

ECONOMY REGENERATION & HOUSING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 7 December 2022

Present: Councillor T Jones (Chair)

Councillors P Martin A Hodson
G Wood I Lewis
G Davies L Rennie
J Robinson J Grier
D Burgess-Joyce D Mitchell

32 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The Chair opened the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was being webcast and a copy is retained on the Council's website for two years.

33 **APOLOGIES**

No apologies for absence were received.

34 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in connection with any item on the agenda and, if so, to declare them and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

35 **MINUTES**

The Chair presented the minutes of the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee held on 19 October 2022.

Resolved - That the minutes of the meeting of Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee held on 19 October 2022 be approved and adopted as a correct record.

36 **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

No questions, statements or petitions from the public or Councillors had been received.

37 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

The Head of Economic Growth presented the report to the Committee which provided an overview of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and the mechanisms for delivery of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's (LCRCA's) allocation. A proportion of LCR's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) funds would be allocated for direct delivery by the six constituent Local Authorities with commencement expected in the financial year 2022/2023.

The report sought approval for the Council's Phase 1 Investment Plan of £1.53m and delegated authority to commence delivery on receipt of the relevant grant funding permissions.

Members were informed that the LCR allocation of UKSPF represented a significant reduction in funding for the region in comparison to funding received from European programmes between 2014 and 2020. The committee sought and obtained an explanation regarding the criteria for the 18.9% allotted allocation, the re-allocation of unspent funding and the level of compliance and reporting that the Council will be undertaking on receipt of the funding.

Resolved – That

- 1. the submission of Wirral Council's Phase 1 Investment Plan to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) be endorsed.**
- 2. Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Regeneration and Place to:**
 - (a) make such changes to Wirral Council's Phase 1 UK Shared Prosperity Fund ("UKSPF") Investment Plan as may be necessary to reflect any feedback received from the LCRCA, provided such changes do not have a material impact on Council resources between different intervention areas.**
 - (b) review and accept the UKSPF Phase 1 grant funding agreement of £1.53m from the LCRCA;**
 - (c) commence delivery of the UKSPF Phase 1 programme in line with the grant funding agreement and change control process;**
 - (d) ensure any spend in advance of the grant funding agreement is only in extenuating circumstances where the viability of any project is at risk due to financial timescales; and**

- (e) negotiate and accept management funds for the staffing resource assigned to management, monitoring and evaluation of the Wirral UKSPF Programme.**

38 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING FOR QUARTER TWO

The Senior Manager Finance presented the report which set out the financial monitoring information for the Economy Regeneration & Housing Committee as at quarter 2 (1 Jul – 30 Sep) of 2022-23. The report provided Members with an overview of budget performance, including progress on the delivery of the 2022-23 saving programme and a summary of reserves to enable the Committee to take ownership of the budgets and provide robust challenge and scrutiny to Officers on the performance of those budgets.

At the end of Quarter 2, there was a forecast adverse position of £0.237m on the Committee's net revenue budget, of £14.583m. This included the costs of the staff Pay Award which was £0.345m above the 3% pay award budget that had been built in to 22-23 budget. This position was based on activity to date, projected trends in income and expenditure and potential mitigation to offset areas of adverse variance.

Without the pay award there would have been an overall favourable position of £0.104m.

Members queried the costings around the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service contract. A discussion was also had on the number of Homeless people, including prevention and resettlement in the borough. It was agreed that further work be undertaken by the Committee on this issue. Further queries from Members relating to budget reporting, grant funding and real living wage.

Resolved – That

- (1) the forecast revenue position presented at Quarter 2 be noted;**
- (2) the progress on delivery of the 2022-23 savings programme at Quarter 2 be noted;**
- (3) the forecast level of reserves at Quarter 2 be noted; and**
- (4) the capital forecast position of £39.061m at Quarter 2 be noted.**

39 WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Lead Principal Lawyer presented a report on the work programme for the municipal year. He also informed members that the Regeneration Working Group had met since the previous meeting and arising from that Group was a suggested workshop session with members of the Committee, which would be beneficial to obtain an overview of the timelines of the various major regeneration programmes. He also indicated that members input in relation to

housing and homeless matters would be best dealt with via a workshop in the first instance.

Members discussed several items on the work programme including Council House building and the Mass Transit Business Case. The Director of Regeneration and Place indicated that she intended to arrange workshops relating to housing and homelessness matters and also relating to Regeneration Programmes. Members expressed a preference for the next workshop be held in person.

Resolved – that the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee work programme for the remainder of the 2022/23 municipal year be noted.

40 **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved – That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion

41 **APPENDIX 2 - UKSPF WIRRAL INVESTMENT PLAN PHASE 1**

Resolved – That the exempt appendix be noted.