

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Committee held at the Council Offices,
Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury on Wednesday, 6 July 2022 commencing at
2:00 pm**

Present:

Chair
Vice Chair

Councillor R A Bird
Councillor J R Mason

and Councillors:

G F Blackwell, M A Gore, D J Harwood, E J MacTiernan, C Softley, R J Stanley and
M G Szymiak

also present:

Councillor J W Murphy

EX.14 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 14.1 The evacuation procedure, as noted on the Agenda, was advised to those present.
- 14.2 The Chair welcomed Councillor Murphy to the meeting and explained that he was in attendance as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Item 7 – Council Plan Performance Tracker and COVID-19 Recovery Tracker – Quarter Four 2021/22.

EX.15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

- 15.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Dean and R J E Vines. There were no substitutions for the meeting.

EX.16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 16.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 26 June 2012 and took effect from 1 July 2012.
- 16.2 There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

EX.17 MINUTES

- 17.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 June 2022, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

EX.18 ITEMS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- 18.1 There were no items from members of the public.

EX.19 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

- 19.1 Attention was drawn to the Committee's Forward Plan, circulated at Pages No. 8-13. Members were asked to consider the Plan.
- 19.2 A Member questioned why the Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefits Overpayments Debt Recovery Policy had been taken off the Agenda prior to the publication of the current Agenda and added to 'pending' in the Forward Plan. In response, the Head of Corporate Services explained that the Policy had not yet been drafted. The team was under pressure making payments for Council Tax energy rebates and the Revenues and Benefits Manager would be passing formulation of the policy to her successor. Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED: That the Committee's Forward Plan be **NOTED**.

EX.20 COUNCIL PLAN PERFORMANCE TRACKER AND COVID-19 RECOVERY TRACKER - QUARTER FOUR 2021/22

- 20.1 The report of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, circulated at Pages No. 14-99, asked Members to review and, if appropriate, take action on the observations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee following its review of the Quarter Four 2021/22 Council Plan performance tracker and COVID-19 recovery tracker information.
- 20.2 The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee explained that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had noted the performance management and recovery reports. Whilst some actions and key performance indicators may not have progressed as expected, or met pre-determined targets, overall the picture was generally positive. Questions raised by the Committee could be found in Paragraph 2.1 of the report. Similar to previous quarters, as could be seen from the questions asked, there was not one real area of focus but a range of questions across all the actions within the Council plan and recovery plan. The key questions/observations to bring to the attention of Executive Committee included asset management - a question was raised around the revised implementation date of March 2023 (from June 2022) for the production of a new asset management plan. It was explained that priority had been given to the Council's carbon reduction plan. Nevertheless, Officers were keen to have it in place as it was an important document even though the current plan was considered to be sound. With regards to another asset related question, Members were pleased to be informed that a tenancy agreement should soon be in place for one of the units within the Council's commercial property portfolio. Once occupied, this would bring an income of approximately £170,000; the Trade Waste project – assurance was given that the project could be delivered within the revised timescale. A trial of food and recycling collections was due to start in July and would shed light on customer expectations, any gaps in the service and how it could be rolled out across the borough. A project update would be given at next week's Overview and Scrutiny Committee where this would be scrutinised in greater detail; processing of minor planning applications – concern was expressed at the outturn figure of 48.57%, especially as there was an improvement review underway. Such applications were important to residents and it may be the only time they ever engaged with the Council on a planning basis. In essence, the Head of Development Services gave assurance that, despite this disappointing figure, officers were working extremely hard to rectify the situation but there was a national issue with regards to securing good quality Planning Officers. It was anticipated that an upturn in performance may be seen within the latter part of the year. It was also acknowledged that responses to customers could be significantly improved. The application tracker being developed by the Business

Transformation Team was one way to improve this aspect of the service; Economic Development and Tourism Strategy – assurance was given that the revised target date of the end of the calendar year could be achieved to develop a new strategy. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had requested a role in the development of that strategy. The Committee had noted the positive achievements within the quarter and the overall success of the COVID-19 recovery plan. Recognising the success of the recovery plan, this had been integrated back into the Council Plan as part of the annual refresh.

