

## **EXECUTIVE**

**MONDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2020 AT 4.00 PM**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor J Mallinson (Leader / Chair)  
Councillor Ellis (Deputy Leader, and Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder)  
Councillor Christian (Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder)  
Councillor Higgs (Culture, Heritage and Leisure Portfolio Holder)  
Councillor Mrs Mallinson (Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder)  
Councillor Nedved (Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder)

### **OFFICERS:**

Town Clerk and Chief Executive  
Deputy Chief Executive  
Corporate Director of Economic Development

### **REGISTER OF ATTENDANCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

A roll call of persons in attendance was taken; there were no declarations of interest affecting the business to be transacted.

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of the Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services, and the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources.

### **PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED – That the Agenda be agreed as circulated.

### **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The Leader moved and the Deputy Leader seconded that the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 14 and 28 September 2020 be confirmed as a true record of the meetings; which course of action was agreed. The Chair would sign the Minutes at the first practicable opportunity.

### **BUDGET OVERVIEW 2021/22**

The Deputy Leader introduced Agenda item A.1 which constituted the formal beginning of the 2021/22 Budget process. He reminded Members that the various reports listed under that item and which were under consideration by the Executive today would proceed to the Business and Transformation; Health and Wellbeing; and Economic Growth Scrutiny Panels. The Executive would then reconvene in December 2020 to assess the Scrutiny feedback on the Budget.

**EX.122/20 BUDGET UPDATE - REVENUE ESTIMATES 2021/22 TO 2025/26**  
(Key Decision – KD.25/20)

**Portfolio** Finance, Governance and Resources

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Health and Wellbeing; Economic Growth; Business and Transformation

**Subject Matter**

The Deputy Leader submitted report RD.32/20 providing a summary of the Council's revised revenue base estimates for 2020/21, together with base estimates for 2021/22 and forecasts up to 2025/26 for illustrative purposes. The base estimates had been prepared in accordance with the guiding principles for the formulation of the budget over the next five-year planning period as set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Charging Policy; Capital Strategy; and Asset Management Plan approved by Council on 8 September 2020.

The report set out known revisions to the MTFP projections, although there were a number of significant factors affecting the budget that were currently unresolved and which would be considered as the budget process progressed (paragraph 1.3 referred).

Details of the outstanding key issues and resource assumptions were set out at Section 4, the report also alluding to the fact that decisions would need to be taken to limit budget increases to unavoidable and high priority issues, together with maximising savings and efficiencies, and potential use of reserves, to enable a balanced budget position to be recommended to Council in February 2021.

In light of the current position in the MTFP, there were some potential new spending pressures and bids which required consideration. There may also be other pressures on the revenue budget as highlighted within the revenue monitoring report, which may have a recurring impact; however, Officers were reviewing the existing base budget provisions to ensure that the services could be provided within those budgetary provisions and also contribute towards the savings target. Details of the COVID-19 income and budget monitoring shortfalls were documented at paragraph 5.9.

The current MTFP included a recurring savings requirement to be found by 2021/22 of £1 million.

Also summarised were the movements in base budgets; the updated MTFP projections; Treasury Management and Borrowing; the projected impact on revenue balances; review of reserves and balances; together with a summary of the financial outlook and budget discipline 2021/22 to 2025/26.

The Deputy Leader moved the report, which was seconded by the Leader.

**Summary of options rejected** none

**DECISION**

That the Executive:

- (i) Noted the revised base estimates for 2020/21 and base estimates for 2021/22;

- (ii) Noted the current MTFP projections, which would continue to be updated throughout the budget process as key issues became clearer and decisions were taken;
- (iii) Noted the initial budget pressures, bids and savings which needed to be taken into account as part of the 2021/22 budget process;
- (iv) Noted the review of the earmarked reserves as outlined in paragraph 9 and Appendix F.

## **Reasons for Decision**

To note the Revenue Base Estimates; updated Medium Term Financial Plan projections and budget pressures / savings for consideration as part of the 2021/22 budget process

## **EX.123/20 REVIEW OF CHARGES 2021/22 - COMMUNITY SERVICES** (Key Decision – KD.25/20)

**Portfolio** Environment and Transport; Culture, Heritage and Leisure

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Economic Growth; Health and Wellbeing;  
Business and Transformation

## **Subject Matter**

The Deputy Leader submitted report CS.30/20 setting out the proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 relating to those services falling within the Community Services Directorate.

