

CABINET

At a meeting of Cabinet held on
6 January 2021

(Present) **Councillor Baines (Chair)**
Councillors Bell, Bond, Bowden, Burns, Charlton,
Gomez-Aspron, Groucutt, McCauley and Quinn

24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

25 MINUTES

- * **Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 2 December 2020 be approved and signed.**

26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

No declarations of interest from Members were made.

27 BUDGET REPORT

A report was submitted which gave an update of the Council's progress in identifying potential savings proposals to meet the anticipated budget gap for 2021-2022 and future years.

The Council had previously reported a number of financial pressures in the current year, due to underlying budget pressures and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the forecast impact of these pressures moving into 2021-2022. These reports culminated in the production of the Budget Strategy 2021-2022 report, which was agreed by Cabinet at its meeting held on 7 October 2020.

In setting the budget for 2021-2022 the Council faces significant financial pressures that had been factored into the budget model in an attempt to set baseline budgets at the correct level for the financial year, based upon current assumptions. The Council was also working to address the ongoing budget gap for future years.

However, through necessity, the Council's budget model had been produced with significant uncertainty on issues such as:

- The underlying level of Government funding – Government were due to implement the Comprehensive Spending Review and the Fair Funding Review for 2021-2022, as well as reviewing the business rates system. These had all been delayed with Government announcing a one-year settlement;
- The ongoing impact of COVID-19 and any future Government funding for this issue;
- The impact of Brexit; and
- Future increases in Council Tax.

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* **Resolved that:**

- (1) **the progress in identifying potential saving proposals be noted; and**
- (2) **the Executive Director of Corporate Services, be delegated authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Governance, to agree the final submission of the Non-Domestic Rate Return for 2021-2022**

28 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 3 2020/21

A report was submitted which detailed the latest forecast in relation to the revenue budget for 2020/21, the latest capital programme for the period 2020/21 to 2022/23, and the latest reserves and balances position.

A summary of portfolio forecast revenue outturn positions and variations against the revised budget were provided within the report which also included detail of the 2020/21 implications of COVID-19 on the Council's financial position.

The Council remained committed to the regular monitoring of its financial performance, and this report was provided to update Cabinet on the position of the Council in respect of the general fund for 2020/21 and progress in delivering the capital programme.

Cabinet were informed that the report was prepared excluding any financial implications that may arise from other agenda items being considered by Cabinet at this meeting.

The report also sought approval of the Council's and its Parishes Tax Base for 2021/22.

* **Resolved that:**

- (1) **the latest forecast revised budget and revenue position for 2020/21 as detailed in Section 1 be noted;**
- (2) **the latest position with regard to the implementation of the 2020/21 savings proposals as detailed in Section 2 be noted;**
- (3) **the revised Capital Programme as detailed in Section 3 be noted;**
- (4) **the latest reserves and balances position as provided in Section 4 be noted;**
- (5) **the transfer of £1m from the Inflation Reserve to the Growth Reserve as detailed in Section 4.2 be approved;**
- (6) **other Financial Monitoring Matters as detailed in section 5 be noted;**
- (7) **the Treasury Management position Statement as detailed in Annex G be noted;**
- (8) **the tax base for the year 2021/22 as calculated by St Helens Borough Council shall be 52,080; and**
- (9) **the amounts calculated by St Helens Borough Council as the tax base (after allowing for exemptions, discounts and**

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collection rate) for each of its Parishes for the year 2021/22 shall be:

Bold	1,094
Rainford	2,886
Eccleston	3,916
Windle	975
Rainhill	3,709
Billinge	2,006
Seneley Green	1,367

29 POST COVID ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN

A report was submitted which asked Cabinet to consider the draft Economic Recovery Plan, which had been developed in consultation with Cabinet Members in response to the economic impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

In developing the Economic Recovery Plan officers had conducted an on-going economic impact analysis, through primary research, a review of secondary research, liaison with government departments, engagement with the Combined Authority and business surveys.

Members were informed that engagement with the private sector, the wider business community and the public, community and voluntary sectors was the next stage in the process.

The aim of the Economic Recovery Plan was to support the Borough's engagement with Government, the City Region and potential investors in order to tackle the impact of economic downturn, maximise the opportunities for economic growth and to frame regeneration in the context of Sustainable Growth. Since Government's thinking and the course of the pandemic continued to change, officers would continue to adapt the plan until its formal adoption.

The Council had already launched programmes to maximise the impact of the Government's Building Back better, the cycling programmes, green retrofit programmes and employment programmes for 16 -18 year olds, the development of key investments and grant support to businesses. However, it was clear that the scale of challenge ahead and the ethos of the Council underlined the need for a new level of partnership.