20.3 Referring to the planning application KPIs, a Member noted that the figures provided did not show the enormous amount of work the team was currently managing. She offered her thanks to each and every member of the planning team who were putting in many additional hours to get the Council through a very difficult time. Another Member questioned how the Management Team planned to address the increasing number of vacancies in the Development Management service. In response, the Head of Development Services confirmed that the issues in the Development Management service were acknowledged and the Management Team was trying to tackle them as swiftly as possible. The Council was losing Officers but there was also a national shortage of planners – the private sector was struggling to recruit as well. The Council was looking at its job descriptions and, through the development management review, was trying to address pay as well as recruitment and retention, career graded posts and ‘grow your own’ schemes. The backlog of planning applications was being addressed and the options were being considered to get more people into the department as well as supporting existing staff. The Member understood the issues and felt the ‘grow your own’ approach was something the Council should be doing; however, in the current climate that approach would not fill the immediate vacancies. In response to further questions, the Head of Development Services indicated that Officers were looking at all aspects and it was intended that the Transform Working Group would be updated on the development management review at its next meeting. In response to a query regarding exit interviews, the Corporate Director advised that the Council carried these out routinely but they were not compulsory. Any issues, where appropriate to do so, were fed back to managers. In terms of the consequences of delays in the planning system, the Head of Development Services advised that they included reputational risks to the Council as well as the risk of not meeting national targets. She undertook to speak to the communications team to consider whether communications about the service could be prioritised on a regular basis.

20.4 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED: That the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s review of the quarter four performance management and recovery information be **NOTED**.

EX.21 FINANCIAL OUTTURN REPORT

21.1 The report of the Head of Finance and Asset Management, circulated at Pages No. 100-123, highlighted the Council’s financial performance for the previous year, setting out the General Fund and capital outturn positions. Members were asked to consider the General Fund outturn for 2021/22, the financing of the capital programme and the annual treasury management report and performance; and approve the transfers to and from earmarked reserves.

21.2 In introducing the report, the Head of Finance and Asset Management advised that the report outlined an underspend of £4.2million and detailed the reasons for that position – the majority of the underspend was due to one off ringfenced income that had not been spent. The report summarised the service performance that had

generated the surplus as well as highlighting the non-service related activity and other aspects of the overall budget to provide a whole view of the Council's general fund. Particular reference was made to employees - £700,000 underspent largely as a result of staff turnover and vacancies in a number of service groupings; payments to third parties – including £138,000 on planning appeals as well as various provisions amounting to £330,000, in addition, £140,000 on appeals had been funded from reserves totalling £608,000 on planning appeals this year; £215,000 saving in the MRF gate fee due to changing provider; and £300,000 of gross costs, across various activities, were supported by external grant funding which was shown as part of the surplus on income. COVID-19, including Contain Outbreak Management Funding (COMF), expenditure amounted to £807,000 and included £148,000 leisure centre costs; £281,000 on contain outbreak management; additional staff costs across various departments – some full-time staff were redeployed fully to the COVID response, e.g. administering grant schemes therefore agency staff were contracted to backfill the day jobs; and £47,000 of additional Ubico costs due to extra staff, vehicles, PPE and cleaning products in order to be COVID secure. The heading 'projects funded externally' contained the costs and income of the Joint Core Strategy, Garden Towns and Heritage Action Zone – the balances on those individual funds were moved to reserves at year-end.

