

MINUTES OF: THE CABINET

Date of Meeting: Wednesday 15th March 2023

**Present: Councillor A Barnes (Chair)
Councillors Ashworth, Hughes, Oakes and Walmsley**

**In Attendance: Mr A Allen, Acting Chief Executive
Ms C Birtwistle, Head of Legal (Monitoring Officer)
Mr D Smurthwaite, Director of Economic Development
Mrs K Spencer, Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer)
Mr I Walker, Service Assurance Team Leader**

**Also present: Councillor Foxcroft
1 member of the public**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lythgoe.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8th February 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

3. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No written questions had been submitted.

6. UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Leader gave a brief overview of the items discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13th March 2023. The O&S Committee chair was thanked for the update.

7. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT Q3 2022/23

The Lead Member for Resources outlined the report, which asked Cabinet to note the contents of the Quarter 3 2022/23 financial monitoring report.

Cabinet members were invited to comment on the report:

- Late advice of Local Government Finance settlement does not assist.
- The staff pay increase for next year was discussed.

Other members were invited to comment on the report:

- Impact of supermarket business rates is within the provision.

Resolved:

Cabinet noted the contents of the Q3 2022/23 financial monitoring report.

Reason for Decision:

Robust monitoring of the General Fund and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is essential to control risks expressed in section 5 of the report and the Council continues to undertake this.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

8. REFRESH OF HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENT POLICY

The Lead Member for Housing and Customer Services outlined the report, which asked Cabinet to consider any recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to approve the refreshed policy and delegate minor amendments to the Head of Customer Services and ICT in consultation with the Lead Member.

Cabinet members were invited to comment on the report:

- Real time reporting helps the process.
- Thanks were expressed to the team.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet considered the recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Committee and approved the Housing Benefit Overpayment Policy.
2. Cabinet delegated any minor amendments to the policy to the Head of Customer Services and ICT in consultation with the Lead Member.

Reason for Decision:

Councils have a duty to protect public funds and recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments in a timely and cost effective way. This policy sets out the Council's commitment to this as laid down by The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

9. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**Resolved:**

That public and press be excluded from the following item of business under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 since the item involved the likely disclosure of exempt information under Part 1 Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

10. REFRESH OF HOUSING BENEFIT WRITE-OFF POLICY

The Lead Member for Housing and Customer Services outlined the report. Cabinet members commented on the report.

Resolved:

1. The report was agreed.

Reason for Decision:

To agree the report.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

The meeting concluded at 6.54pm

_____ CHAIR _____ DATE