The Deputy Leader informed the Executive that an Addendum to the report, providing an update and details of the proposed charge for refuse bins for new properties and also the charge of a second garden waste bin for 2021/22, had been circulated to all Members of the Council on 4 November 2020.

On the issue of car parking, the report recorded the proposal to simplify the permit fees and base those on the all-day charge in those car parks; and offer a 10% discount if a monthly/annual permit was purchased (plus a small administrative fee) for the applicable car parks. Therefore, the fees for permits would not be shown separately but there was opportunity to review the rate of discount offered.

In terms of pay and display tariffs, an increase of 3% was proposed, with changes to Paddy's Market to make that an all-day car park due to limited spaces and use. Due to lack of interest, it was further proposed to remove the early bird tariff from West Walls.

Details of the other proposed charges in relation to City Centre usage by external organisations; events; digital banner; Old Fire Station; Tourist Information Centre; allotments; use of parks; sports pitches; Talkin Tarn; Bereavement Services; Waste Services and Garage charges were also provided.

The original 2020/21 budgets and 2021/22 forecast income levels based upon the current charge structure and forecast volume was as detailed in the table on page 32 of the document pack. The charges highlighted within the report would result in an anticipated level of income of £2,518,400 against the MTFP target of £3,006,000. That represented a shortfall of £487,600 against the MTFP target.

The Deputy Leader moved the report, which was seconded by the Leader.

**Summary of options rejected** none

## **DECISION**

That the Executive:

1. Had reviewed the proposed charges as set out in the body of Report CS.30/20, the Addendum and relevant appendices with effect from 1 April 2021, noting the impact those would have on income generation as detailed within the report.
2. Made the report of proposed charges and the Addendum available to relevant Scrutiny Panels for their review and comment.

### **Reasons for Decision**

To ensure that the City Council's Corporate Charging Policy is complied with

#### **EX.124/20 REVIEW OF CHARGES 2021/22 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** (Key Decision – KD.25/20)

**Portfolio** Economy, Enterprise and Housing

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Health and Wellbeing; Economic Growth; Business and Transformation

### **Subject Matter**

The Deputy Leader submitted report ED.38/20 setting out the proposed fees and charges for areas falling within the responsibility of the Economic Development Directorate.

The report set out the proposed charges in relation to Planning Services including Development Control income; Building Control income; Building Control Discretionary Charges; the Home Life Grant Scheme; Shop Mobility and Investment and Policy Income.

Acceptance of the charges highlighted within the report would result in an anticipated level of income of £595,200 against the Medium Term Financial Plan target of £637,000.

The Deputy Leader moved the report, which was seconded by the Leader.

**Summary of options rejected** none

## **DECISION**

That the Executive agreed for consultation the charges, as set out in Report ED.38/20 and accompanying Appendices, with effect from 1 April 2021; noting the impact those would have on income generation as detailed within the report.

### **Reasons for Decision**

To ensure that the City Council's Corporate Charging Policy is complied with

#### **EX.125/20 REVIEW OF CHARGES 2021/22 – GOVERNANCE AND REGULATORY SERVICES** (Key Decision – KD.25/20)

**Portfolio** Cross Cutting

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Health and Wellbeing; Business and Transformation

**Subject Matter**

The Deputy Leader submitted report GD.48/20 concerning the proposed fees and charges for areas falling within the responsibility of the Governance and Regulatory Services Directorate.

The report set out the proposed charges relative to Environmental Health and Housing; Homeless, Prevention and Accommodation Services; and Legal Services.

The introduction of the proposed charges was forecast to generate income of £845,300 in 2021/22 as summarised in the table at paragraph 5.9.1 of the report.

The Deputy Leader moved the report, which was seconded by the Leader.

**Summary of options rejected** none

**DECISION**

That the Executive agreed for consultation the charges as detailed within Report GD.48/20 and accompanying Appendices, with effect from 1 April 2021; noting the impact those would have on income generation as detailed within the report.

