

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Executive Committee held at the Council Offices,
Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury on Wednesday, 16 November 2022 commencing
at 2:00 pm**

Present:

Chair
Vice Chair

Councillor R A Bird
Councillor J R Mason

and Councillors:

G F Blackwell, M Dean, M A Gore, E J MacTiernan, H S Munro (Substitute for M L Jordan),
R J Stanley and R J E Vines

EX.53 ANNOUNCEMENTS

53.1 The evacuation procedure, as noted on the Agenda, was advised to those present.

EX.54 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

54.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D J Harwood, M L Jordan and M G Sztymiak. Councillor H C Munro would be acting as a substitute for the meeting.

EX.55 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

55.1 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.

55.2 There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

EX.56 MINUTES

56.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2022, and the Special meeting held on 18 October 2022, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as correct records and signed by the Chair.

EX.57 ITEMS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

57.1 There were no items from members of the public.

EX.58 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

58.1 Attention was drawn to the Committee's Forward Plan, circulated at Pages No. 9-14. Members were asked to consider the Plan.

58.2 Accordingly, it was

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

EX.59 FINANCIAL UPDATE - QUARTER TWO PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021/22

59.1 The report of the Head of Finance and Asset Management, circulated at Pages No. 15-38, set out the Council's financial performance for the second quarter of the year. Members were asked to consider that information.

59.2 The Head of Finance and Asset Management presented the quarter two financial information which projected a surplus of £138,305 on the revenue budget and detailed expenditure to date against both the capital programme and the approved reserves. The projected surplus was expected to go down as the financial situation in the country worsened; however, some impacts, such as rising inflation, the national pay award and the local pay line review had already been included which was encouraging.

59.3 Referring to the revenue budget position, Members were advised that the full year projection for employees highlighted a potential gross surplus of £320,219; however, it should be noted that, within the Council's corporate expenditure, was a target to save £100,000 from employment costs across the Council, consequently, the net position was a surplus against target of £220,219. That figure included the costs of both the national pay award and the first phase of the local pay review. Significant savings were being made in employee expenditure across the Council as a result of retention and recruitment difficulties – whilst this resulted in a financial benefit to the Council, there could be a service disbenefit associated with the issues. The employer's offer of an increase of £1,925 across all pay points had been agreed and that equated to an increase of 10.5% on the lowest pay point up to just over 2% at the highest pay point outside of Chief Officers and the Chief Executive. It was estimated that the pay award would cost the Council, including the impact on Ubico, around £500,000 to implement. In addition to the national pay award, the Council was currently facing challenges with retention and recruitment which had resulted in high agency costs and numerous vacancies; therefore, at the end of September, the Council had approved the first phase of the retention and recruitment programme, which was a benchmarking exercise to ensure professional roles were competitive within the marketplace. As with the national pay award, a reserve was set aside to meet the expected additional cost but, on current projections for the whole budget, this was not forecast to be required.

59.4 Payments to third parties highlighted a projected overspend of £441,522. The Ubico contract was forecast to be overspent by £400,000 at year-end driven, in large part, by the rising cost of fuel. Despite a falling price during quarter two, the increased cost of diesel alone accounted for an estimated overspend of £133,000. Other areas of additional spend within the contract included agency staff to cover absences and holidays and the increased cost of vehicle hire which would be funded from reserves. At the start of the financial year, and after the budget was set, the Council had been informed by Cheltenham Borough Council of additional running costs in relation to Swindon Road Depot. The costs, previously borne by Cheltenham Borough Council, were in relation to the day-to-day running costs and maintenance requirements for the depot and were estimated to be in the order of £150,000 per year. The Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) gate fee was expected

