



MINUTES

Finance and Democracy Committee

Date:	Monday, 23 June 2022
Venue:	Town Hall, St Annes
Committee Members Present:	Councillor Karen Buckley (Chairman) Councillors Frank Andrews, Peter Anthony, Peter Collins, Ellie Gaunt, Linda Nulty, Liz Oades, David O'Rourke, Richard Redcliffe, Michael Sayward, Elaine Silverwood, Michael Withers.
Officers Present:	Allan Oldfield, Ian Curtis, Paul O'Donoghue, Lyndsey Lacey-Simone.
Other Attendees:	Louise Jones - Head of Revenue and Benefits Shared Service

Public Platform

There were no speakers on this occasion.

1. Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded that any disclosable pecuniary interests should be declared as required by the Localism Act 2011 and any personal or prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.

Councillor Peter Anthony declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 10 on the agenda relating to a Fully Funded Capital Addition - Lytham St Annes Art Collection Display Options and withdraw from the meeting during the discussion and voting thereon.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Finance and Democracy Committee meeting held on 28 March 2022 as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

3. Substitute Members

The following substitutions were reported under Council procedure rule 23 (c):

Councillor Frank Andrews substituted for Councillor John Singleton

Councillor Michael Sayward substituted for Councillor Vince Settle.

Decision Items

4. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) General Fund Revenue, Capital Programme & Treasury Management Outturn Position for 2021/22

Paul O'Donoghue, Chief Financial Officer, introduced a report which set out the General Fund Revenue, Capital, and Treasury Management Outturn position for the financial year 2021/22. In doing so, he outlined the major variations between the latest approved budget and the actual outturn expenditure, a summary of the impact on the Council's reserves and a summary of the Council's Treasury Management operations for the financial year.

Mr O'Donoghue then went on to highlight the key elements of the outturn position as detailed within the report. Members were also advised that the Council had received a range of grants from central government in 2021/22 to support the overall response to the COVID pandemic.

In conclusion, Mr O'Donoghue stated that the favourable outturn position for revenue allows for an additional contribution to be made to the Capital Investment Reserve in the sum of £0.228m. He added that this further contribution is beneficial to the overall position of the Council. As a result, the financial position of the Council had improved since the revised 2021/22 budget was set in March 2022, the Council remains debt-free, and the financial position remains robust.

Mr O'Donoghue went on to say that increasing inflation is exerting significant upward pressure on prices for utilities and on supplies and services across all sectors of the economy, which in turn increases the base costs for both revenue and capital budget items. He added that the situation is particularly acute in the construction sector where supply chain issues and price increases are combining to put increased risks on the delivery of capital programme schemes and that this is likely to be a continuing issue for the Council during 2022/23.

The report included the following appendices: General Fund Summary Revenue Expenditure & Income Account; General Fund Outturn 2021/22 - Variations from Revised Estimates; Revenue Budget Slippage Items requested; Capital Outturn 2021/22; Capital Outturn Slippage Items requested and Prudential Indicators.

Following the presentation, the Chairman invited questions and in doing so, thanked the Finance Team for their contribution to the outturn position. Clarification was sought on how the Council manages inflationary budget adjustments & expenditure. Mr O'Donoghue addressed this point.

Following consideration of this matter it was RESOLVED:

1. To approve the General Fund Revenue Outturn position as summarised in table 1 of the report.
2. To approve the revenue slippage items and the transfer to general fund balances as set out in paragraph 2.5 and Appendix C of the report.
3. To approve the transfers to earmarked reserves as set out in section 2 and as summarised in table 1 of the report.
4. To approve the transfers out of the Covid-19 Unringfenced Grant Reserve and the Contain Outbreak Management Fund Reserve as detailed in paragraphs 1.4 and 1.5 of the report.
5. To approve the Capital Outturn position, including financing, as set out in sections 7 to 9 of the report.
6. To approve the capital slippage items as set out in Appendix E of the report; and
7. To approve the Treasury Management Annual Report as set out in sections 10 to 12 and the actual Prudential Indicators set out in Appendix F of the report.

5. Energy Rebate - Discretionary Scheme

The Chairman invited Louise Jones, Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Service to present the report. Members were advised that on 3rd February 2022, the Government announced a package of support for rising energy costs. This included a main scheme allocating £150 to most households in Council Tax Bands A to D together with a Discretionary Fund.