**Reasons for Decision**

To ensure that the City Council's Corporate Charging Policy is complied with

**EX.126/20 REVIEW OF CHARGES 2021/22 – LICENSING**  
(Key Decision – KD.25/20)

**Portfolio** Finance, Governance and Resources

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Business and Transformation

**Subject Matter**

The Deputy Leader submitted report GD.54/20 setting out the proposed fees and charges for areas falling within the responsibility of the Licensing Section of the Governance and Regulatory Services Directorate.

The Regulatory Panel had responsibility for determining the licence fees, with the exception of those under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013, which fell to the Executive. The fees were as outlined in attached Report GD.50/20.

The Deputy Leader then moved the report, which was seconded by the Leader.

**Summary of options rejected** that the charges detailed at Appendix A should not be approved

## DECISION

That the Executive:

1. Noted the charges which were considered by the Regulatory Panel on 14 October 2020, with the exception of charges under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013.
2. Approved the charges detailed at Appendix A under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 with effect from 1 April 2021.

## Reasons for Decision

To ensure that the City Council's Corporate Charging Policy is complied with and sufficient income is generated to cover the costs associated with administering and enforcing the Council's statutory licensing function

## EX.127/20 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21 AND PROVISIONAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22 TO 2025/26

(Key Decision – KD.25/20)

**Portfolio** Finance, Governance and Resources

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Economic Growth; Health and Wellbeing; Business and Transformation

## Subject Matter

The Deputy Leader submitted report RD.33/20 detailing the revised Capital Programme for 2020/21, now totalling £19,390,400 together with the proposed method of financing; and highlighting an underspend of £714,250 against the profiled annual budget. Also summarised was the proposed programme for 2021/22 to 2025/26 in the light of the new capital proposals identified, together with the estimated capital resources available to fund the programme.

Section 4 provided details of the current commitments and new spending proposals. Any capital scheme for which funding had been approved by Council may only proceed after a full report, including business case and financial appraisal, had been approved.

In addition, a summary of the estimated resources compared to the proposed programme year on year was set out at Section 6 of the report.

The Deputy Leader moved the report, which was seconded by the Leader.

**Summary of options rejected** none

## DECISION

That the Executive:

1. Noted the revised capital programme and relevant financing for 2020/21 as set out in Appendices A and B to Report RD.33/20;
2. Had given initial consideration and views on the proposed capital spending for 2021/22 to 2025/26 given in the report in the light of the estimated available resources;

3. Noted that any capital scheme for which funding had been approved by Council may only proceed after a full report, including business case and financial appraisal, had been approved.

### **Reasons for Decision**

To note the details of the revised Capital Programme and relevant financing and make arrangements for the new capital bids to be considered as part of the 2021/22 budget process

### **EX.128/20 CORPORATE ASSETS – 3 YEAR REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2021/22 TO 2023/24** (Key Decision – KD.25/20)

**Portfolio** Finance, Governance and Resources

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Business and Transformation

### **Subject Matter**

The Deputy Leader submitted report GD.52/20 setting out the repair and maintenance programme budget proposals for the Council's corporate property assets for the three-year period 2021/22 to 2023/24, required to ensure that the legal responsibilities of the City Council were met. Background information was as detailed at Section 1.

In terms of planned maintenance, the report recorded that the projects detailed at Section 2 reflected the highest priority projects to be funded from capital. The current allocation of £250,000 included an additional £100,000 allocated to further address maintenance backlog.

The allocation reflected the Council's current financial situation. In an ideal world outstanding maintenance would be reduced to a minimum, however, that was not possible in the current climate. The effect of maintaining a reduced budget would likely result in an increase in the number of properties awaiting maintenance, although that could be alleviated in part by disposal of properties with a high maintenance requirement.

The Deputy Leader moved the report, which was duly seconded by the Leader.

**Summary of options rejected** that approval should not be granted

### **DECISION**

That the Executive approved:

1. The three-year revenue maintenance programme set out in Appendix A to Report GD.52/20 as part of the budget process.
2. The 2021/22 capital budget of £250,000 as part of the budget process.
3. The List of capital projects selected to meet the allocated capital budget of £250,000.