to be £209,000 lower than budget which was due to a significant reduction in the gate fee per tonne being paid. The current buoyant market for recycled materials had resulted in the gate fee paid dropping from £67 per tonne, at the start of the contract last year, to a current price of £26 per tonne. Income in many areas of Council activity was showing a positive position with several income streams projected to deliver in excess of budget including car parking and licensing. A few areas were, however, projecting lower than budget with income from Tewkesbury Leisure Centre and a vacant commercial unit within the Council Offices being lower than anticipated. In addition, One Legal income was below target, although that was offset against savings within employee costs. Treasury activities were expected to deliver savings in borrowing costs, despite the increasing rates, as the Council had been able to divest itself of some of its previous borrowing need. The overall projected position on retained business rates was currently exceeding budget expectations, generating additional income of £150,000 – this was due to awarding more reliefs than anticipated, resulting in S31 grants income which was greater than budget. Bringing together both the deficit on net service expenditure and surplus on net corporate expenditure resulted in an overall budget surplus projection of £138,000 for the year. Within that forecast, the budget had absorbed the significant impact of employee inflation and the inflation being felt in services buying goods and external services. Whilst the position could deteriorate over the winter, as it currently stood, the reserve support expected to be needed to meet the impact of inflation would not be required and could end up being released to support other priorities at year end.

- 59.5 In respect of the capital position, this was currently showing an underspend of £1.27million against the profiled budget of £2.63million. The capital programme estimated total expenditure for the year to be approximately £5.17 million with the main elements including: Ashchurch Bridge over Rail; the heat replacement system at the Council Offices; and Disabled Facilities Grants. As previously noted, there were currently unavoidable delays with the delivery of the Ashchurch Bridge project which accounted for the majority of the underspend on land and buildings. The solar canopy project had been completed in quarter two with a final cost of £599,000. An overspend was being reported for vehicle replacement as the new sweeper was delayed until the new financial year – no further vehicles were expected to be acquired this year. Disabled Facilities Grants were showing an overspend as more grants had been paid out but the overspend would be met by an increased grant being released by the County Council.
- 59.6 Referring to the reserves position, the Head of Finance and Asset Management explained that Appendix C provided a summary of the current usage of available reserves, and supporting notes were provided for reserves where expenditure was high. As at 1 April 2022, reserves stood at £18.13million which was an increase of £1.93million on the previous year. The increase reflected the 2021/22 budget surplus which included significant external funding for a range of projects. The information in the appendix only reflected expenditure incurred to date and did not take account of reserves which had been committed but not yet paid, or were awaiting capital financing at year-end, such expenditure included: the funding of the Garden Town operation during 2022/23, currently estimated at £544,000; the partial funding of land acquisition to support the Garden Town which would utilise the full balance in the Investment Reserve of £450,000; the partial funding of the solar canopy, from the Council's own resources, totalling £315,000; temporary staff support for Development Services; funding the forecast income deficit on the commercial property reserve; and additional Council Tax hardship support across the winter. Based on current forecasts, it was unlikely the £750,000 set aside in reserves to meet the impact of inflation in the current year would be required.
- 59.7 At the half year point of the financial year, treasury investment activities had resulted in an average return of 2.29% in its investment which, at the end of September, totalled £34.2million. This performance and level of return had

generated interest of £356,000 in the first half of the year against the budget estimate of £220,000 resulting in a surplus of £136,000. This was considered to be an excellent return given the relatively low interest rates and represented a return of 0.34% in excess of the benchmark rate; further returns were expected in the second half of the year and an overall surplus of £410,000 was currently projected on investment activity.

- 59.8 In response to a Member's query as to where Building Control expenditure sat, the Head of Finance and Asset Management explained that service was outsourced to Cheltenham Borough Council and the net position was incorporated into payments to third parties. The service was currently cost neutral. In terms of agency staff, depending on what they were employed to do, the expenditure would be shown against employees or reserves. In terms of Ubico, the budget was showing £300,000 excess on its own employee budget due to the pay award and inflation in a number of areas would see next year's budget increase significantly. Local government had dealt with a lot in the last few years but it had not had to deal with inflation at the same time and this was adding significant pressure to budgets meaning the Council had to consider what it could, and could not, afford.
- 59.9 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED: That the financial performance information for the second quarter 2022/23 be **NOTED**.