- 21.3 In terms of corporate codes, the treasury outturn for 2021/22 was a £100,000 gain against budget. In respect of commercial activity, the Council had an investment property portfolio totalling £61.5million which produced a gross rental income of £3.06million – the gross rental income was slightly down against budget expectations of approximately £116,000 as a result of the reletting of the units at Clevedon at lower market rents, a temporary vacancy as a result of a tenant exercising a break clause and an ongoing vacancy at an office unit in Hertford. The commercial property reserve had been utilised to cover the shortfall in income to the general fund. All vacant units had now been let. Business rates were volatile with the Valuation Office Agency agreeing a refund to Virgin Media of £2million. The report also highlighted COVID funding of £1million received in-year to support the Council's position as a result of the COVID pandemic. It had received a fifth tranche of general COVID support funding in the first quarter as well as significant new burdens funding for its work on administering business grants, compensation for losses on sales, fees and charges as a result of COVID for the first quarter of the year and a direct allocation of Contain Outbreak Management Funding (COMF). Delivery of the budget 2021/22 had used less reserves than envisaged at the time of setting the budget – a number of activities such as in-cab technology had not moved forward in the financial year and had therefore not required the funding from reserves as originally planned – the allocation for those projects would remain within the Council's earmarked reserves for draw down once the projects commenced. The outturn for 2021/22 highlighted a significant financial surplus for the Council. Savings had been generated in the delivery of core services which had been supplemented by increased service and corporate income. In addition, substantial external funding had been attracted for both COVID related activity and for service/project specific activity. Overall, a £4.2million net underspend was recorded and went forward to support the Council's reserves, a breakdown of which was attached to the report at Appendix B.
- 21.4 Total revenue reserves of the Council stood at £29.55million as at the end of March 2022 and included earmarked reserves, planning obligations and the general fund working balance. Whilst £4.2million was transferred into reserves from the general fund surplus, there was an overall decrease in revenue reserves of £2.06million as a result of expenditure against existing earmarked reserves in year, particularly relating to COVID, the use of the business rates reserve to meet the collection fund deficit in 2021/22 as a result of COVID and a net reduction in planning obligation reserves. The general fund surplus allowed the Council to

support a number of existing reserves as well as to create new specific reserves to meet some of the inflationary risks that were now arising – increases to existing reserves included: planning contributions to the commercial property reserve, investment reserve and vehicle replacement reserve; increasing the Medium Term Financial Strategy reserve to support financial challenges that the Council faced; increasing the working balance of the Council in line with recommendations associated with the CIPFA resilience index; and adding in-cab project delivery to the waste management reserve. New reserves had been set aside for inflation; and pay awards. Where external funding had been received for specific projects, this had been set aside in ringfenced reserves including transport modelling for the Joint Strategic Plan (JSP), homeless reduction, digitisation of the planning service, health-related projects and investigation of a development corporation for the Garden Town.

- 21.5 The Council's planned capital programme for 2021/22 was £3.9million with the breakdown of the planned expenditure being £2.4million on land and buildings delivery; £0.9million on replacement vehicles and equipment; £0.1million on housing and business grants; and £0.5million on disabled facilities grants. The actual delivery of the capital programme totalled £1.3million which was £2.6million less than the budgeted amount. An underspend of £2.1million was reported against Council land and buildings due to delays with Ashchurch Bridge. Actual expenditure of £276,000 included £59,000 on the decarbonisation project, which was funded from a grant, £178,000 on Ashchurch Bridge and £39,000 on car parking payment machines. A total of £383,000 was spent during the year on vehicles and equipment – this included purchase of three new mowers, a tractor, a wood chipper and a mounted flail for grounds maintenance, waste and recycling bins and the purchase of IT hardware. The community grants programme showed an outturn position of £90,000 expenditure – these were grants distributed to Winchcombe Skate Park and Bishops Cleeve Football Club as well as other small community projects. The disabled facilities grant programme showed an overspend of £31,000 – all expenditure was covered by capital grant funding from the government which was administered by the County Council. Tewkesbury Borough Council's allocation for the year was £500,000 with the total expenditure incurred being £531,209 - the shortfall would be fully recovered. As well as the income for disabled facilities grants, capital receipts were also received for right to buy sales on housing stock previously owned by Tewkesbury Borough Council and for the sale of land in Northway and Bishops Cleeve. The summarised capital programme was shown at Appendix C to the report, together with the sources of finance used. Following the allocation of capital receipts, the balance on capital reserves, both receipts and grants, had increased to £1.539million as at 31 March 2022.
- 21.6 Referring to treasury management, the detailed report was attached at Appendix D and set out the economic environment, local performance and a number of prudential indicators. The prudential indicators had been monitored regularly and there were no deviations from those indicators which arose during the year. The in-year performance of treasury investments resulted in an average return of 1.29% and total income of £429,218, which was £84,218 above budget. In addition, the Council had an in-year gain from the capital growth of its pooled funds totalling £600,000. Given the lack of available investment opportunities, the Council had temporarily invested in short-dated, liquid instruments such as call accounts and money market funds. Total short-term investments at 31 March 2021 was £10million increasing to £22million at the end of this financial year. The average income return, across all investments, had decreased from 1.5% to 1.29%.
- 21.7 A Member referred to the investment units in Clevedon and questioned whether they had been re-let to the existing tenants and why the rents were lower. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset Management explained that one had been re-let and the second had a new tenant. It was already known that the rents may need to decrease when the properties were re-let as they had been on the

high side and rents had decreased in the area – fortunately the other two vacant units in the Council’s commercial property portfolio had been let with increased rents.