### **Reasons for Decision**

The Council's property assets require regular repair and maintenance to ensure they provide a safe working environment for their users and occupiers. The recommendations outlined ensured that Council assets were maintained to a standard that supported service provision and ensured the safety and comfort of their users and occupiers

**EX.129/20 TREASURY MANAGEMENT QUARTER 2 2020/21 AND FORECASTS FOR 2021/22 TO 2025/26**  
(Key Decision – KD.25/20)

**Portfolio** Finance, Governance and Resources

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Business and Transformation

**Subject Matter**

The Deputy Leader submitted report RD.34/20 providing the regular quarterly report on Treasury Transactions, together with an interim report on Treasury Management as required under the Financial Procedure Rules. The report also discussed the City Council's Treasury Management estimates for 2021/22 with projections to 2025/26 and set out information regarding the requirements of the Prudential Code on local authority capital finance.

Treasury Management projections were reviewed annually to ensure that current interest rate forecasts were updated, and that current and future spending implications were built into the cash flow forecasts model. Average cash balances would need to be amended to reflect revised forecasts for anticipated capital receipts, capital expenditure and use of revenue reserves and that would adjust the final pressure/saving requirement from treasury management. The draft base Treasury Management estimates for 2021/22 with projections for 2025/26 were set out at Appendix C.

The Deputy Leader moved the report, which was seconded by the Leader.

**Summary of options rejected** none

**DECISION**

That Report RD.34/20 be received and the projections for 2021/22 to 2025/26 be incorporated into the Budget reports considered elsewhere on the Agenda.

**Reasons for Decision**

To receive the report on Treasury Management and refer it as part of the budget process

**EX.130/20 LOCAL TAXATION 2021/22 – 2025/26**  
(Key Decision – KD.25/20)

**Portfolio** Finance, Governance and Resources

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Business and Transformation

**Subject Matter**

The Deputy Leader submitted report RD.35/20 considering aspects of Local Taxation decisions which needed to be made as part of the Budget process for 2021/22 onwards.

Set out within the report were the various considerations, including the levels of Council Tax for the City Council (including Parish Precepts), Council Tax Surplus calculations, Council Tax Base calculations, Local Support for Council Tax, and Business Rate Retention (including Pooling arrangements). A summary of the assumptions made was also provided at Section 4.



The Deputy Leader moved the report, which was duly seconded by the Leader.

**Summary of options rejected** that approval should not be granted

## **DECISION**

That the Executive:

1. Noted the contents of Report RD.35/20 including the current assumptions built into the MTFP with regard to local taxation issues;
2. Approved, for recommendation to Council as part of the budget process, the 2021/22 Local Support for Council Tax scheme as set out in paragraph 2.4.
3. Approved the continuation of involvement in the Cumbria Business Rate Pool arrangements for 2021/22 subject to the continuing involvement of the other partners, with the final decision on participation being delegated to the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources.

## **Reasons for Decision**

To make recommendations on aspects of Local Taxation decisions required to be made as part of the 2021/22 Budget process

### **EX.131/20 ST CUTHBERT'S GARDEN VILLAGE LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION** (Key Decision – KD.28/20)

**Portfolio** Economy, Enterprise and Housing

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Economic Growth

## **Subject Matter**

The Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder submitted report ED.39/20 which sought Executive approval for consultation on the St Cuthbert's Garden Village Local Plan preferred option policies. Background information was set out at Section 1.

The Portfolio Holder provided a brief overview, commenting that the St Cuthbert's Garden Village vision was to create locally distinctive, high quality, new garden communities with a strong emphasis on design, green infrastructure and healthy environment.

The public consultation on the draft St Cuthbert's Garden Village Local Plan, Policies, Masterplan and the Design Supplementary Planning Document would commence on 10 November and run until 22 December 2020.

The Portfolio Holder highlighted, in particular, the information set out at paragraphs 2.1 – 2.19 of the report. He added that Section 3 outlined the extensive and innovative nature of the consultations undertake to date. COVID-19 had, however, meant that the Garden Village Team was having to deploy virtual 360 consultation tools and access to a range of documentation could be achieved via websites, leaflets, social media and digital banner.

Attention was further drawn to the draft St Cuthbert's Garden Village Policies attached at Appendix 1.

The Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder concluded by moving the recommendation, which was seconded by the Leader.

**Summary of options rejected** that approval should not be granted

## **DECISION**

That the Executive approve stakeholder and public engagement (under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) on the Garden Village Local Plan preferred option policies, as set out in Appendix 1 to Report ED.39/20.

