

Executive 7 December 2017 – Minute Extract

60. DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2018/19 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

Councillor Lunn, Executive Lead Member for Finance and Resources introduced the report that presented the draft revenue budget, capital programme and outlined the Programme for Growth for 2018/19 to 2020/21.

The Executive Lead Member for Finance and Resources explained that between 2016/17 and 2019/20, the General Fund settlement would reduce by £2m per annum due to the revenue support grant being phased out and the New Homes Bonus reducing from six to four years. It was also added that the wage settlement for staff had been announced with a 2% rise in the current year and next year which would have implications for the budget.

The Executive were informed that the draft budget assumed a council tax rise of £5 and forecast a savings figure of £200k for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). It was noted that the final figures may need to be revised when wage settlement rise was factored in.

A query was raised on whether the 1% council tax base increase was too conservative. The Chief Finance Officer explained that the budget had factored in a level of additional growth however there were other factors that impacted on the council tax base figure such as discounts and exemptions. Further to this, the Executive were informed that there had been an increase in single person discounts for council and a review of this scheme would be undertaken.

It was queried why a number of income generation projects in the savings plan would not generate income until 2019/20. The Director of Economic Regeneration and Place explained the programmes outlined were cautious however that confidence for growth in the district was increasing and as soon as planned schemes across the district were delivered, the Council would receive positive results.

In response to a query concerning the Debt Officer, the Chief Finance Officer explained that the post was working to recover overpayments of housing benefit and that the post had generated a net benefit of £31k.

RESOLVED:

- i) To submit the draft budgets, bids and savings be approved for public consultation and submitted to Policy Review Committee for comments.**
- ii) To invite options for additional savings as part of the consultation.**

REASON FOR THE DECISION

To enable the views of the public and the Policy Review Committee to be gathered through consultation.