

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
05 February 2024
5:35-6:15

Present: Councillors Mike Davey (Chair), Alice Gilderdale, Gerri Bird, Sam Carling, Rosy Moore, Simon Smith, Katie Thornburrow and Rachel Wade.

Also present remotely: Councillor Martin Smart

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL (EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES SIMON SMITH)

General Fund (GF) budget proposals 2024/25 and update to the budget setting context

Overview of Budget Setting Report (BSR)

- i. At this stage in the 2024/25 budget process the range of assumptions on which the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was based need to be reviewed in light of the latest information available, to determine whether any aspects of the strategy need to be revised. This then provides the basis for the budget considerations.
- ii. The General Fund (GF) BSR, which is attached, includes detailed revenue bids and savings and capital proposals and sets out the key parameters for the detailed recommendations and budget finalisation being considered at this meeting. This report reflects recommendations that will be made to The Executive on 5 February 2024 and then to Council, for consideration at its meeting on 15 February 2024.
- iii. The BSR sets out GF net service expenditure of £27.559m for 2024/25, analysed over portfolios. It is balanced by a contribution from the GF reserve of £18.834m, including £20.750m reallocation to earmarked reserves, a contribution towards funding on going services of £1.897m and movements on the business rates growth balance.
- iv. The recommendations that follow refer to the strategy outlined in the BSR and all references to Appendices, pages and sections relate to the final BSR 2024/25 (Version 1 – The Executive). The budget consultation was approved by the Executive at its meeting on 20 November 2023. Budget proposals were scrutinised at Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee on 15 January 2024. The BSR has

now been finalised to reflect the provisional local government finance settlement, considerations arising from the public consultation and updated estimates as appropriate.

The Executive Committee considered and approved the recommendations (unanimously).

Accordingly, Council is recommended to approve:

- a) Revenue pressures and bids shown in Appendix D(b) and savings shown in Appendix D(c).
- b) Formally confirm delegation to the Chief Finance Officer of the calculation and determination of the council tax taxbase (including submission of the national non-domestic rates forecast form, NNDR1, for each financial year) which is set out in Appendix A(a).
- c) The level of council tax for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix A (b) and Section 2, page 10.

Note that the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel will meet on 31 January 2024 to consider the precept proposed by the Police and Crime Commissioner, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority met on 31 January 2024, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Fire Authority will meet on 10 February 2024 and Cambridgeshire County Council will meet on 13 or 16 February 2024 to consider the amounts in precepts to be issued to the City Council for the year 2024/25.

Other Revenue:

- d) Delegation to the Chief Finance Officer authority to finalise changes relating to any further corporate and/or departmental restructuring and any reallocation of support service and central costs, in accordance with the CIPFA Service Reporting Code of Practice for Local Authorities (SeRCOP).

Capital: [Section 5, page 17]

Capital Plan:

- e) Proposals outlined in Appendix E(a) for inclusion in the Capital Plan.

f) Subject to (e) above, the revised capital plan for the General Fund as set out in Appendix D(c) and the funding as set out in Section 5, page 20.

The creation of a Civic Quarter Development Reserve with the remit set out in Section 6, page 24.

General Fund Reserves:

g) Note the impact of revenue budget approvals and the resulting contribution to reserves [Section 4, page 15].

h) The creation of a Civic Quarter Development Reserve with the remit set out in Section 6, page 24.

i) The allocation of £20m of general reserves to that reserve.

j) The allocation of £750k of general reserves to the Climate Change Fund, as set out in Section 6, page 23.

k) Note the resulting level of reserves [Section 6, page 25]. Section 25 Report:

l) Note the Chief Finance Officer's Section 25 Report, covering the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves, included in Section 8 of the BSR [page 32]. Other:

m) Reconfirm that the incomes below will be disregarded (if above £10 statutory disregard) when calculating entitlement to housing benefit and/or council tax reduction. These schemes are often called local or modified schemes.

- War disablement pension
- War widow, widower or surviving civil partner pension
- Armed Forces Independence Payment

The estimated cost to the council for payments of housing benefit made under the local scheme is £1,777.50 and for council tax reduction less than £50.

n) Note the Equality Impact Assessment in Appendix F covering all GF budget proposals.

o) Note the schedule of proposed fees and charges for 2024/25 in Appendix G