* **Resolved that:**

- (1) it be agreed to consult for a period of 6 weeks on the draft Economic Recovery Plan attached at appendix 1;**
- (2) the need to monitor and update the plan to reflect Government's own recovery planning and the evolving impacts of the Pandemic be noted; and**
- (3) the actions outlined in the action plan at appendix 2 be endorsed.**

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30 RESIDENTIAL PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WE LOOK AFTER AND EMERGENCY RESPITE PROVISION

A report was submitted which set out the case for developing three new children's homes in St Helens and developing an emergency respite home for children on the edge of care. The report considered the options available for acquiring suitable properties to bring into service as children's homes and charted the next steps and the timescale required.

* **Resolved that:**

For the Children's Homes:

- (1) **For home 1: Torus be commissioned to buy a property on the open market to lease to SHLA;**
- (2) **For homes 2 and 3: the options to be reviewed in April 2021 in the context of progress on home 1;**

For Edge of Care emergency respite provision:

- (3) **the proposal to bring Barrowcliff Cottages and The Stables into service for a two-year period be approved whilst a permanent home is developed, subject to a review of the feasibility study and the full costs of refurbishment;**
- (4) **funding of £19k be approved to conduct a feasibility study into bringing Wellesley House into service as the permanent respite home; and**
- (5) **the options for the permanent respite home be reviewed following the feasibility study of Wellesley House.**

31 SAFEGUARDING ADULTS ANNUAL REPORT 2019/2020

A report was submitted which informed Cabinet of the Safeguarding Adults Annual Report for 2019/2020.

The Care Act 2014 required the St Helens Safeguarding Adults Board to publish an Annual Report which set out how the Board had performed during 2019/20. The requirements of the Report were set out as follows:

- a) to set out the progress against the business objectives for 2019/20, which were focused on: Making Safeguarding Personal;
- b) seek assurance from partners that there is effective leadership in place;
- c) ensuring that effective Partnership working & governance are in place;
- d) ensuring all services have appropriate systems & processes in place; and
- e) ensure that partners are equipped to respond appropriately.

The Report also set out the progress on any Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR) that had taken place during the year.

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The final statutory requirement was for the report to set out the business objectives for 2020/21 and to revise the 3-year Strategic Priorities for the period 2020-23.

The Report was also an opportunity for the Board to pay tribute to, and highlight the hard work of, Board partners, particularly those delivering front line services in the context of the COVID pandemic.

* **Resolved that the Annual Report be noted.**

The following report had not been notified five clear working days but the Leader had agreed for it to be considered in order to progress the matter.

32 INTEGRATING CARE: NEXT STEPS IN ESTABLISHING INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEMS NATIONALLY AND IN CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE

A report was submitted which informed Cabinet that the NHS had been on a journey with partners since 2016 (with the creation of System Transformation Partnerships (STPs) to establish system wide integrated and collaborative working aimed at improving population health, reducing inequalities, and managing resources effectively. The NHS Long Term Plan published in 2019 further set out the direction for health and care to join up locally to meet population needs and for greater collaborative working and for all STPs to work towards being formally approved by NHS England as an Integrated Care System (ICS).

In Cheshire and Merseyside, the Health and Care Partnership (C&MHCP) was working towards formal designation as an ICS by April 2021. As part of this process the C&MHCP Board had produced a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for all partners to sign and although not legally binding, it was presented to Cabinet for information and comment at Appendix 1 to the report.

In December 2020 NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI) produced a paper which set out proposals for significant legislative reform that would give ICS's statutory functions and change CCGs and the way NHS providers work together.

The consultation on the paper would close on 8 January 2021. The paper was attached at Appendix 2 to the report for information and to raise awareness of the expected legislative changes to the NHS during 2021.

* **Resolved that the report be noted.**

33 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

* Resolved that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item for the reason stated:

Minute	Reason (under the Local Government Act 1972)
34	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

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34 **PROCUREMENT OF REPLACEMENT HUMAN RESOURCES SYSTEM AND EXTEND PAYROLL SOFTWARE**

A report was submitted which sought approval to procure a replacement for the current in-house HR System and extend the contract of the existing Payroll System.

This was the second stage of the process following approval to source a preferred supplier via Cabinet in September 2020.

Cabinet was informed that the decision was a Key Decision and details had been included within the Public Notice of Key Decisions published in accordance with the provisions within the Constitution.

* **Resolved that:**

- (1) **the purchase of Zellis HCM Cloud HR software to replace the current in-house Human Resources System be approved;**
- (2) **the extension of the existing contract in respect of the Zellis Payroll System be approved and in addition, a one-off upgrade cost of the Payroll System in support of integration with procured HR software be approved;**
- (3) **the procurement route identified be approved; and**
- (4) **the funding allocation be approved.**