Further to the above, Ms Jones stated that Fylde Council had received a Discretionary Fund allocation of £181,350 and that it is for local authorities to determine how best to utilise the discretionary funds by 30th November 2022.

In addition to the above, details of the Government's further package of national support measures to households were also set out in the report.

The report recommended that members approve a fully funded revenue budget increase of £181,350 in 2022/23 for the distribution of the funding based on the information contained in the main body of the report.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Chairman invited questions. Clarification was sought on several areas including: the proposed package of support/Council Tax reductions applied to Bands E to H; administrative anomalies; HMO knowledge/challenges and the potential impact of Option 7 proposals which the Chairman

highlighted would not be properly costed out until proposals 1-6 (contained in the report) had been paid. She went on to say that there would be some merit in awaiting the outcome of proposals 1-6 before any action was taken on Option 7. Louise Jones addressed these points.

Following consideration of this matter it was RESOLVED:

1. To approve a fully funded revenue budget increase of £181,350 in 2022/23 from the Discretionary Fund Government Grant allocated to the council for this purpose, and to agree to the distribution of funding proposals 1-6 (contained in paragraph 5 of the report).
2. That subject to the outcome of 1 above, a further report be presented to a future meeting of the Committee to determine how the balance of funding is to be allocated.

6. Community Governance Review

Prior to the presentation of the report, Mr Curtis (Head of Governance) drew the Committee's attention to a correction required on page 17 of the report. This required reference to "Church Road" being amended to read "Church Drive". In addition, he stated that an addendum to page 28 of the report (reference to RW1) was required to reflect the fact that following the publication of the agenda, Westby- with- Plumpton's Parish Council had subsequently objected to the proposals.

Following on from the above, Mr Curtis went on to introduce the comprehensive report on the Community Governance. In doing so, he advised that a community governance review had recently been undertaken, with terms of reference comprising the whole of the Council's district with a focus on the unparished areas of Lytham and Ansdell. The review recommended establishing parish councils for each of the unparished areas of Ansdell and Lytham and making four minor boundary adjustments affecting existing parishes. Members were reminded that legislation allows the Council to review the pattern of community governance in its area. A review can recommend the establishment or abolition of parish councils, re-align boundaries between them and change the number of parish councillors.

The financial provisions including the mechanism for anticipating and charging precepts for the newly established parish councils were set out in the body of the report.

The report asked the Committee to consider endorsing the recommendations of the community governance review for adoption by full Council.

Following the presentation, the Chairman invited questions. These related to the following areas: options available regarding number of councillors per parish; ability for Ansdell and Lytham to be combined as a single parish council; legal status/weight attached to the Council's recommendation; precept matters and the financial implications/ impact of transfer of assets to parish councils. Mr Curtis addressed each point in turn.

It was RESOLVED:

1. To note the recommendations of the community governance review as set out in pages 33-36 of the review report and to refer the report to full council for further consideration.
2. To arrange a Member Briefing on the matter to allow full consideration of the impact of this review prior to its consideration at a future Council meeting.

7. Fully Funded Revenue Budget Increase - Holiday, Activity and Food Programme (HAF)

The report detailed a request from the Environment, Health & Housing Committee at its meeting held on 28 March 2022 for a fully funded revenue budget increase of £160,216, from the HAF grant for the delivery of the HAF programme in Fylde in 2022/23. Details regarding this matter including the objectives of the programme were set out in the report.

Councillor Nulty commented on matters associated with families in need, the establishment of smaller satellite clubs and the delivery of the programme to rural areas as well as capturing the most vulnerable. An undertaking was given for Edyta Paxton to update Councillor Nulty on the latter point.

It was RESOLVED: to approve a fully funded revenue budget increase of £160,216, from the HAF grant for the delivery of the HAF programme in Fylde in 2022/23 that the EH& H Committee approved 28 March 2022.

8. Fully Funded Capital Increase - North Beach Windsports Centre

The report detailed a request from the Tourism and Leisure Committee, held on 9th June 2022 for a fully funded Capital increase for the North Beach Windsports Centre scheme in the sum of £50,000, to be met in full from the capital investment reserve. Details reading this matter were set out in the report.