EX.60 DRAFT EMPTY PROPERTY STRATEGY 2023-2025

- 60.1 The report of the Environmental Health Manager, circulated at Pages No. 39-48, outlined the options for utilising long-term empty properties and presented a strategy for the Council to address the problem of long-term empty properties within the Borough. Members were asked to approve the draft Empty Property Strategy 2023/25.
- 60.2 The Environmental Health Manager explained that long-term empty properties could have a significant impact on the environmental quality of an area and could attract anti-social behaviour. Furthermore, long-term empty properties, if utilised, could represent a valuable resource to meet housing demand and achieve affordable housing objectives for the Borough. A number of options were available to assist local authorities in bringing long-term empty properties back into use. A long-term empty property was defined as a property that remained unoccupied for a period longer than six months – this did not include second homes unless the owner had declared it to the Council as being a long-term empty property. There were currently 237 long-term empty properties currently on the Council Tax database; of those, the majority (97) had been empty from six to 12 months; 70 from 12 to 24 months; 43 from two to five years; 20 from five to 10 years; and 7 over 10 years.
- 60.3 The strategy was based on three overlapping elements: phase 1 – planning, identification and prioritisation; phase 2 – engagement with property owners and community; and phase 3 – property solutions. The first phase would obtain accurate and reliable information on the long-term empty properties within the Borough - including information regarding property ownership, tenure, condition and length of time unoccupied – in accordance with best practice this would allow the Council to develop a risk-based register of empty properties which would enable each property to be risk-assessed, prioritised and subject to a property action plan – the empty property register would be maintained by the Environmental Health team; the aim of phase two was to engage with property owners and stakeholders to secure a viable solution for long-term empty properties; and the third phase was to ensure the Council made effective use of its

powers to deal with long-term empty properties in circumstances where the engagement approach outlined had not achieved a satisfactory outcome. Like most local authorities, the Council applied Council Tax premiums for long-term empty properties; 100% for properties empty for two years; 200% for those empty for five years; and 300% for properties empty for 10 years or more. The strategy was flexible and would be sensitive in terms of probate etc.

- 60.4 A Member noted there was a need to identify empty homes and she questioned how that could be addressed before new homes were built and whether they could help meet the affordable homes gap. In response, the Environmental Health Manager explained that this would be part of the prioritisation process and, when the register was complete, it would take into account the type and tenure of homes. In terms of Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs), this would be a last resort and each case would be judged on its own merits but the option would be fully explored if necessary. The target date for completion of phase 1 was mid-2024 with all properties visited and risk assessed by summer 2024. Another Member expressed concern that there were some types of property which would not meet the needs of the Council e.g. if it was Grade II Listed. In response, the Environmental Health Manager explained that Officers would look to get all properties back into use to try and ensure they had a sustainable future. In respect of the amount of additional work for the Environmental Health team, the Manager explained that the site visits would be a challenge, but the initial visits could be incorporated into other visits.

- 60.5 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED: That the draft Empty Property Strategy 2023-25 be
APPROVED.

EX.61 M5 J10 IMPROVEMENTS SCHEME

- 61.1 The report of the Head of Development Services, circulated at Pages No. 49-53, provided an update on the M5 J10 Improvement Scheme Development Consent Order process which was being promoted by Gloucestershire County Council. Members were asked to note the update and to delegate authority to the Head of Development Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Built Environment, to make the decisions needed to agree the Statement of Common Ground and to finalise and submit the Local Impact Report to the examining authority.
- 61.2 Members were advised that the County Council would be submitting a Development Consent Order to the Secretary of State for independent examination imminently. As part of the process, the respective local planning authorities would be asked to enter a Statement of Common Ground with Gloucestershire County Council. The purpose of the Statement of Common Ground was to set out areas of agreement and disagreement relating to a range of issues, including technical and procedural issues. The Statement would then be submitted to the examination panel appointed to consider the proposal. In addition, comments on the Local Impact Report and various other deliverables during the examination would be required. The Local Impact Report provided the opportunity for the relevant local authorities to provide details of the likely impact of the proposed development on the authority's area. Given the nature of the Development Consent Order process, and the continuing need to engage and update the Statement of Common Ground and Local Impact Report, the production of both would be an ongoing and iterative process so this was very much a procedural issue to ensure the Council could support the process.
- 61.3 Accordingly, it was

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the update on the M5 J10 Highway Improvements Development Consent Order process be **NOTED**.
 2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Development Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Lead Member for Built Environment, for the decisions needed to agree the Statement of Common Ground with Gloucestershire County Council and to finalise and submit the Local Impact Report to the Examining Authority.

