework to support good practice in local authorities by the setting out of standards of financial management.

72 ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE INVESTMENTS

The Committee noted the position of the Council's Treasury Management investments in respect of the environmental, social and governance aspects of investing which have been coming into prominence over the last few years.

73 ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES

Members were informed of the changes to the Council's establishment as well as the associated costs and impact on service delivery from May 2019 to January 2021.

The Council's overall 2020/21 employees budget 2020/21 is £15 million covering the costs of 473 employees. The latest financial forecast shows that the Council is on target to exceed its employees savings target of £329,000, by £60,000.

74 LEVELLING UP FUND

The Committee considered an allocation within the 2021/22 General Fund revenue budget for costs associated with developing a project bid for submission to the Levelling Up Fund.

RESOLVED that a supplementary revenue estimate of £20,000 be included in the 2021/22 General Fund revenue budget for costs associated with developing a bid to the Levelling Up Fund and met from the Council's General Fund balance.

75 RISK BASED VERIFICATION

Members considered the termination of Risk Based Verification (RBV) in respect of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support new applications.

The Department of Work and Pension's guidance states that Councils are not able to adapt their RBV Policy during the financial year. In view of this, it was proposed that the best approach is for the Council to terminate RBV and cease using the Risk Scoring software supplied by Trans Union from 1 April 2021.

RESOLVED that the termination of the Risk Based Verification process in respect of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support with the appropriate software saving of £9,360 per annum be approved.

76 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Work Programme.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme be approved.

77 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that, under Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 3, 5 and 7 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

78 TRAM COMPENSATION UPDATE

RESOLVED that the final negotiations be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of this Committee and the three main party leaders, with a report being submitted to the July Committee.