

POLICY COMMITTEE

1 February 2022

Present – The Chairman, Councillor Foster and Councillors Barrett, Heseltine, Ireton, Lis, Madeley, Metcalfe, Morrell, Mulligan, Myers, Noland, Ogden, Rose and Wheeler.

Officers – Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer), Strategic Manager for Planning and Regeneration, Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer, Finance Manager, Human Resources Manager and Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apology for Absence – An apology for absence was received from Councillor Place.

Confirmation of Minutes – The minutes of the Policy Committee meeting held on 30th November 2021 were confirmed as a correct record subject to a minor amendment.

Start: 6.30pm

Finish: 7.18pm

The Chairman introduced and welcomed to the Committee, the Council's new Communications Officer Faiza Afzaal.

Minutes for Report

POL.1169

SKIPTON HERITAGE ACTION ZONE

The Director of Services submitted a report seeking permission to accept additional funding from Heritage England and the Arts Council for England to advance the work of the Skipton Heritage Action Zone which was established in 2020 by Historic England. Heritage England awarded £1.2m to support the delivery of a programme of activity:

- the redevelopment of Skipton Town Hall;
- the creation of the Craven Arts House;
- improvements to the public realm on Coach Street, Otley Street and some ginnels;
- support improvements to Skipton Market; and
- delivery of a cultural programme.

In 2020/2021, national underspends allowed Historic England to provide an additional £260k to Skipton Heritage Action Zone to offset the Council's expenditure on the Town Hall.

Due to another underspend in 2021/22, Historic England hoped to be able to provide additional funding to support work on the stonework at the Town Hall and to improve the quality of the internal finishes and the environmental sustainability of Craven Arts House.

The second phase of the Craven Arts House project was the development of the middle wing of the building, a large open space suitable to meet creative needs of a wide range of practitioners. The area needed a new floor, lighting, heating, ventilation, demountable staging, sound system and stackable seating. Adjacent music areas required sound proofing to such a standard that band rehearsals and recording could take place.

A bid had been submitted to Arts Council for England for £150k and all match funding for that bid would, if successful be provided from Historic England, meaning in no additional Craven District Council funding.

Resolved – (1) That, the additional funding from Historic England to increase the scope and quality of the Skipton Heritage Action Zone is accepted.

(2) That, if successful, £150k is accepted from the Arts Council for England to fit out a recording studio and rehearsal room in the Craven Arts House.

(3) That, delegated authority is granted to the Director of Services in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council, to enter new or amended funding agreements.

POL.1170

**MINUTES FROM THE CRAVEN SPATIAL PLANNING
SUB-COMMITTEE**

Resolved - The Minutes of the Craven Spatial Planning Committee held on the 13th December 2021 are received.

Minutes for Decision

POL.1171

**REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 AND MEDIUM TERM
FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP) (INCLUDING THE CAPITAL
STRATEGY**

The Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer) submitted a report which identified a fully funded budget for 2022/23 together with a recommendation for a prudent level of general fund reserve balances for the financial year. The report also outlined the medium term financial plan (MTFP) to 2025/26.

As the final settlement had not been confirmed the 2022/23 budget was based on the provisional settlement announced in December 2021. Little or no change to the figures was expected. As part of that announcement, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities gave permission for councils to increase their council tax by 1.99% without triggering a referendum or £5 whichever was the greater. A £5 increase gave a council tax of £187.21 at band D.

In accordance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer) made a specific personal statement that the revenue budget was robust and delivered a balanced budget in 2022/23.

During the debate, Members thanked the Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer) and his team for all their hard work in producing a balanced budget.

RECOMMENDED – (1) That, the revenue budget 2022/2023 of £8.935m (as detailed at Appendix B) including the revenue growth bids of £265k (as detailed at Appendix C) is approved.

(2) That, the Medium Term Financial Plan (Annex 1) and the Capital Strategy (Annex 2) including the contributions to/from reserves, the level of general fund working balance and the assumptions used to construct the budget are approved.

(3) That, for 2022/2023, Council Tax is increased by £5 to £187.21 (band D equivalent) is approved.

Resolved - (4) That, the Section 25 report 'The Assessment of the Robustness of the budget and adequacy of reserves as detailed at Appendix E is noted.

(5) That, the outcome of the budget consultation exercise as outlined in the report now submitted is noted.

POL.1172

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23

The Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer) submitted a report seeking approval for the 2022/2023 – 2025/26 capital programme, subject to their being capital resources. The rolling capital programme was aligned to the three years' medium term financial plan.

The proposed capital programme and its funding for 2022/2023 was £6,243 were as detailed in Appendix A to the Chief Finance Officer's report including information about the continuing commitments of £60k from the 2021/22 programme, giving a total of £6,303k.

- RECOMMENDED** – (1) That, £60,000 of continuing projects from the 2021/22 programme is noted and that no slippage has been confirmed at this stage.
- (2) That, the new capital programme projects of £6,242,500 are approved.
- (3) That, a total capital programme for 2022/23 of £6,302,500 is approved.
- (4) That, the final allocation of funding for the 2022/23 capital programme is confirmed once the outturn position of the 2021/22 revenue budget is finalised.

POL.1173

2022/23 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY
STATEMENT, MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION
STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer) submitted a report which presented for approval the proposed Treasury Management Strategy together with the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement, Prudential Indicators and the Annual Investment Strategy for 2022/2023, as required by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and CIPFA.

The Council was required to operate a balanced budget and part of treasury management was to ensure that cash flow was adequately planned with cash being available when needed. Surplus monies were invested in low risk counterparties with security capital and liquidity of funds being considered before investment return. The counterparty lending limits enabled the Council to take full advantage of investment opportunities whilst maintaining a sufficient level of security of capital.

The strategy ensured that the required funding sources were available to support the Council's capital spending plans and longer term cash flow planning was necessary to ensure capital spending obligations were met.

The strategy also determined the limits of borrowing and investments that officers would apply over the next 12 months in order to ensure the Council's capital investment plans were affordable, prudent and sustainable.

Members were advised that all local authorities were required to ensure that all elected members on the Council fully understood the overall long-term policy objectives and resultant capital strategy requirements, governance procedures and risk appetite.

- RECOMMENDED** – (1) That, the operational boundary for 2022/23 is set at £15m.
- (2) That, the authorised limits for 2022/23 is set at £16m.
- (3) That, delegated authority is given to the Chief Finance Officer (s.151 officer) to effect movement within the agreed operational boundary and authorised limits for long-term borrowing for 2022/23 onwards.
- (4) That, the Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23, incorporating the Minimum Revenue Position Policy Statement and the Annual Investment Strategy, is approved.
- (5) That, the prudential indicators for 2022/23, which reflect that the capital expenditure plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable, are approved.

POL. 1174

PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23

The Human Resources Manager submitted a report which sought approval to implement the Council's 2022/23 Pay Policy Statement in accordance with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. The statement outlined the Council's policy towards the pay of the workforce, particularly senior staff and the lowest paid employees.

RECOMMENDED – (1) That, implementation of the Council's 2022/23 Pay Policy Statement is approved.

(2) That, it is noted that the 2021/22 pay award has not yet been finalised and therefore the report may change slightly once the pay award has been agreed.

Any Other Business – There were no late items of business to consider.

Date and Time of Next Meeting – Tuesday, 1st March 2022 at 6.30pm.

Chairman