

EXECUTIVE

* Councillor Julia McShane (Chairman)
Councillor Joss Bigmore (Vice-Chair)

* Councillor Tim Anderson
* Councillor Tom Hunt
* Councillor John Redpath

* Councillor John Rigg
Councillor James Steel
* Councillor Cait Taylor

*Present

Councillor Ramsey Nagaty was in remote attendance.

EX41 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Joss Bigmore, Deputy Leader of the Council and Councillor James Steel, Lead Councillor for Environment.

EX42 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT - DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

EX43 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2022 were approved as a correct record. The Chairman signed the minutes.

EX44 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader of the Council made the following announcements.

Community Services continued to provide borough-wide support to residents. The Community Fridge and Thrive at the Hive provided food, household items and clothing. For those residents unable to reach the Hive there was a 'Bundle and Delivery' service or selected items could be collected on behalf of residents. Pop-up support events were being organised across the borough. Community groups might request a pop-up event for their area by contacting Community Services. There was also assistance available to connect residents with other support agencies and food banks operating across the borough. There would be a 'Cost of Living Crisis' forum in early November involving partner agencies to ensure support was available across the borough. More information regarding services offered by the Council was available on the Council's website and Surrey County Council's website.

[Help with the cost of living - Guildford Borough Council](#)

[Cost of Living financial support available - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](#)

Community Services could be contacted directly by telephone 01483 444150 or by email community.wellbeing@guildford.gov.uk

Guildford Fire Station's Veteran's Hub had been open since 2019 as a regular drop-in venue to provide support for ex-service personnel and retired blue-light colleagues. Special dates coming up for the Hub were a Remembrance tea on Saturday 12 November from 4-6pm, to include a one-minute's silence and the Last Post and on Thursday 8 December from 7-9pm there would be a Hub Open Evening including a meal for those unable to attend the daytime sessions.

Following the recent Tillingbourne by-election, the Leader welcomed new member Councillor Richard Morris to the Council.

There were updated proposals for the Guildford Park Road site which would be on display next month at Grace Church, Guildford Park Road, Guildford GU2 7NF on Monday 7 November from 3-7pm and on Tuesday 8 November from 1:30-5:30pm. There would be a webinar presentation on Thursday 3 November from 6-7pm. Registration was available to receive more updates from,

www.guildfordparkroad.co.uk

Guildford Park Road would provide a range of much needed housing for local people to rent and buy. The housing would be energy efficient and well located near to the town and public transport.

The Farmers' Market was on Tuesday 1 November and every first Tuesday of the month.

There would be a Firework Fiesta on Saturday 5 November at Stoke Park run by the Guildford Lions Club. The event would open at 6pm with fireworks from 8:30pm. All proceeds would be directed to local charities and the Prostate Project. There would be live music, children's entertainment and food and drink available and free parking. Tickets were available from www.seetickets.com

Remembrance Sunday was on 13 November and the Council's event would start at 9am on the High Street. More information and a timetable were available from the Civic Secretary. civicsecretary@guildford.gov.uk

The Mayor's 'Wine Bluff' would be held on 19 November from 7:45pm at the Royal Grammar School. Tickets were available from the Civic Secretary. Funds raised would be directed to Challengers, the Mayor's chosen charity. Teams were of 8-10 players and tickets were £35 per person.

EX45 TO CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The intention of the report was to collate and track progress of all recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Executive throughout the year, and to log the Executive decisions on the submitted matters.

The Executive noted the report and that there had been no updates since the previous meeting.

EX46 CAPITAL AND INVESTMENT OUTTURN REPORT 2021-22

The annual outturn report included capital expenditure, non-treasury investments and treasury management performance for 2021-22.

The comments arising from the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee held on 29 September 2022 were set out in the Supplementary Information Sheet.

The Lead Councillor for Resources introduced the report.

There had again been slippage on capital projects and there was a Capital Programme outturn of £40 million compared to the original budget of £148 million and a revised budget of £142 million. Consequently, there was a reduction in the minimum revenue provision of £1.38 million against a budget on £1.5 million. At year end there was £152 million in investments compared to £309 million in borrowing.

Overall, there was a satisfactory performance with some high returns. The lower yield on investments was offset by higher interest accrued by retained cash due to programme slippage.

The Council had taken out its first Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) local infrastructure rate loans for Weyside Urban Village of £22.8 million. The interest rate on those loans would be capitalised so that the borrowing could be repaid from capital receipts from land sales as a part of the scheme.

Some Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reform loans had become payable, and the Council had repaid a £45 million loan from the HRA reserves.

Part of the Council's M&G funds had been redeemed with a gain of £1.4 million which had contributed towards balancing the 2021-22 budget.

Given there had been slippage again on capital projects it was proposed there would be a more pragmatic approach to budget setting in anticipation of what might realistically be achieved alongside a regular monitor of expenditure throughout the next financial year. Consequently, the Executive,

RESOLVED:

(1) To approve the removal of the following schemes from the capital programme:

- Albury closed burial grounds £57,000 in 2022/23
- Mill Lane Flood Protection works - £16,000 2022/23 and £200,000 2023/24
- Merrow & Burpham surface water study - £15,000 in 2022/23

(2) To recommend to Council at its meeting to be held on 6 December 2022,

- That the capital and investment outturn report be noted.
- That the actual prudential indicators reported for 2021/22, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

Reasons:

- (1) To comply with the Council's treasury management policy statement, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice

on treasury management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

- (2) As per the treasury management code although the scrutiny of treasury management (and indeed all finance) had been delegated to the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee, ultimate responsibility remained with full Council - this report therefore fulfilled that need.

