

**SCHEDULE OF ITEMS RECOMMENDED FROM COMMITTEES AND OTHER MEMBER BODIES**

Committee: Council

Date: 23 February 2021

Author: Tracy Couper, Democratic Services Manager

[V131]

<b>Member Body</b>	<b>Report No.</b>
<p><b>1. FINANCE AND ASSETS COMMITTEE – 26 NOVEMBER 2020</b></p> <p>(a) <u>Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme &amp; Discretionary Business Rate Reliefs Policy Reviews 2021/22</u></p> <p>The Committee received a report which reviewed the Council’s Local Council Tax Reduction Support Scheme (LCTRS) and Discretionary Business Rate Reliefs Scheme.</p> <p>Members concurred with the proposal that the current schemes should be retained at present to give consistency in these challenging times. In that context, Members asked if work had been carried out to try to model the impact of an increase in the number of claimants due to Covid-19 on the Council’s finances. The Finance Manager confirmed that in his modelling for the 2021/22 Budget he had accounted for this and that the taxbase for the District actually had dropped as a consequence. The Finance Manager further agreed to provide information to Members of the Committee on the impact of the fluctuating earnings rule when making re-assessments due to change in circumstances.</p> <p>A Member requested that references in the report to customers be amended to refer to residents.</p> <p><b>It was resolved to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:</b></p> <p><b>(i) That the LCTRS 8.5% benefit scheme, i.e. the maximum benefit to working age claimants is 91.5%, be retained for 2021/22 financial year.</b></p>	<p><b>Report attached at Appendix A (as amended)</b></p>

<p>(ii) <b>That the Council’s policies with regard to Discretionary Business Rate Reliefs remain unchanged for 2021/22.</b></p> <p>(b) <u>Treasury Operations Mid-Year Review</u></p> <p>The Committee received a report which provided an update on the Council’s 2020/21 Treasury Management Strategy Statement.</p> <p>A Member commented that the report gave an interesting overview of the position in the wider world at present and that some of the assumptions made appeared over-optimistic and might need testing in the light of future developments.</p> <p>In response to a question by a Member, the Finance Manager explained the background to the treatment of the ECTC loan as Capital Expenditure rather than an investment.</p> <p><b>It was resolved to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:</b></p> <p><b>That the mid-year review of the Council’s Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21, as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be noted.</b></p>	<p><b>Report attached at Appendix B</b></p>
<p><b>2. FINANCE AND ASSETS COMMITTEE – 25 JANUARY 2021</b></p> <p><u>2021/22 Annual Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy (AIS)</u></p> <p>The Committee considered a report, previously circulated, containing the 2021/22 Treasury Management Strategy, the Annual Investment Strategy and the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement.</p> <p>Ian Smith, Finance Manager, introduced the report and summarised that the Council would continue to finance Capital Expenditure from internal borrowing and that with reserve levels, and therefore cash balances, relatively high it was forecast that no external borrowing would be needed in the near future. Despite historically low interest rates, every effort would be made to maximise interest receipts while maintaining the security of the capital.</p> <p>Members commended Ian Smith and his team on their work regarding Treasury Management.</p>	<p><b>Report attached at Appendix C</b></p>

A Member drew the Committee's attention to the list of approved countries for investment (Section 5.4, page 35 of Appendix 1), she highlighted the policy of having a sovereign rating of AA- or higher but questioned the poor Human Rights records of some of the countries on the list and asked Members if the Council should be investing in those countries. Some Members agreed that it was important to consider carefully where Council money would be invested and there was general agreement that such a decision could not be rushed as many elements needed to be considered. Officers were asked to prepare a report regarding the Human Rights indicators in order to enable Councillors to make a fully informed decision. In response to a Member's question, Ian Smith clarified that the Council does not currently invest in any of the countries listed, apart from the UK, but approval of this strategy would allow such investments in future.

A Member queried the AA- rating of the UK in the aforementioned list of countries. Ian Smith responded that the list had been supplied by their advisors and he committed to checking it before submission to Full Council.

It was proposed to recommend the report to Full Council subject to the inclusion of a report on the Human Rights status and implications of the listed countries. The proposal was seconded and after voting was carried unanimously.

**It was resolved to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:**

**That subject to a report to Council on the Human Rights status and implications of the countries listed in Section 5.4 "Approved Countries for Investments" on page 35 of Appendix 1 to the report, Council approve:**

- **The 2021/22 Treasury Management Strategy**
- **The Annual Investment Strategy**
- **The Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement**
- **The Prudential and Treasury Indicators**

***ADDENDUM: Further to the above recommendation, a Briefing Note is attached at Appendix C2 regarding the Human Rights status of the countries listed in Section 5.4 "Approved Countries for Investments" on page 35 of Appendix 1 to the report.***