
Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods
Date	16 January 2020
Present	Councillors Craghill

31. Declarations of Interest

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or discloseable pecuniary interest that she might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

32. Public Participation

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

33. Financial Strategy 2020/21

The Executive Member received a report which provided background information for the overall Financial Strategy and presented the savings proposals and growth assumptions for the Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods portfolio.

This Budget Meeting was intended to provide an opportunity for the Executive Member to obtain feedback in advance of the finalisation of the overall Financial Strategy which would be presented to Executive on 13 February 2020.

The Director of Health Housing and Adult Social Care; the Assistant Director for Housing and Community Safety and the Finance Manager were in attendance to present the report and to respond to questions.

The options available were:

- (i) Option 1 - to retain the savings, growth and HRA capital proposals as set out in annex 1, 2, 3 and 4;

- (ii) Option 2 – to add, delete or amend proposals, noting that any adjustments made must have a net nil effect with reference to the overall budget.

The Executive Member welcomed the proposals in this budget particularly in the context of limited finances and growing demands on services. She was pleased to note that at a time when the Council was facing challenges to balance budgets and when the Council had to save a further £4m this year and potentially for each of the 3 years thereafter, that additional spending of £1.8m had been included in the Housing Revenue account annual budget which would be focused on improving the care of council properties and estates, improving services to tenants and developing the council's capacity to explore innovative models of delivering social housing.

Other key areas that the Executive Member had wished to highlight included the following:

- Additional £250k a year over the next four years in capital spending had been included in the budget, to add to the £1m investment in the interim budget. This would be used to help develop a retrofit programme bringing council housing up to very high energy efficiency standards to meet the demands of the Climate Emergency.
- It had been encouraging to note that York residents had put renewables, energy efficiency and lower energy bills high on their list of priorities in the findings from consultation with residents at appendix 5.
- Additional investment in council housing stock following the Stock Condition survey would enable the council to improve repairs as well as ventilation systems to address some of the damp and condensation issues that tenants report.
- Welcomed investment into the new apprenticeship programme which will provide new jobs and incorporate training for energy efficiency work.
- The council had also been able to protect and continue key areas of work such as: the Council's Housing Delivery Programme; effective homelessness prevention services; working to reduce street sleeping to close to zero in future years, and in developing programmes which would support people with complex needs.

Resolved:

The Executive Member considered the following, in the context of the overall budget;

- The 2020/21 revenue general fund savings proposals for their portfolio as set out in annex 1
- The 2020/21 HRA savings proposals for their portfolio as set out in annex 2
- The 2020/21 revenue HRA growth proposals for their portfolio as set out in annex 3
- The 2020/21 to 2024/25 HRA Capital Schemes as set out in annex 4
- The feedback from consultation for their portfolio as set out in annex 5

Reason:

To ensure that stakeholders have the opportunity to feed into the budget process in advance of the finalisation of the Financial Strategy 2020/21 to 2024/25.

Cllr Craghill, Chair

[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 2.10 pm].