

ECONOMY REGENERATION & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 8 June 2021

Present: Councillor T Jones (Chair)

Councillors K Greaney D Mitchell
G Wood P Martin
D Burgess-Joyce E Gleaves
A Gardner A Hodson
C Povall T Smith

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed attendees and viewers to the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was webcast and retained on the Council's website.

2 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

3 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Tony Jones declared another interest as a Board Member of the Wirral Growth Company in relation to the Birkenhead Temporary Market item (Minute 7) although he reminded Members that the item has been requested to be withdrawn by officers

4 MINUTES

Resolved - that the minutes of the meeting of the Economic, Regeneration and Development Committee held on 4 March 2021 be agreed as a true record.

5 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

There were no questions, statements or petitions from the public or Members.

6 ACTIVE TRAVEL FUNDING

This report sought approval for the Active Travel Fund Tranche 1 and 2 and Capability Fund Programmes for 2021/22 and to allocate the funds to priorities and projects as outlined in the report.

Chief Regeneration Officer Sally Shah presented the report and highlighted that delegated authority was requested as there was no finalised programme to date and formal consultation had not yet taken place. She explained that Tranche 1 funding was awarded as part of the Covid response and two schemes had progressed but difficulties in supply of building materials had developed and a delay had been required. Tranche 2 was in the form of a proposed programme and consultation was to take place with Members in the relevant Wards and then with the public. The initial list of proposed schemes was attached to the report and had been informed by the criteria for the funding and by previous consultations with Wirral.

Members discussed the consultation methods and were concerned at some schemes appearing on the list in the report and suggested that two of these - the Crescent and proposed cycle way through Wallasey and New Brighton – be formally deferred until consultation took place.

Resolved (by assent) – That Policy and Resources Committee:

- (1) Authorise the Director of Regeneration and Place to accept the grant funding of £1,153,380 allocated to Wirral Council by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority for the Active Travel Fund Tranche 1 and 2 Programmes and accept the Local Authority Active Travel Capability Fund Programme indicative allocation of £286,000**
- (2) Approve the proposed Active Travel Fund Tranche 1 and 2 Programmes and the Active Travel Capability Fund Programme (“the Programmes”) as set out in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 of this report.**
- (3) Authorise the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and the Chair and Spokespersons of the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee to amend the Programmes if required having due regard to any issues that may arise during design or consultation stages of projects.**
- (4) Note that the above authority and approvals are subject to the schemes at the Crescent and proposed cycle way through Wallasey and New Brighton being deferred until a consultation process has taken place.**

7 BIRKENHEAD TEMPORARY MARKET

The Chair announced that the Director of Regeneration and Place has requested permission to withdraw this report to allow further consultation and examination of options to take place.

Members discussed the progress of the scheme.

Resolved – that the Birkenhead Temporary Market item be withdrawn and deferred to a future meeting.

8 2021/22 BUDGET MONITORING AND 22/23 BUDGET PROCESS

Councillor Tony Jones declared an interest in this item as a Board Member of the Wirral Growth Company.

The Director of Regeneration and Place Alan Evans presented this report which highlighted the processes for monitoring the 2021/22 budget and the budget setting process for 2022/23. The Committee was accountable for ensuring that the committee budget remained within the relevant envelope and was to take collective responsibility via the Policy and Resources Committee to ensure that the whole Council budget remained in balance at all times, by agreeing mitigating actions to bring the budget back in line, should a deficit be forecast.

One of the key documents required to enable the Council to receive approval for exceptional financial support was a balanced five-year Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). This document was prepared by Officers and required committee oversight and approval, and whether any proposals within it should be taken forward into business cases and brought to workshops and a further report to Committee.

In answer to Members questions, it was emphasised that any income which was deferred because of delayed schemes would not be lost but would be realised in a different financial year.

Resolved (by assent) - That

- (1) the content of the report and the current forecast position of savings for 2021/22 and the ongoing work being undertaken to mitigate any under-achievement be noted.**
- (2) the current proposals within this report from the Medium Term Financial Plan from 2022/23 – 2025/26 and the Director of Regeneration and Place be included to develop them into full business cases, where appropriate, for inclusion in the 2022/23 budget proposals to Policy and Resources Committee at its October meeting for approval.**
- (3) a series of budget workshops be convened to identify any alternative savings/income/reductions in pressures to ensure that a full suite of costed and deliverable proposals can be recommended to the Policy and Resources Committee at its October meeting for approval.**
- (4) the Zero-Based Budgeting project within the budget workshops be commenced to contribute to the overall savings target of £170k in 2021/22.**

9 **2020/21 REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT**

Senior Finance Business Partner Karen Page introduced this report which provided a summary of the year-end revenue outturn and capital position for the Committee as at the end of March 2021 for the 2020/21 financial year.

The Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic continued to present financial risk due to uncertainty and fluidity in the external environment, and due to movement of staff to deliver the emergency response which had delayed work on schemes.

The overall financial position for the Council remained challenging, and a number of actions were instigated during the year to mitigate the overall position including limiting spending to essential areas of service delivery only, with Corporate Directors supported to mitigate the risk of overspending.

For the Committee, there was an adverse position of £0.514 million, but this was partly mitigated by revenue.

Resolved - That

(1) the adverse year-end outturn of £0.514m be noted.

(2) the impact of funding and expenditure as a direct consequence of Covid-19 be noted.

(3) the Capital Programme Report be noted.

10 **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO ACTIVE TRAVEL WORKING GROUP**

Lead Principal Lawyer Matthew Neal presented this report which was to enable the Committee to review the continuing need for advisory groups and to appoint Members to serve on those that are to be retained in 2021/2022.

The report followed on from a report in March 2021 when the Active Travel Members Working Group had been established comprising 8 Members. There was also an Active Travel Forum which was outward facing and open to any individual with an interest. The Group was to interact with the Forum and route recommendations to this Committee for consideration.

Members queried the benefits of any recommended active travel schemes if they conflicted with economic schemes but were reminded that the Committee would make a final decision, taking account any recommendations from the Active Travel Working Group. It was noted that there was some cross-over with the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee regarding active travel schemes.

Councillor Tony Jones proposed amendments that the membership be drawn from this Committee and the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee; that the Chair be appointed Chair of the Active Travel Working

Group; and that authority be delegated to the Director of Law and Governance to make consequential amendments to the terms of reference of the Active Travel Working Group.

This was seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell

The amendments were agreed by assent.

Resolved –

- (1) that the membership of the Active Travel Working Group be drawn from the Chair and Spokespersons of the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee and that additionally the Chair and Spokespersons of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee be invited to become members of the Group;**
- (2) That the Chair of the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee be appointed as Chair of the Active Travel Working Group; and That authority be delegated to the Director of Law and Governance to make consequential amendments to the terms of reference of the Active Travel Working Group.**

11 ECONOMY, REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

Resolved –

That The Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee is invited to agree or otherwise determine the content of the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee work programme which is proposed in this report for the remainder of the 2021/22 municipal year.