

COUNCIL

Thursday, 26 September 2019

PRESENT – The Mayor, Councillors Ali, Allen, Baldwin, Bartch, Bell, Boddy, Dr. Chou, Clarke, Cossins, Crudass, Crumbie, Mrs Culley, Curry, Donoghue, Dulston, Harker, Haszeldine, Holroyd, Howarth, Howell, C L B Hughes, L Hughes, Johnson, B Jones, Mrs D Jones, Keir, Laing, Layton, Lee, Lucas, Marshall, McCollom, McEwan, Mills, Newall, K Nicholson, M Nicholson, Paley, Preston, Renton, A J Scott, Mrs H Scott, Snedker, Tait, Tostevin and Wright

APOLOGIES – Councillors Durham, Heslop and Lister

23 MINUTES - TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS COUNCIL HELD ON 18 JULY 2019

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Council held on 18 July 2019.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

25 SEALING.

Presented – The Register showing the documents which had been sealed since the last meeting of Council.

26 ANNOUNCEMENTS.

There were no announcements made at the meeting.

27 QUESTIONS - TO ANSWER QUESTIONS (WHERE APPROPRIATE NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN FROM):-

(1) THE PUBLIC;

There were no questions, with notice, from members of the public.

(2) MEMBERS TO CABINET/CHAIRS;

There were no questions from Members, where notice had been given, for the Mayor, Members of the Cabinet, or the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees.

(3) MEMBERS TO THE POLICE, CRIME AND VICTIMS' COMMISSIONER FOR DURHAM AND DARLINGTON.

The Acting Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner for Durham and Darlington attended the meeting on behalf of the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner for Durham and Darlington, advised Members that the Police, Crime and Victims'

Commissioner was unwell, and that he had been appointed to undertake the role on an interim basis on his behalf.

The Acting Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner for Durham and Darlington addressed Members and answered questions thereon.

28 COUNCIL REPORTS.

(1) MEMBERS ALLOWANCES REVIEW

The Managing Director submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that Members give consideration to a review of the Members' Allowances Scheme.

The submitted report stated that the Council's Members' Allowances Independent Panel was constituted to review the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme in 2003, when a full review of allowances was undertaken, and subsequently in 2006, 2008, 2011 and 2015. It was reported that Councils must establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel which made recommendations about the allowances paid to Elected Members, including the level of basic allowance for all Members, and on whether a dependant's carers allowance, travel and subsistence allowances, and co-optees allowances, etc. should be paid, and the levels of such allowances.

The submitted report outlined that the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 states that Councils must not rely on any index-linked figure for longer than a period of four years, and therefore, as the current indexing came into effect on 1 April 2016, a revision was required to introduce a new scheme with effect from 1 April 2020.

The submitted report outlined details regarding the composition of the Independent Remuneration Panel, the terms of reference, and a proposed date for the initial meeting.

RESOLVED – (a) That the Membership of the Council's current Independent Remuneration Panel be confirmed,

(b) That a review of the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme be undertaken by the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel, and

(c) That the Terms of Reference for the Panel, as detailed in Appendix A of the submitted report, be approved for the review.

REASONS – (a) To ensure that the allowances paid to Members are appropriate for the office that is held.

(b) To ensure that this Council reviews its Members' Allowances Scheme to meet legislative requirements.

29 CABINET REPORTS.

The Cabinet Members each gave a report (previously circulated) on the main areas of

work undertaken under their relevant portfolio during the previous cycle of meetings. Cabinet Members answered questions on their portfolios.

(1) TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT AND OUTTURN PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2018/19

The Managing Director submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide important information regarding the regulation and management of the Council's borrowing, investments and cash-flow. The submitted report also sought approval of the Prudential Indicators results for 2018/2019, in accordance with the Prudential Code.

The submitted report outlined the circumstances with regard to treasury management for 2018/2019. It was reported that due to low returns on cash investments new ways to improve investment returns were sought, and that it had been agreed that that alternative investment types to increase return were looked at. The submitted report stated that the cost of borrowing remained low throughout 2018/19, and that it was anticipated that the cost of shorter term borrowing would remain low for a number of years in the future.

The submitted report stated that the Council had complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements, and that the need for borrowing was only increased for capital purposes.

The submitted report stated that at 31st March 2019, the Council's external debt was £179.161m, which was £19.000m more than the previous year. It was reported that the average interest rate for borrowing was down to 3.22%, from 3.84% in 2017/18, and that investments totalled £55.849m at 31st March 2019, in comparison to £52.433m at 31st March 2018, earning interest of 0.69% on short term cash investments, and 2.3% on Property Fund units net of cost.

RESOLVED – (a) That the outturn 2018/19 Prudential Indicators within the submitted report, and those contained within Appendix 1 of the submitted report, be noted.

(b) That the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2018/19 be noted.

REASONS – (a) In order to comply with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

(b) To inform Members of the performance of the Treasury Management function.

(c) To comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003.

30 SCRUTINY REPORTS - TO CONSIDER SCRUTINY OVERVIEW REPORTS:-

The Scrutiny Committee Chairs each submitted a report (previously circulated) on the main areas of work undertaken by their relevant Scrutiny Committee during the last cycle of Committee meetings.

31 MEMBERSHIP CHANGES - TO CONSIDER ANY MEMBERSHIP CHANGES TO COMMITTEES, SUBSIDIARY BODIES AND OTHER BODIES.

There were no membership changes reported at the meeting.