21.8 Accordingly, it was

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the General Fund Outturn for 2021/22, the financing of the capital programme and the annual treasury management report and performance be **NOTED**.
 2. That the transfers to and from earmarked reserves be **APPROVED**.

EX.22 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

22.1 The report of the Community and Economic Development Manager, circulated at Pages No. 124-127, outlined the shared prosperity fund process and relevant delegations to enable the Council to take the shared prosperity agenda forward. Members were asked to submit a Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan for Tewkesbury Borough by 1 August 2022 and to delegate authority to the Head of Finance and Asset Management, in consultation with the Head of Development Services, the Lead Member for Economic Development/Promotion and the Lead Member for Community, to prepare and submit the Investment Plan on behalf of the Council.

22.2 The Community and Economic Development Manager explained that the government had launched the shared prosperity fund to support places to be empowered to identify and build on strengths and needs at a local level, focus on pride in place and to increase life chances. Specifically, the objectives were to: boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they were lagging; spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they were weakest; restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they had been lost; and empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency. The investment plan had to be submitted by 1 August 2022 covering a three-year period and focused on three main areas of work: community and place; supporting local business; and people and skills. The government required that the development, and subsequent management, of the investment plan received local input therefore all local authorities were requested to develop a Local Partnership Group to incorporate Members of the Council, as well as other local agencies and partners, the voluntary and community sector and the business community. The group would form a pivotal engagement and consultation role in the formation of the plan. It was intended that the partnership group would meet three times before the submission of the plan

22.3 The shared prosperity fund succeeded the European structural fund which funded several projects across the region, therefore a number of organisations such as the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)/Growth Hub had approached the Council and other districts regarding future funding from the shared prosperity fund. The Council was also receiving approaches from agencies and organisations that were aware of the funds. The information supplied by those bodies would feed into the discussions with the Local Partnership Group and would help support the evidence base being established.

22.4 Members indicated that trying to get such a large number of representatives to agree dates for meetings would be quite difficult. In response, the Community and Economic Development Manager explained that the partnership group was a prerequisite of the funding and the government had provided a list of suggested

representatives. The government had also provided a set of 41 metrics which the group had to focus on in the first instance.

22.5 Accordingly, it was

- RESOLVED:**
1. That a Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan for Tewkesbury Borough be submitted by 1 August 2022.
 2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Finance and Asset Management, in consultation with the Head of Development Services, the Lead Member for Economic Development/Promotion and the Lead Member for Community, to prepare and submit the investment plan on behalf of the Council.

EX.23 INTEGRATED LOCALITY PARTNERSHIP

23.1 The report of the Community and Economic Development Manager, circulated at Pages No. 128-131, provided background on the work of the Tewkesbury Borough Integrated Locality Partnership to date, as well as next steps regarding the action plan and funding available. Members were asked to consider the work of the Partnership and to resolve that the action plan and cost plan were agreed by the Head of Development Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing.

23.2 Members were advised that, at the outset, the Integrated Locality Partnership had looked to interrogate data, as well as consulting and engaging with key partners to understand the key priorities for the Borough and how best to address health inequalities. At an initial visioning event, four priorities had been identified: mental health; social isolation and loneliness; employment and skills; and physical activity. To assist the work of the Partnership, each district had been awarded funds which were conditional upon projects being designed to address health inequalities as well as a strengthening local communities approach. A total of £250,000 had been allocated for the work which had to be agreed in liaison with the Integrated Locality Partnership – although Tewkesbury Borough Council was the accountable body for the funding that had been allocated. To enable the Council to take the priorities forward, the Partnership would be developing an action plan and a cost plan. To further enhance the decision-making procedure, it was recommended that, alongside the action plan, the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing would agree the overall cost plan for the Partnership.