EX.62 ANNUAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT (IFS) AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) RATE SUMMARY STATEMENT REQUIREMENTS

- 62.1 The report of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Manager for the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) Authorities, circulated at Pages No. 54-83, provided an update on the preparation of the Infrastructure Funding Statement for 2022 and this year's CIL Rates Summary Statement and sought approval for their publication on the Council's website.
- 62.2 Members were advised that the Infrastructure Funding Statement was a legal agreement and must be published by charging authorities by 31 December each year. The reported year was 2021/22 so the figures in the report were 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. The Infrastructure Funding Statement was required to contain three chapters: the CIL report - which answered a number of statutory questions in the CIL Regulations; the Section 106 report - which was required to give answers to set questions; and the Infrastructure List which was part of the Infrastructure Funding Statement. The list, adopted in the first year, had been drawn from the Infrastructure Delivery Plan of the JCS and this year had been revised again and had shrunk as some schemes were amalgamated and reviewed as set out in the preamble. Some schemes had been funded by other means and others had been identified as not necessarily needing CIL contributions as sufficient funding had already been secured elsewhere. The list was located at the end of the third chapter of the document. The CIL Manager for the JCS Authorities explained that this was a very heavily regulated process. In the third year of operation the Council had received much larger payments. The Regulations required the receipts to be split into three pots with up to 5% on administration of the charging authority function; 15-25% to the Parish Council depending on whether or not it had a 'made' Neighbourhood Development Plan (15% if no Plan and up to 25% if it did); and the remainder to deliver the Infrastructure List. The Regulations set out what it could be spent on and Tewkesbury Borough Council had a duty to monitor the spending as well as to pass money onto Parishes as it had enforcement powers if it felt it had been spent wrongly. If it was not spent it would come back to the Borough Council and go into the infrastructure pot.
- 62.3 A Member questioned whether any progress had been made with CIL being used to help improve the waste collection service. In response, the CIL Manager for the JCS Authorities explained that the Council was currently in the early stages of review of the CIL Charging Schedules and Officers were reviewing that in relation to the JCS and the three District Council Plans but, at the same time, working on the Joint Strategic Partnership (JSP) and the CIL Charging Schedule was also needed for that. The Councils had to show what was needed and how it would be used as well as that it was reasonable.
- 62.4 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED: That it be **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:**

1. That the publication of the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) relating to the financial year ending 31 March 2022 by 31 December 2022 be **APPROVED**.
2. That the annual Community Infrastructure Levy Rate Summary Statement be published alongside the Infrastructure Funding Statement by 31 December 2022.

EX.63 ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY (2022-2026)

The Chair left and the Vice-Chair took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

- 63.1 The report of the Asset Manager, circulated at Pages No. 84-102, presented the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy for approval which detailed how the Council would work in partnership with the County Council's Electric Vehicle Strategy, planning policy and would signpost organisations to support the growth of electric vehicles through direct delivery for destination and on-route charging and supporting the rollout of charging infrastructure and other linked objectives. Members were asked to approve the strategy.
- 63.2 The Asset Manager explained that the strategy had been developed over the last eight months looking at all the data available in partnership with the Energy Saving Trust and the Climate Change and Flood Risk Management Group. The Council had an overarching vision to encourage use but also to understand that it could not make the differences required alone. It would ensure that Tewkesbury Borough was a welcoming place for electric vehicles. Some of the key measurable outcomes from the strategy were installation of electric vehicle charge points in public car parks; an increase in publicly accessible charge points; the percentage of on-street residents that were within five minutes' walk of a charge point exceeding the national average; Tewkesbury Borough being viewed as a good destination for charging; and a shift away from petrol and diesel fuelled transport.
- 63.3 In terms of where people charged their vehicles, this was 60% at home; 30% in the workplace; and 10% at destination or enroute. The travel hierarchy was active travel – encourage wheeling and walking as the first preference for trips that needed to be made; public transport – where a longer trip was required public transport should be used; shared vehicles – if public transport was limited, the use of shared vehicles, preferably low carbon options, was encouraged; zero emission vehicles – for those trips that still needed to be made in private vehicles the shift should be towards electric vehicles. The strategy aimed to incentivise the use of electric vehicles by providing high quality facilities to support the adoption of electric vehicles with associated air quality and climate change benefits. In terms of local public charging points, Tewkesbury Borough's points were scattered across the area including Tesco stores in Brockworth and Churchdown, Twigworth local centre, Shell petrol stations at Hucclecote and Little Witcombe plus a small number of hotels and restaurants. The current provision in Tewkesbury Borough was 31 charge points per 100,000 population which was similar to Stroud, Cheltenham and Gloucester. Cotswold District currently had 81 charge points per 100,000 and was in the top 20% of UK local authorities. The area to the south of the Borough was better served; however, there was currently no provision of public chargers within large populated areas such as Bishop's Cleeve, Winchcombe and Northway, Twyning and other rural settlements. In terms of home charging on-street, Tewkesbury Borough was positioned worst in Gloucestershire with 96.7% currently outside of a five-minute walk to a public charger. Having said that, Gloucestershire County Council was looking to roll out dual charging points in four sites within

