

## **CABINET REFERRALS**

**30 July 2019**

### **8.1 CA/071/19 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)**

#### **Decision**

#### **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:**

**The revised Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period 2019/20 – 2023/24, including the recommendations at Section 2 of the Strategy be approved.**

#### **Corporate objectives**

The Medium Term Financial Strategy supports the delivery of all five of the corporate objectives.

#### **Section 151 Officer:**

This is a S151 Officer report.

#### **Deputy Monitoring Officer:**

No comments to add to the report

#### **Advice**

Councillor Elliot introduced the report and the MTFS looks at the general fund savings target be approved for the financial year. The four year general fund savings target is £2.9 million. The council are still awaiting the announcement of the government's spending review.

J Deane said the £2.9 million savings target represents 17% net cost of services which is a significant amount of money to find. Next year, the savings target is £780k. However, as a result of the Council's multi-year approach to savings, significant inroads have already been made to that figure leaving £130k still to find.

J Deane highlighted a number of fundamental assumptions within the MTFS. The council is in the final year of a four year deal and at present there is no certainty on future years' funding as we are awaiting the announcement of the Fair Funding Review which is scheduled for the end of this year. Until further announcements are made, the MTFS assumes continued reductions in future government funding of the magnitude experienced over previous years, resulting in the Council becoming self-sufficient by 2022/23. There is a risk that cuts could be deeper and faster than this but this is unlikely. The New Normal programme will look at cross departmental savings.

Councillor Williams said he was sceptical that an announcement from government would be made by the end of the year.

J Deane said if there is no announcement this year, and there is a roll forward of current funding arrangements in the interim then it would be prudent for the Council to treat any resultant benefits as one-off, and continue to meet the savings outlined until Government makes a formal funding announcement.

Councillor Tindall said he could not see an update on the New Normal programme on the Cabinet forward plan.

S Marshall said it would be brought forward with the budget report and it will be brought to Cabinet if there are any actions required.

Councillor Anderson asked about the annual settlement on staff pay and if there was any information for next year.

S Marshall said they were currently in negotiations. There has been a pay request from Unison for a 10% pay increase, a reduction in the working week by 2.5 hours and an extra day holiday. This is obviously their starting position and negotiations will be ongoing. The roadshows start in September so we will get more clarity then.

Councillor Anderson said it was frustrating that the decision gets put off.

S Marshall said there was a two year settlement last year which helped.

The recommendations were agreed.

### **30 July 2019**

#### **8.2 CA/072/19 Dacorum Borough Statement of Community Involvement**

##### **Decision**

That:

##### **2. RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that Council adopts the revised Statement of Community Involvement**

The Council's Local Plan (of which the SCI forms one of the documents) helps support all 5 corporate objectives:

- *Safe and clean environment:* e.g. contains policies relating to the design and layout of new development that promote security and safe access;
- *Community Capacity:* e.g. provide a framework for local communities to prepare area-specific guidance such as Neighbourhood Plans, Town / Village Plans etc.;
- *Affordable housing:* e.g. sets the Borough's overall housing target and the proportion of new homes that must be affordable;
- *Dacorum delivers:* e.g. provides a clear framework upon which planning decisions can be made; and
- *Regeneration:* e.g. sets the planning framework for key regeneration projects, such as Hemel Hempstead town centre and the Maylands Business Park.

##### **Monitoring Officer**

The SCI should help to ensure that the views of relevant stakeholders are taken into account in the statutory plan making and planning decision-making process, which improve the quality and consistency of those decisions and reduce legal challenges.

## **Deputy Section 151 Officer**

There are no direct financial implications.

### **Advice**

Councillor G Sutton introduced this item and said it forms a very important part of the future working of DBC. This will include the local plan and corporate objectives.

C Taylor said the council have an obligation to review this document every two years. This has been out to consultation.

Councillor Tindall said consultations can be crucial. He asked if it was possible to ask Communications to make consultation notices more user friendly and add more links to relevant documents and enhance the visualisation. It is likely to put people off and less people will respond.

C Taylor said a lot of lessons have been learnt from the Issues & Options consultation. Moving forward, this will be a better process which is more streamlined and one that is easier to analyse the results.

The recommendations were agreed.

## **30 July 2019**

### **8.3 CA/073/19 Hemel Garden Communities**

#### **Decision**

That:

- 2. The draw down from the Local Development Framework Reserve of £0.14m in 19/20 and the residual £0.235m in 20/21 in line with Table 2 - 2 Year Spending Plan be approved and RESOLVE TO RECOMMEND its approval recommended to Council.**

#### **Corporate objectives**

The proposals for major development at north and east Hemel Hempstead through the Hemel Garden Communities proposals are wide-ranging and relate to all corporate objectives.

#### **Monitoring Officer:**

There are no direct legal implications arising from the report at this stage, however, the legal team should continue to be consulted as the governance arrangements for the project are developed.

#### **S.151 Officer**

The use of the Local Development Framework (LDF) reserve to fund the HGC project is in line with the strategic purpose of this specific reserve.

An additional £375k was allocated to the LDF reserve in 2018/19 to fund additional strategic planning for the HGC project over the next 2 years.

### **Advice**

Councillor G Sutton said this report follows on from the outcome of the bid submitted to MHCLG in 2018. The £750k was awarded to DBC and St Albans. This report is seeking authority to draw funds down from reserves to cover the extra staffing costs. The success of the bid is down to the hard work and dedication of staff from both councils. This is a great achievement as only 5 out of 100 districts were successful in their bids. There are discussions ongoing for future funding.

C Taylor said a lot of the annexes to the report are the details for taking the next steps like recruitment and tendering of some of the work.

Councillor Tindall asked if we have managed to finish recruitment.

C Taylor said the recruitment has been prepared but not advertised.

Councillor Tindall asked if this meant there could be some slippage on the project.

C Taylor said this may be possible but the team are working hard with preparations and the SPAR team have been carrying out this work on top of their day jobs.

Councillor Williams said in terms of scale, there is the right investment in forward planning and design. This is a major development on the edge of Hemel Hempstead and funding will be crucial.

C Taylor said they have had early meetings with the Garden City network. This funding is just the beginning of the process. The garden town status means we are now part of the organisation with the opportunity to bid for future bids.

S Marshall said there has been dialogues with key partners (St Albans council and Herts County Council) and there has been an agreement for us to host the officer. The recruitment process for the officer post will be a joint process. There are ongoing discussions with Homes England and there are problems with future funding as the government haven't decided on their funding. Discussions are being taken at the highest level.

Councillor Williams said he has had discussions with the new leader at St Albans and they are keen to continue with this project. It is important to have good working relationships and they will be determining some of the planning applications on our boundary.

Councillor Tindall asked if there was any scope to look at the parking situation across the borough and if two teams are coming together they could share ideas on how to relieve parking stress.

M Gaynor said this project will look at sustainable transport across the borough.

Councillor Williams said a separate parking consultation is ongoing.

The recommendations were agreed.