

To: **COUNCIL**  
**14 September 2022**

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**EXECUTIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL**  
**The Leader**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 Since the Council agenda for the 13 July 2022 was published, the Executive met on the 19 July 2022. This report summarises decisions taken by reference to the relevant portfolio within which they fall.
- 1.2 Updated Forward Plans are published every Friday and can be viewed online at [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk). Full details on the decisions taken by individual portfolio holders can also be accessed online through the Council's website.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 Council is asked to consider the recommendations set out at paragraph 5.2.3**

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The reasons for recommendations are set out in the supporting information and in the reports considered by the Executive.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 Alternative options are discussed in the relevant individual reports considered by the Executive.

**5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**Transformation & Finance**

**5.1 Capital Programme Outturn 2021/22**

- 5.1.1 The Executive noted that the projected capital programme outturn for 2021/22 was £27.221m, 52% of the approved budget of £52.7217m. Although this was subject to change pending external audit, no significant movement was anticipated. As a result, carry forwards totalling £21.713m had been requested to fund the completion of projects in 2022/23. Although a significant proportion of the programme, many of the projects which were either close to being completed or were contractually committed and underway.
- 5.1.2 As a result of the capital expenditure in 2021/22, the Council had an overall capital financing requirement (CFR) of £213.7m as at 31 March 2022. The Council will provide for the repayment of this through the minimum revenue provision which will be re-calculated for these out-turn figures using the policy agreed by Council and reflected in the Council's Budget. The CFR represents the underlying need to borrow

to fund capital expenditure that cannot be financed from other income sources. However, the actual need to borrow at any particular time is determined by the Council's overall cashflow requirements. The actual level of borrowing at the end of March 2022 was £80m with investments of £43.5m leaving a net debt of £36.5m compared with £59.8m last year.

- 5.1.3 Given that the level of capital expenditure incurred was less than budgeted for and income from capital receipts greatly exceeded expectations, the Council's long-term borrowings are much lower than predicted. This has contributed to an underspend in the capital financing revenue budget.

## **5.2 Revenue Expenditure Outturn 2021/22**

- 5.2.1 The Executive noted that its outturn revenue expenditure for 2021/22, subject to audit, was £74.086m, which represented an under spend of -£1.020m compared with the approved budget. This outturn maintains the Council's enviable record of never having overspent its budget since becoming a Unitary Authority in 1998. The actual level of spending has allowed the Council to return £1.019m to General Reserves rather than the budgeted withdrawal of £0.001m. The General Reserves balance at 31 March 2022 was £11.346m. This compares to the minimum prudent level recommended by the s151 Officer is £4.5m, broadly equivalent to 5% of the Council's net budget.
- 5.2.2 The Executive also received and noted the Council's treasury management performance during 2021/22. In accordance with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance, this was being recommended to Council.
- 5.2.3 It was therefore **RECOMMENDED** that Council note the Treasury Management performance in 2021/22 as set out in Annexe B.

## **Adult Services, Health and Housing**

### **5.3 Berkshire Community Equipment Service: Continued Membership of the S75 Joint Agreement.**

- 5.3.1 The Berkshire Community Equipment Service (BCES) was commissioned through a S75 Joint Agreement across all Berkshire Unitary local authorities and NHS partners. The contract was due to end on the 31st March 2024, with no further extensions available.
- 5.3.2 The Executive agreed for Bracknell Forest Council to continue membership of the S75 Joint Agreement for a maximum period of five years. Following this period continued membership of the S75 will be reviewed and options presented to the Executive for consideration.
- 5.3.3 The joint procurement will be led by West Berkshire Council but approval would be subject to review by Bracknell Forest Council procurement and legal teams to ensure compliance to the Council's own Procurement Regulations.

## **Council Strategy & Community Cohesion**

### **5.4 Corporate Business Change Programme**

- 5.4.1 The Executive endorsed the refocussed Business Change and Transformation programme recognising that there will need to be flexibility to adjust the programme as necessary in response to changing circumstances.

5.4.2 There were important drivers for undertaking this review at this time. During the pandemic a number of projects in the corporate change programme were paused as resource had to be re-focussed on the Covid community response. Over the past year the council has been focussed on recovery from the pandemic and responding to the pressures and wider issues that it has presented.

5.4.3 Within the refocussed programme there will be three key themes under the overarching objective of “delivering long term sustainable services”:

- Responding to any major policy and legislative changes;
- Addressing any serious service weaknesses;
- Supporting the organisation to move towards long term financial sustainability.

All projects within the programme would deliver on at least one of these themes to help deliver quality, sustainable services that achieve good outcomes for residents.

## **5.5 Council Plan Overview Report**

5.5.1 The Executive noted the performance of the council over the period from January to March 2022 highlighted in the Overview Report.

5.5.2 At the end of the fourth quarter, 51 actions (46%) were rated as “green” and 13 actions (12%) were “amber” and 1 action was red. 40 actions (36%) were complete.

5.5.3 Progress against key performance indicators across the council for each of the Council Plan’s strategic themes was positive, particularly in the face of pressures on services due to the Covid-19 pandemic. 20 (87%) were “green”, 0 were “amber” and 3 (13%) were “red”. 42 further indicators have no set target or data was currently unavailable.

## **6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

### Borough Solicitor

6.1 The Borough Solicitor’s comments have been addressed in the reports to the Executive.

### Executive Director: Resources

6.2 The Executive Director: Resources’ comments have been addressed in the reports to the Executive.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

6.3 Equalities issues, where appropriate, have been addressed in the reports to the Executive.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4 Any strategic risks have been identified in the reports to the Executive.

### Background Papers

Executive Agenda – 19 July 2022

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