23.3 A Member questioned why it had taken two years to get to the current point given the Integrated Locality Partnership had been formed in 2020. In response, the Community and Economic Development Manager explained that, initially, the Partnership was formed to bring partners together to look at health data in the area to understand what the issues were. That process had highlighted Tewkesbury and Brockworth. A project was set up in those areas to engage the community to see if solutions and actions came forward from residents – so the idea was to enable the community rather than the Council or other organisations doing it for them. The Officer in Brockworth was employed by the Parish Council and had been talking to residents about issues around health and how they felt those could be addressed. The next stage in the process was to put in solutions which would provide better health outcomes. The process took a long time but there was two years on the funding – ideas could include new activities / support groups to build community resilience. In Tewkesbury, there was a group including representatives from the Borough Council, GP surgeries, One Gloucestershire etc.

23.4 Accordingly, it was

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the work of the Tewkesbury Borough Integrated Locality Partnership be **NOTED**.
 2. That the action plan and cost plan are agreed by the Head of Development Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing.

EX.24 CARBON REDUCTION ACTION PLAN UPDATE

- 24.1 The report of the Head of Finance and Asset Management, circulated at Pages No. 132-156, sought to update Members on the progress achieved in year two of the Carbon Reduction Action Plan and asked the Committee to approve the recommended year three action plan.
- 24.2 The Head of Finance and Asset Management advised that this was the second annual report following the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in October 2019. Good progress had been made in the second year of the action plan, particularly since the appointment of the new Carbon Reduction Programme Officer. There had been disappointment that it had not been possible to progress the replacement of the heating system at the offices, but the delivery of the solar car parking canopy was well underway and was due to be completed in the next few weeks. In terms of the replacement of the heating system, the securing of external funding remained a key target and would continue to be a primary action in its plans until it was delivered. It was hoped a further round of Public Sector Decarbonisation Funding would be announced in Autumn 2022 and an early bid could be made utilising all of the information gathered in previous rounds. The appendix also included a draft action plan for year three with the actions recommended building on the progress made in the second year and setting solid foundations for the delivery of the Council's 2030 ambition. The third year action plan also began to look at the strategies required to meet targets against the waste and recycling fleet as well as the rollout of electric vehicle charging points.
- 24.3 Appendix A to the report highlighted the achievements of the second year of the action plan which included approval of funding to support the Council's ambitions: £100,000 delivery fund from the Borough Council's reserves; £284,200 of external grant funding and £447,200 of internal funding to support the delivery of a solar car parking canopy; £40,600 of ongoing funding to support a new Carbon Reduction Programme Officer post - as well as appointment of the Carbon Reduction Programme Officer in February; appointment of contractors and start on site for the delivery of the solar car park canopy; an updated Tree Management Policy; and promotional and partnership work in the run up to COP26 last November. The annual emissions report 2021 against 2019 baseline highlighted a significant reduction in emissions across Council services in the last calendar year with a total of 33.5% being saved against the Council's baseline which was a significant achievement; however, that was caveated by the COVID pandemic which had an impact on working practices and energy demand in that period – this may or may not continue moving forward. The Head of Finance and Asset Management also noted that some of the movements in data supplied by outside bodies required further investigation and understanding to clarify either the base position or the 2021 update.
- 24.4 A Member noted that air source heat pumps had been having some bad press recently and she wanted to ensure the Council was keeping the situation under review. The Head of Finance and Asset Management confirmed that Officers were aware of the limitations of air source heat pumps and were looking at alternative options as well. Another Member indicated that one of the common questions he was asked was about electric vehicle charging points and where and when the Council would be installing them. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset

Management advised that the County Council was rolling out on-street parking chargers and, following that, the Borough Council would decide where it wanted to put its charging points. In terms of Councillor mileage, the exact figures were not known as not all Councillors claimed for their mileage. As part of the County group work, Officers were considering how to move forward with that type of issue and whether to be specific or take an average.

24.5 Accordingly, it was

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the progress achieved in Year Two of the Carbon Reduction Action Plan be **NOTED**.
 2. That the recommended Year Three Action Plan be **APPROVED**.

EX.25 COVID-19 ADDITIONAL RELIEF FUND SCHEME (SECOND ROUND)

25.1 The report of the Head of Finance and Asset Management, circulated at Pages No. 157-169, sought approval for the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund Scheme (Second Round) as well as approval for the decision on the allocation of unspent funds, after all applications had been assessed, to be delegated to the Head of Finance and Asset Management in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management.

