

MINUTE EXTRACT

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

7 OCTOBER, 2020

9 2020/21 & 2021/22 COVID-19 BUDGET POSITION STATEMENT

A report by the Director of Resources provided a summary of the Council's financial position following the Covid-19 pandemic. The report highlighted the impact on the Council's 2020/21 and 2021/22 budget following the onset of Covid-19 and the actions in place to mitigate the deficit. The report also described the support available from HM Treasury in mitigating the deficit and asked the Committee for approval to submit a formal application for support and highlighted the options available if this support was not forthcoming.

The report provided information on the additional government funding provided to support the Council's emergency response to Covid-19.

The Director of Resources responded to a number of comments and confirmed that each of the six policy committees would receive a budget report, though no proposals would be included as these were not fully formed yet. The report would contain the budget for each individual committee. There was a need to demonstrate to the MHCLG that the Council had a robust sustainable plan to mitigate any future losses including the staff to deliver on these, so not all non-statutory services would be put forward as potential savings.

Members expressed the view that a very bleak outlook was being painted in the report and of the need to protect communities against potentially damaging cuts. There was also a need to be very cautious in the approach to how decisions on savings were made whilst the funding settlement figures from government were as yet unknown. There was a need to work together to support civic society.

The Chair referred to her meetings with other Combined Authority leaders and that they were all united in making representations to central government to help local government in giving the support to residents that they needed.

A. RECOMMENDED (unanimously) - To Council that an additional £99,731,884 be added to the budget for 2020/21 as a result of additional one off Government funding received since the 2020/21 budget was set on 2 March 2020 to either be spent or passported to support the emergency response to Covid-19 or returned to the Government by 31 March 2021, as described in Section 5 of the report.