EX47 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - REVENUE OUTTURN REPORT 2021-22

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) recorded the income and expenditure associated with the provision and management of Council owned residential dwellings in the Borough. The requirement to maintain an HRA was set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the requirement to publish final accounts was set out in the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015.

The Leader of the Council introduced the report that set out the actual level of revenue spending on day-to-day services provided to tenants recorded in the HRA in 2021-22.

The comments arising from the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee meeting on 29 September 2022 along with some financial updates were set out in the Supplementary Information Sheet.

The report set out the income and expenditure on the HRA for the year 2021-22 and it was confirmed that a sustainable budget had been maintained with an £11.2 million operating surplus. The 30-year business plan supported expenditure of £2.5 million of the surplus to maintain and improve the Council's housing stock. The focus of the expenditure was to support the continued wellbeing of tenants and to increase the energy-efficiency of homes. In addition, a further £7.84 million would be added to the new-build budget. Right to Buy (RTB) receipts had been utilised and an additional 21 homes had been purchased for social housing resulting in no repayment penalties. Overall, the report was in line with the 30-year business plan.

The Lead Council for Resources added that the rental income was £29.2 million, there had been a low instance of arrears and few void properties for the period resulting in a strong financial position justifying the investments in the housing stock. Consequently, the Executive,

RESOLVED:

That the final outturn position on the HRA for 2021-22 be noted, and that the decision taken under delegated authority to transfer £2.5 million to the reserve for future capital, and £7.84 million to the new build reserve from the revenue surplus of £10.339 million in 2021-22, be endorsed.

Reason:

To allow the Statutory Statement of Accounts to be finalised and subject to external audit prior to approval by the Council.

EX48 GENERAL FUND REVENUE OUTTURN REPORT 2021-22

The Lead Councillor for Resources introduced the report. Comments arising from the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee meeting held on 29 September were set out in the Supplementary Information Sheet.

It was noted that in the middle of last year the Council identified a significant overspend in the General Fund and the report before the Executive recorded the effects of actions taken to mitigate the situation. The mitigation resulted in a balanced budget and a £138,987 underspend, which had been transferred to the budget pressures reserve.

The net income from interest receipts was £1.5 million more than had been estimated and the minimum revenue provision for debt repayment was £154,414 lower than estimated. Put together, this contributed £1.6 million net additional interest to the General Fund.

The report set out the structure and the use of reserves and it was noted that the reserves available to support the General Fund remained low.

It was noted that the Council was actively encouraging more customers to use online services to free up the telephone lines to residents who did not have access to a computer.

There were no further comments and consequently the Executive,

RESOLVED:

That the Council's final outturn position on the General Fund for 2021-22 be noted, and that the decisions taken under delegated authority to transfer the underspend to the Budget Pressures reserve and to make a transfer between the business rates retention reserve and the ICT renewals reserve, be endorsed.

Reasons:

To note the final outturn position for 2021-22 and to facilitate the ongoing financial management of the Council.

EX49 HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME - ACQUISITION OF LAND AND BUILDINGS FOR THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme and the Capital and Investment Strategy, approved by the Council in February 2022 had included a budget programme of £1.8 million for 2022-23 and £1.8 million in 2024-25 for the acquisition of land and buildings for the HRA. A further £3 million had been agreed for a provisional programme for 2022-23 and £4 million for 2024-25 which could be used subject to individual development and acquisition plans.

It was noted that the capital programme included buying back homes that had previously been sold through Right to Buy (RTB) and homes that became available through s.106 agreements. The Council utilised RTB receipts to re-purchase homes where there was a good financial outcome in terms of favourable terms and long-term rental income potential, or to benefit the Council's strategic objectives.

The Leader of the Council introduced the report that proposed the provisional budget be moved to the approved budget as the currently approved funds had been either committed or spent.

The meeting heard that good progress had been made throughout the year and consequently the Executive,

RESOLVED:

That the existing Housing Revenue Account Acquisition Provisional Budget of £7 million for 2022-23 and 2024-25 be moved to the HRA Approved Capital Programme.

Reason:

To facilitate the delivery of social housing whilst contributing to the Council's plan to fully utilise Right To Buy receipts.

EX50 FUTURE OF INTERNAL AUDIT

The Lead Councillor for Resources introduced the report.

The Council's existing contract for the provision of internal audit services was due to expire in March 2023. A process of soft market testing and due diligence had been undertaken to assess the available options and to identify a preferred provider. It was proposed that Southern Internal Audit Partnership (SIAP) could provide the service to the Council from 1 April 2023 for a five-year period.

It was noted that SIAP worked with many other councils including Waverley Borough Council (WBC). There would be no significant cost savings gained by transferring to SIAP, but it would harmonise with the Council's collaboration with WBC. Consequently, the Executive,

RESOLVED:

- (1) That, with effect from 1 April 2023, the Council discharges its Internal Audit Function under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 to Hampshire County Council so that Southern Internal Audit Partnership (SIAP) can provide the Internal Audit Service for Guildford Borough Council.
- (2) That the Council's Section 151 and Monitoring Officers be authorised to enter into the Joint Working Agreement by way of a deed of accession with Southern Internal Audit Partnership and undertake all necessary legal arrangements to do so.
- (3) That the Section 151 Officer or nominated officer represents the Council's interests by becoming a voting member of the Southern Internal Audit Partnership Key Stakeholder Board.

Reason(s):

To ensure good governance arrangements and internal control by undertaking an adequate level of internal audit coverage through discharging the Council's functions as permitted by the S101(5) of the Local Government Act 1972.

The meeting finished at 7.35 pm

Signed

Date

Chairman