Tewkesbury Borough which would provide 16 charge points across all of those locations. There were BP Pulse charging points at the rear of the Council Offices building and Officers were working with the supplier to improve the availability of those points - the charging points must work and be available when needed as this was extremely important to tourists. The team was working on funding opportunities, particularly for on-street residential funding schemes for 2023/24, and it was hoped some funding would be secured. There were different operating models with some sites being more profitable but also more useful to users than others so this needed to be considered carefully and balanced across the whole portfolio.

- 63.4 Attention was drawn to Page No. 100 of the Agenda pack which set out the implementation plan and covered six objectives: objective 1 – Tewkesbury Borough Council would be installing charging points as per the strategic need of enroute and destination objectives – this would take place in two phases 1. Winchcombe and Tewkesbury public car parks and 2. other suitable sites as defined in the strategy; objective 2 – support Gloucester County Council’s on-street electric vehicle charging infrastructure roll out; objective 3 – promote electric vehicle usage within a transport hierarchy which reduced the need to travel and prioritised cleaner modes of transport such as walking and cycling; objective 4 – promoting the Council’s low carbon salary sacrifice purchase scheme; objective 5 – encourage full utilisation of existing publicly owned charge points; and objective 6 – continuous partnership working to explore latest technology in charge point provision incorporating smart charging, battery and renewables where financially viable.
- 63.5 During the discussion which ensued, a Member questioned how the strategy would be policed. In response, the Asset Manager explained that, from a car park point of view, there were regulations but, in general, this was something that Officers would be considering further. Some authorities made extra charges and gave fines for not parking in the correct bay etc. this was obviously more difficult in areas that were not car parks. Another Member questioned whether someone could reserve a spot and was advised that the Council was looking at seven 22kw units which took one to two hours to charge – Officers would look at usage and consider if more charging points were required. Accessibility of charging points also needed to be considered to ensure infrastructure could grow as needed. Referring to charging points already in place, a Member questioned whether the chargers could be used by everyone. In response, the Asset Manager explained that any electric vehicle could usually be charged at any point but some vehicles charged differently, e.g. Tesla, which was why they had their own charging points as well. Regarding the need for planning permission, the Head of Development Services indicated that she would confirm if it was necessary. A Member questioned whether people that used car park chargers had to pay for parking and charging. In response, the Asset Manager explained that this was what happened at the moment but may change going forward so any equipment would need to be future proofed to enable changes to be made as necessary.
- 63.6 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED: That the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2026 be **APPROVED**.

EX.64 RURAL ENGLAND PROSPERITY FUND

- 64.1 The report of the Community and Economic Development Manager, circulated at Pages No. 103-106, outlined the Rural England Prosperity Fund process and the relevant delegations needed to enable the Council to take both the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan and the Rural Prosperity Fund addendum forward. Members were asked to agree the submission of a Rural Prosperity Fund Investment Plan addendum for Tewkesbury Borough by 30 November 2022 and to make the necessary delegations to the Head of Development Services in consultation with the Head of Finance and Asset Management, Lead Member for Economic Development/Promotion and Lead Member for Community.
- 64.2 Members were advised that the government had announced the creation of the Rural England Prosperity Fund in follow up to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, both of which contributed to the Levelling Up Agenda, and the fund aimed to target funding to support rural businesses and rural community infrastructure. The Rural Prosperity Fund outlined an allocation of funding for Tewkesbury Borough of £400,000 over a two-year period and, to access those funds, the Council was required to develop an addendum to the previously submitted UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan. If the Council received funding, it would set up a capital grant scheme which rural businesses could apply to. The Community and Economic Development Manager undertook to provide all Members with a short Member Update on the Fund.
- 64.3 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED:

