

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects
Date	14 November 2022
Present	Councillor Ayre (Executive Member for Finance and Performance) and Councillor Craghill (Executive Member for Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods) Debbie Mitchell (Chief Finance Officer) Pauline Stuchfield (Director Customer and Communities) David Walker (Head of Customer and Exchequer Services)

12. Declarations of Interest [10.02]

The Executive Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that he might have had in respect of business on the agenda. They confirmed he had none.

13. Minutes [10.03]

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 17 October 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Executive Member.

14. Public Participation [10.03]

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

15. Household Support Fund October 2022 – March 2023 [10.03]

The Executive Members considered a report detailing the Household Support Fund (HSF) scheme from October 2022 to March 2023. The Head of Customer and Exchequer Services reported that the total funding including any administration costs for the council was £1.037m. He advised

that the government had provided a broader approach with the purpose of the support not being aimed at specific groups but that the support would be targeted at vulnerable households to prevent escalation of problems, including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers, and people with disabilities; particularly considering support for those vulnerable households who were ineligible for other government support with the cost of living.

The Head of Customer and Exchequer Services explained the scheme noting that direct payments would be available for households eligible for free school meals, working age customers not in receipt of income support or universal credit and foster carers. In terms of the discretionary scheme he noted that each application would be judged on its own merits and support would automatically be paid to families receiving Disabled Living Allowance (DLA). There is also funding for supporting student applications through referrals from educational establishments. It was noted that families in receipt of DLA needed to apply directly to the council. There had also been additional funding given to York Energy Action to help with energy efficiency measures, and there was also additional budget for discretionary housing payments, along with food and fuel vouchers. He noted that the council would write to families eligible for direct payments in coming weeks about the scheme and he explained that the payments would not be made until January 2023 at the earliest to allow time for the application process.

The Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods noted that the need for funding was set to grow and that the support offered by the government was not enough to support people. She added that the increased flexibility was useful and that people in receipt of DLA needed to apply for the funding. She welcomed the funding for Energy Action York, the student hardship fund and discretionary housing payments. The Executive Member for Finance and Performance supported the comments of the Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods and noted the significant challenge regarding payments for families in receipt of DLA. He then;

Resolved: That;

- a) the council's HSF scheme October 22 – March 23 (as set out in Annex A of the report) be approved.
- b) any changes to the scheme that do not fundamentally alter the purpose be delegated to the Section 151 officer in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance & Performance.
- c) the delegation of discretion to pay claims made within the broader scope of the scheme guidance as set out by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) (as set out in Annex

B of the report) be given to the Head of Customer & Exchequer Services.

Reason: To provide financial support to the city's most financially vulnerable residents through the October 2022 – March 2023 arising from the ongoing cost of living increases.

16. Regular update on routine procurements and approval of ICT procurement over £250k [10.12]

The Executive Member considered a report that presented a register of procurement exercises deemed routine for the period of April 2022 to October 2022. These were defined as routine procurements as per the council's contract procedure rules and expenditure falling within existing capital and revenue budget provisions. It was intended that those reports would be brought to this decision session every 6 months, with any non routine ICT or other procurements reported as they arose between £250k and £500k in value.

The Chief Finance Officer noted the contract procedure rules as set out at paragraph 4 of the report and she detailed the three routine procurements set out in Annex A of the report. The Executive Member then;

Resolved: That;

- the routine procurements that were approved during the period April 2022 to October 2022 (as set out at Annex A of the report) be noted.
- the significant future routine procurement of the council's revenues and benefits system (as set out at Annex B of the report) be noted.

Reason: To ensure the that councillors receive reports on routine procurement decisions in line with the council's contract procedure rules and the public have the opportunity to see transparent decision-making in operation relating to major ICT procurements.

Cllr N Ayre, Chair

[The meeting started at 10.02 am and finished at 10.14 am].