## **Reasons for Decision**

Good progress continued to be made with both the planning and delivery aspects of St Cuthbert's Garden Village. Executive's approval to consult on the draft policies and objectives which would form the St Cuthbert's Local Plan was needed as the version of the plan that would go out to consultation would represent the Council's 'preferred option', before the Regulation 19 Publication version of the plan is produced in Spring 2021. It is an obligation of the HIF funding agreement that the St Cuthbert's Local Plan is adopted by July 2022, and it is therefore important that the programme of work leading to adoption remains on track

## **EX.132/20 NOTICE OF EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS** (Non Key Decision)

**Portfolio** Cross-Cutting

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Health and Wellbeing; Economic Growth; Business and Transformation

## **Subject Matter**

The Notice of Executive Key Decisions dated 9 October 2020 was submitted for information.

Key Decision (KD.26/20) – the Deputy Chief Executive was scheduled to submit a report concerning the Bitts Park Interactive Water Feature to this meeting. The matter was, however, deferred pending further discussion.

The Leader moved and the Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder seconded the paper.

**Summary of options rejected** none

## **DECISION**

That, subject to the above, the Notice of Executive Key Decisions dated 9 October 2020 be received.

## **Reasons for Decision**

Not applicable

**EX.133/20 SCHEDULE OF DECISIONS TAKEN BY OFFICERS**  
(Non Key Decision)

**Portfolio** Cross-cutting

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Health and Wellbeing; Economic Growth; Business and Transformation

**Subject Matter**

Details of decisions taken by Officers under delegated powers were submitted.

The Leader moved and the Deputy Leader seconded the paper.

**Summary of options rejected** none

**DECISION**

That the decisions, attached as Appendix A, be noted.

**Reasons for Decision**

Not applicable

**EX.134/20 JOINT MANAGEMENT TEAM**  
(Non Key Decision)

**Portfolio** Cross-cutting

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Health and Wellbeing; Economic Growth; Business and Transformation

**Subject Matter**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Management Team held on 12 October 2020 were submitted for information.

The Leader moved and the Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder seconded the paper.

**Summary of options rejected** none

**DECISION**

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Management Team held on 12 October 2020, attached as Appendix B, be received.

**Reasons for Decision**

Not applicable

**EX.135/20 REVENUE BUDGET OVERVIEW AND MONITORING REPORT: APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2020**  
(Non Key Decision)

**Portfolio** Finance, Governance and Resources

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Business and Transformation

**Subject Matter**

The Deputy Leader submitted report RD.36/20 providing an overview of the Council's overall budgetary position for the period April to September 2020 for revenue schemes only, and details of the impact of COVID-19 on the revenue budget. Also included were details of balance sheet management issues; bad debts written off in the period; and progress against the budget savings.

Set out at paragraph 2.2 was the updated Budget figure for 2020/21 of £17,687,600 together with the summarised budgetary position as at September 2020; the main variances were as summarised at paragraph 2.4; with the table at paragraph 2.6 providing a summary position of the income and expenditure within exceptional items. Also itemised in the table at paragraph 2.8 was the position as at September 2020 of savings achieved against the budget savings targets to date.

The Council's financial position, which was affected by a number of external factors which had a financial impact during the course of the year and ultimately at the year end, would continue to be closely monitored and reported more fully in a future monitoring report. It would be important to maintain a prudent approach so as to ensure a sustainable budget position for future years to avoid any significant variance at the year end.

Information on the main variances in the Directorates' Budgets; the forecast outturn position for 2020/21; and impact of COVID-19 was provided. On the issue of balance sheet management, there may be a significant impact on the cash flow of the Council if outstanding debts were not received. Any debts deemed to be irrecoverable were written off against a bad debt provision set up specifically for that purpose. Other significant debts related to Council Tax, NNDR and Housing Benefit overpayments.

The Council's VAT partial exemption calculation for the period ending September 2020 was currently 2.30%, well below the 5% limit.

The Deputy Leader concluded by moving the recommendations, which were seconded by the Leader.