It was RESOLVED: to approve a fully funded capital budget increase in respect of the Windsports Centre within the existing approved Capital Programme for 2022/23 in the sum of £50,000, to be met in full from the capital investment reserve.

9. Fully Funded Capital Increase - Park View Drainage Improvements

The report detailed a request from the Tourism and Leisure committee meeting held on 9 June 2022 for a fully funded capital budget increase in respect of the Park View Drainage Improvement Scheme within the existing approved Capital Programme for 2022/23 in the sum of £25,000, to be met in full from the capital investment reserve to progress on the drainage improvements at Park View. Details reading this matter were set out in the report.

It was RESOLVED: to approve a fully funded capital budget increase in respect of the Park View Drainage Improvement Scheme within the existing approved Capital Programme for 2022/23 in the sum of £25,000, to be met in full from the capital investment reserve.

10. Fully Funded Capital Addition - Lytham St Annes Art Collection Display Options

Prior to consideration of the item, the Chairman drew the Committee's attention to the fact that there had been an omission from the recommendation contained in the report which sought the following:

"To recommend to Finance & Democracy Committee approval of an unfunded revenue budget increase of £10,000 per annum to allow for appropriate resourcing / facilitation of the project which would be a recurring cost. "

In summary, the report also detailed a request from The Tourism and Leisure committee held on 9th June 2022 to approve a fully funded addition to the council's Capital Programme in 2022/23 in the sum of £65,000 to create a dedicated gallery space within the Long Gallery the 'Lytham Hall Long Gallery', to be met in full from the Capital Investment Reserve. Details regarding this matter were set out in the report.

It was RESOLVED:

1. To approve a new fully funded addition to the council's Capital Programme in 2022/23 in the sum of £65,000 to the 'Lytham Hall Long Gallery', to be met in full from the Capital Investment Reserve.
2. To not recommend to council approval of an unfunded revenue budget increase of £10,000 at this present time.

11. Fully Funded Capital Addition - Stanner Bank Toilet Refurbishment

The report detailed a request from the Operational Management Committee held on 15 June 2022 to approve a fully funded capital budget increase in the sum of £20,000 to enable the refurbishment the Stanner Bank toilet facility within the approved Capital Programme for 2022/23, to be met in full from the Capital Investment Reserve. Details regarding this matter were set out in the report.

It was RESOLVED: to approve a fully funded capital budget increase in the sum of £20,000 to the Stanner Bank Toilet Refurbishment within the approved Capital Programme for 2022/23, to be met in full from the Capital Investment Reserve.

(Councillor O'Rourke was not in attendance during the consideration and voting on this item)

Information Items

12. Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2022

The Information Report provided details of Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2022. Members were advised that in accordance with The Representation of the People Act 1983, each local authority is required to

carry out a review of Polling Districts and Polling Places in its area. Fylde Borough Council's next review will be carried out from 1 July 2022.

Clarification was sought on new polling stations created and the distinction between a polling place/ polling station. Mr Curtis addressed these points.

13. COVID Business Grants

The Information Report provided details of the COVID-19 business grants that had been administered by the Council on behalf of the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) during the pandemic.

Clarification was sought as to whether all the discretionary grant monies had been allocated. Mr O'Donoghue addressed this point.

The Chairman passed on her grateful thanks to all those involved in the administration of the grants. This was endorsed by the Committee.

14. Community Projects Fund

The Information Report provided details of the Fylde Community Projects Fund awards (between £300 and £2,000) that had been made during 2021/22.

15. Corporate Plan Update

The Information Report provided the committee with the latest progress against the corporate actions relevant to the committee that were scheduled for completion at the time of the meeting.

The Chairman updated members on the position regarding the proposed Enterprise Zone presentation. She added that this would hopefully be accommodated at the next meeting.

16. Performance Reporting

The Information Report provided details of the key performance outcomes for the financial year end 2021/22. Performance was reported against the targets set for the year and commentary was provided by performance exception.

Comments were made about the increasing social media platforms and engagement. Members were advised that this was currently being looked at by the Corporate Team.

17. Capital Programme Monitoring Report 2021/22 Outturn Position as at 31 March 2022.

The Information Report set out details of expenditure on schemes within the Council's approved capital programme for the financial year 2021/22 with specific reference to those schemes under the remit of the Committee.

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