1. That the Rural Prosperity Fund Investment Plan addendum for Tewkesbury Borough be submitted by 30 November 2022.
2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Development Services, in consultation with the Head of Finance and Asset Management, the Lead Member for Economic Development/Promotion and the Lead Member for Community, to prepare and submit the Investment Plan addendum on behalf of the Council.
3. That authority be delegated to the Head of Development Services, in consultation with the Head of Finance and Asset Management, the Lead Member for Economic Development/Promotion and the Lead Member for Community, for the decisions needed to develop and implement the action plan arising from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural Prosperity Fund, or subsequent funds, or vary it in response to circumstances which may arise as a consequence of the need, including authority to enter into agreements, notices and other legal documents as necessary.

**EX.65 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME AND COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS
2023/24**

- 65.1 The report of the Revenues and Benefits Manager, circulated at Pages No. 107-111, indicated that the Local Government Finance Act 1992 required each billing authority in England to make a scheme specifying the reductions which were to apply to amounts of Council Tax payable by persons, or classes of person whom the authority considered were in financial need, as well as providing an update on the annual review of Council Tax discounts. Members were asked to agree that the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax discounts in place for 2022/23 remain unchanged for 2023/24.
- 65.2 Members were introduced to the new Revenues and Benefits Manager who had recently taken up her post. She explained that the Council had remained on the national default scheme since Council Tax Reduction was first introduced from 1 April 2013 and, following public consultation on three options for a revised scheme, it was agreed the Council would remain on the default scheme for working age claimants for 2020/21 with a minor revision of a tolerance for income changes. That decision had been made due to the impact of the rules regarding reassessment of Universal Credit and its impact on Council Tax reduction. At that time, it was agreed that alternative options would again be reviewed to ensure any future scheme provided the right level of support for residents as well as its impact on the Council's wider financial position. Due to the current, and likely ongoing, impact of the COVID-19 pandemic the advice of Officers was to remain on the default scheme for working age claimants for the 2023/24 financial year.
- 65.3 During the brief discussion which ensued, a Member questioned whether the 12-month discount for unoccupied homes which needed major repair work was realistic. She was concerned a period of 12-months would not be long enough to undertake major renovations. In response, the Revenues and Benefits Manager advised that, prior to 2019 it had not been possible to change this and it had always been 12-months. She was of the view that a year should be sufficient and, if the property was uninhabitable, the customer could apply to the Valuation Office to have it removed from the rating list so it was not billed at all.
- 65.4 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED:

That it be **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:**

1. That the default Council Tax Reduction Scheme be **ADOPTED** effective from 1 April 2023 with a minor revision to the national working age regulations to allow for a de minimus tolerance for income changes.
2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management, to agree the uprating of the working age regulations incorporated into the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme in line with those announced by the Department for Work and Pensions.
3. That the following Council Tax discounts be **ADOPTED** effective from 1 April 2023:
 - The discount for unoccupied and substantially unfurnished properties is 25% for the maximum period of six calendar months.
 - The discount for properties that are

unoccupied and require major structural repair work to render them habitable is 25% for the maximum period of 12 calendar months.

- The discount for unoccupied furnished properties (second homes) is zero.
- An empty homes premium of an additional 100% is levied on properties that have remain unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least two years, but less than five years.
- An empty homes premium of an additional 200% is levied on properties that have remain unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least five years, but less than ten years.
- An empty homes premium of an additional 300% is levied on properties that have remain unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least ten years.

EX.66 SEPARATE BUSINESS

66.1 The Chair proposed, and it was

RESOLVED That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely discussion of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

EX.67 SEPARATE MINUTES

67.1 The Separate Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5 October 2022, and the Special meeting held on 18 October 2022, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as correct records and signed by the Chair.

EX.68 MEADOW LANE LEASE

(Exempt – Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))

68.1 Members considered and agreed the lease of playing pitches and changing facilities at Meadow Lane, Longford for 25 years.

The meeting closed at 3:45 pm