25.2 The Revenues and Benefits Manager advised that the government had first announced the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) in March 2021; however, a change to primary legislation was required to deliver the fund which had meant Councils had not been provided with any guidance or notification of their funding allocation until 15 December 2021. The Council was keen to provide support as quickly as possible for businesses and an initial CARF scheme had been agreed under urgency powers by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Lead Members for Economic Development/Promotion and Finance and Asset Management in January 2022. Despite a lot of outreach work with businesses identified as being eligible for support, the Council had only been able to award £214,724.82 of its allocation – it was therefore proposed to launch a second round CARF scheme. According to government guidance, billing authorities could design their own schemes as they were best able to understand the specific economic needs of the area; however, it must not award relief to ratepayers who for the same period either were, or would have been, eligible for expanded retail discount, the nursery discount or the airport and ground operations support scheme; not award relief to a hereditament for a period when it was unoccupied, other than those which had closed temporarily due to the government's advice on COVID-19; and direct support towards ratepayers who had been adversely affected by the pandemic and had been unable to adapt to that impact. The Council had until 30 September to allocate the funding but it was felt there was a chance there may not be enough applications which was the reason for the recommendation that authority be delegated to decide what to do with any unspent funds.

25.3 During the brief discussion which ensued, a Member asked what kind of things might be suggested for spending the money and the Revenues and Benefits Manager advised that other local authorities had taken the approach of identifying businesses that might qualify through the rating list and then awarded them the relief. A Member suggested that there could be a lot of Officer time taken up by identifying businesses that qualified but had not wished to apply for themselves. The Revenues and Benefits Manager confirmed that, in the first funding round, the Council had tried all kinds of communication channels to get the messages out but still there had not been many applications. She undertook to consider whether some of those messages could be 'freshened up' for the second round. New

applicants would need to demonstrate they had been severely financially impacted by the pandemic and that they had been unable to adapt but this was likely to be in the form of accounts, bank statements and management accounts for previous years and bank statements and management accounts for the current year so should not be too onerous. A Member questioned whether they had to have been affected by the lockdowns or whether it could be the more general issues in the economy and the Revenues and Benefits Manager advised that the pandemic was 2020/21 and the current scheme applied to business rates for 2021/22 so people had to prove they were impacted after April 2021.

25.4 One Member was against the recommendation and felt the Council should not use its resources to chase businesses that did not apply for funding. Upon being put to the vote, it was

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund Scheme (Second Round), as attached to the report at Appendix A, be **ADOPTED**.
 2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Finance and Asset Management, in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management, to decide on the allocation of any unspent funds before September 2022.

EX.26 PROPOSED REVOCATION OF THE TEWKESBURY TOWN CENTRE AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA

26.1 The report of the Principal Environmental Health Officer, circulated at Pages No. 170-177, set out details of the Tewkesbury Town Centre Air Quality Management Area and Members were asked to consider its revocation subject to agreement by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

26.2 The Head of Community Services explained that the Tewkesbury Town Centre Air Quality Management Area had had a really positive impact on air quality within Tewkesbury Town and the national air quality limits in the area had not been exceeded for over six years. The sustained improvement in air quality enabled the Council to consider revoking the Tewkesbury Town Centre Air Quality Management Area and that had been supported by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs as part of its review of the Council's latest annual air quality status report submitted in 2021. It was noted that, even if the Air Quality Management Area was revoked, the air quality would still be monitored and if an increase was seen it would be dealt with.

26.3 A Member questioned how the air quality was monitored and the Principal Environmental Health Officer explained that there were diffusion tubes around the Borough which were exposed for a month and then swapped over and analysed – the data was analysed over a year and compared to Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs limits. The tubes were placed in a variety of locations including towns and rural areas so a really good spread of information was gained from them. The Council was currently developing a website so the results were more accessible by the public.

26.4 Accordingly, it was

- RESOLVED:** That the revocation of the Tewkesbury Town Centre Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) be **APPROVED** to take effect as of 1 August 2022, subject to agreement by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

(DEFRA).

The meeting closed at 3:45 pm