

COUNCIL
22 February 2023
COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation to Council made at the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 7 December

Capital Strategy 2023/24 incorporating Investment and Treasury Management Strategy

The committee report gave an overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing, treasury and other investment activity contribute to the provision of local public services, how the associated risks are managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. The strategies set limits and indicators that embody the risk appetite that the Council believes to be prudent.

The strategies are set against the Council's own mid-term financial strategy, the context of the UK economy and projected interest rates. The report reflects revisions made by CIPFA to its Treasury Management and Prudential Codes last year. These have introduced new indicators and requirements designed to deal with risks perceived in the local authority sector.

The report sets treasury investment criteria and limits which are largely unchanged in real terms. A number of limits are increased in line with inflation as they have remained unchanged for some years. Limits for sovereign and secured bonds have been extended reflecting an assessment of the risk they are exposed to. The interest rate sensitivity indicator is increased from £250,000 to £300,000 reflecting higher cash balances.

The investment strategy pulls together information on service loans and commercial property to demonstrate the Council's risk management approach in that area. The overall strategy is unchanged apart from an increase in the service loans to accommodate expected activity by the Council's Housing Company. The commercial property portfolio was largely recovering from any pandemic effects but risks to income persist especially in the retail part of the portfolio due to the present recession.

Audit Committee RESOLVED

- (i) To approve this Capital Strategy as an appropriate overarching strategy for the Council while leaving the full Council to approve the updated Capital Strategy that will accompany the 2023/24 budget to Council.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (ii) To recommend that the full Council approve the Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24 and the associated limits and specific indicators included in section 4 and appendix B of this report.
- (iii) To recommend that the full Council approve the Investment Strategy for 2023/24 and the associated limits and specific indicators included in section 4 and appendix C of this report.

REASONS

- (i) The Council is required to have regard to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Prudential Code for Capital Finance that require the Council to approve a Capital Strategy, Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy before the start of each financial year.
- (ii) The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) issued revised guidance on local authority investments in 2018 that the Council is required to have regard to.

Recommendation to Council made at the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 24 January

Hackney Carriage Fares – Rate Increase

Due to the significant increase with the price of fuel and general cost of living, a proposal has been made by the Horsham Licensed Carriage Association and many of the independent hackney drivers to increase the taxi fares.

The appendix to the report set out the proposed increases in Tariffs 1 through to 6 equating to an increase from £6.20 to £7.00 (12.9%) over an average 2-mile journey. This proposal would see the fares set by Horsham District Council in line with other neighbouring authorities for a 2-mile journey – particularly, Arun and Mid Sussex who impose charges of £7.20 and £7.40 respectively. A proposed change to Tariff 2 is also made to adjust the hours effective for hiring from 23:30 to 23:00 hours in line with other neighbouring authorities. The expiry time would remain at 06:59 hours. A soilage charge of £100 is proposed to be added in writing to the tariff card.

Licensing Committee RESOLVED

- (i) To agree the changes to Tariffs 1 – 6 as set out at Appendix 1 and the addition of a soiling charge, for statutory consultation with the hackney trade and public.
- (ii) To agree to advertise the proposed fare increases contained in Appendix 1.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (iii) That, subject to satisfactory consultation procedure and there being no representations TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL the approval of the fares contained in Appendix 1.

REASONS

- (i) To set standard fares throughout the district.
- (ii) To prevent fraud and overcharging of passengers.

- (iii) To ensure openness and transparency in decision-making.

Recommendation to Council made at the meeting of the Governance Committee held on 6 February

Interim Review of Polling Places and Constitutional Amendment

Since the statutory review of polling places that took place in 2019, some venues allocated in the schedule are no longer available or suitable for use. An interim review has been undertaken to determine a proposed schedule of polling places and polling stations to be used at the elections on 4 May 2023. A consultation was undertaken with ward members, and parish councils.

Given that venues can become unavailable at short notice, an amendment to the constitution is recommended to enable the Returning Officer to make temporary changes to the schedule of polling places and polling stations for a particular election to ensure voters have appropriate places to vote.

Governance Committee RESOLVED

- (i) That the revised schedule of polling places and polling stations for elections on 4 May 2023, as set out in Appendix 1, be approved following the consultation carried out this year.
- (ii) That an amendment is made to the constitution to delegate authority to the Returning Officer, in consultation with Ward Members, to make temporary changes to the schedule of polling places and polling stations

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (iii) To approve the proposed amendment to the constitution at Paragraph 3.5.1, namely:

“1(a) Will, in consultation with relevant Ward Members, redesignate new Polling Places, where such becomes unavailable or unsuitable before an election.”

and if approved authorise the Monitoring Officer to make the required changes to the Constitution.

REASONS

To ensure that polling places and polling stations are relevant and fit for purpose.