**Summary of options rejected** none

**DECISION**

That the Executive:

- (i) Noted the budgetary performance position of the Council to September 2020;
- (ii) Noted the action by the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources to write-off bad debts as detailed in paragraph 6;
- (iii) Noted the release of reserves as set out in the table at paragraph 2.2, and noted the virements approved as detailed in Appendix A.

## Reasons for Decision

To show that the Executive had been informed of the Council's actual financial position compared with the budgeted position, and to bring to their attention any areas of concern

### **EX.136/20 CAPITAL BUDGET OVERVIEW AND MONITORING REPORT – APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2020** (Non Key Decision)

**Portfolio** Finance, Governance and Resources

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Business and Transformation

## Subject Matter

The Deputy Leader submitted report RD.37/20 providing an overview of the budgetary position of the City Council's capital programme for the period April to September 2020. Detailed therein were the capital budget overview; the overall budget position for the various Directorates; the monitoring and control of expenditure against budget allocations and the exercise of virement.

As at the end of September, expenditure of £5,881,873 had been incurred on the Council's core capital programme. When considered against the profiled budget of £6,596,123 that equated to an underspend of £714,250. The unspent balance remaining of the revised annual budget of £19,255,400 was £13,373,527. A review of the 2020/21 capital programme would be undertaken to identify accurate project profiles for the remainder of the financial year, any potential slippage into future years and any financial impact of COVID-19 may have on the capital budget in terms of spend and completion dates.

In addition, paragraph 3.9 recorded that a number of schemes were included in the capital programme for 2020/21 which required reports to be presented to the Executive for the release of funding before the project could go ahead.

The 2020/21 programme had been kept to a level that took account of the Council's ability to deliver schemes with regard to capacity and available resources. Work was ongoing to continue to monitor the profiling of budgets, and those were adjusted to reflect progress in current capital schemes. It was likely that there would still be a requirement for some carry forwards at the year end due to further slippage and delays on projects. Budgets now totalling £135,000 were being held in reserves until approved by Executive for release.

The Deputy Leader then moved the recommendations set out in the report, which were seconded by the Leader.

**Summary of options rejected** none

## DECISION

That the Executive:

- (i) Noted and had commented on the budgetary position and performance aspects of the capital programme for the period April to September 2020.
- (ii) Noted adjustments to the 2020/21 capital programme as detailed in paragraph 2.1.

## Reasons for Decision

To inform the Executive of the Council's actual financial position opposite its Capital programme for 2020/21

### **EX.137/20 TRIBUNE DRIVE PLAY AREA, HOUGHTON** (Non Key Decision)

**Portfolio** Environment and Transport

**Relevant Scrutiny Panel** Economic Growth

## Subject Matter

The Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder submitted report CS.34/20 seeking Executive approval for the release of £35,000 contained within the capital programme to allow progression with the installation of new equipment and safer surfacing at Tribune Drive, Houghton. Background information was recorded at Section 1, with details of the risks being provided at Section 3 of the report.

The Portfolio Holder indicated that a wide-ranging public consultation exercise had taken place involving the school, Councillors, the Parish Council and residents. She was very pleased to report that the feedback received had been taken on board; and although, unfortunately, the project slipped due to COVID-19, the Council was now in a position to go ahead.

The Portfolio Holder emphasised that the Council had listened to the comments from residents. Concern had been expressed in relation to drainage around the play area where there was a multi-sport facility which was well used by local residents, and that had been factored into the project.

She also expressed thanks to the Green Spaces Team and local residents who took the trouble to answer the consultation.

The Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder concluded by moving the recommendation, with was duly seconded by the Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder.

**Summary of options rejected** that approval for the release of the capital funds should not be granted

## DECISION

That the Executive approves the release of £35,000 contained within the capital programme to allow progression with the installation of new equipment and safer surfacing at Tribune Drive, Houghton, for which the preparatory works have already been undertaken.

## Reasons for Decision

The play area at Tribune Drive is a valuable community resource, the popularity of the site and residents' desire to contribute towards planning its refurbishment was demonstrated through the consultation

The required funding of £35,000 is already earmarked within the current capital programme and the project has been planned in order to maximise the use of this budget for users of the site

With the release of the capital funds, as per the recommendation of this report, the authority may progress the installation of new equipment and safer surfacing, with completion expected during winter 2020

[The meeting ended at 4.16 pm]