

Decision Notice (27 January 2022)

Published 28 January 2022

This document lists the decisions taken by Cabinet at a meeting held on Thursday, 27 January 2022. The list covers key and non-key decisions. A decision may be implemented with immediate effect, unless it is eligible for call-in as identified below, whereupon a decision will not be implemented until five working days have elapsed.

Agenda Item No	Decision	Reasons for Decision	Any Options Rejected?	Declared Conflict of Interest	Eligible for call in?
A9	<p><u>Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 - 2024/25</u></p> <p>Key decision? Yes</p> <p>RESOLVED that it was recommended to Full Council that:</p> <p>A The Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2022/23 to 2024/25 (attached as appendix B to the report) is adopted.</p> <p>B The planned Council Tax (HDC element) 0 percent increase for 2022/23 as set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan be approved.</p> <p>C That the proposals regarding the Council's Reserves as set</p>	<p>A To enable Cabinet to consider the current factors influencing the three year Medium Term Financial Plan and agree the financial strategy for the period 2022/23 to 2024/25 in support of the overall financial plans of the Council over that period and the delivery of its priorities.</p> <p>B To set out a commitment to manage the Harlow element of the annual Council Tax level such that a balance is maintained between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The themes and objectives set out in 	None	None	No

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	<p>out in paragraphs 5(c) and 22 - 35 of the report are agreed resulting in the release of £1,355,000 from reserves in 2022/23 to provide £993,000 funding for the proposed efficiency dividend set out in the General fund budget report elsewhere on the Cabinet agenda and to create a new Estates Renewal Fund of £363,000.</p> <p>D That the New Homes Bonus for 2022/23 totalling £1.165 million, is applied to part fund the efficiency dividend (£830,000) and to also increase the Budget Resilience Reserve (£335,000) which in turn will be applied to support the proposals relating to 0 percent council tax increases (HDC element) in 2023/24 and 2024/25.</p> <p>E That subject to recommendations C and D being approved an efficiency</p>	<p>the Council's new Corporate Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The funding to support the delivery of those themes and objectives. • The ambition to become a low tax authority and to reduce the tax burden on local residents in relation to the local share of Council Tax. • The need to set out a sustainable budget plan within this Medium Term Financial Strategy. <p>C Harlow has comparatively high Council Tax when compared with other authorities in the region and new towns in Southern England as shown in the table below.</p>			

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	<p>dividend of £50 per eligible property be approved as a one off arrangement for the 2022/23 financial year.</p> <p>F That in respect of the Harlow Council element, the MTFS includes plans for a 0 percent council tax increases in 2023/24 and 2024/25.</p>	<table border="1" data-bbox="842 347 1296 807"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="842 347 1066 416">Authority</th> <th data-bbox="1066 347 1296 416">2021/22 Band D Council Tax</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 416 1066 456"></td> <td data-bbox="1066 416 1296 456">£</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 456 1066 525">East Hertfordshire</td> <td data-bbox="1066 456 1296 525">258.33</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 525 1066 564">Harlow</td> <td data-bbox="1066 525 1296 564">288.90</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 564 1066 604">Epping Forest</td> <td data-bbox="1066 564 1296 604">224.14</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 604 1066 644">Stevenage</td> <td data-bbox="1066 604 1296 644">220.57</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 644 1066 684">Basildon</td> <td data-bbox="1066 644 1296 684">286.75</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 684 1066 724">Chelmsford</td> <td data-bbox="1066 684 1296 724">243.88</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 724 1066 764">Dacorum</td> <td data-bbox="1066 724 1296 764">228.40</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 764 1066 804">Brentwood</td> <td data-bbox="1066 764 1296 804">211.79</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="842 804 1066 844">Broxbourne</td> <td data-bbox="1066 804 1296 844">143.24</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Note : the above is the total District Council element levied including the average parish and other local precepts where applicable.</p>	Authority	2021/22 Band D Council Tax		£	East Hertfordshire	258.33	Harlow	288.90	Epping Forest	224.14	Stevenage	220.57	Basildon	286.75	Chelmsford	243.88	Dacorum	228.40	Brentwood	211.79	Broxbourne	143.24			
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A10	<p><u>General Fund Budget 2022/23</u></p> <p>Key decision? Yes</p> <p>RESOLVED that Cabinet recommended to Full Council that:</p> <p>A The General Fund estimates for 2022/23, as set out in</p>	<p>A The Council must approve an annual budget and Council Tax charge for the forthcoming year under legislation.</p> <p>B To agree a budget proposal for the 2022/23 financial year which supports the</p>	None	None	No																						

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	<p>Appendix A to the report, are approved.</p> <p>B The proposed transfers between the General Fund and Earmarked Reserves, referred to within the report and set out in Appendix C to the report, are approved.</p> <p>C The proposed Fees and Charges, as set out in Appendix E to the report, are approved.</p> <p>D The Pay Policy Statement, as set out in Appendix G to the report, is approved.</p> <p>E The Council's Band D Council Tax for 2022/23 is set at £288.90 representing a reversal of the proposed 1.99 percent increase as set out in the 2021/2022 MTFS meaning that eligible households will pay £55.75 less than previously forecast in the 2021/22 MTFS.</p>	<p>delivery of the key themes and objectives set out within the new Corporate Strategy and especially the commitment to become a lower tax authority.</p>			

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	<p>F That the proposals set out in the report are approved allowing a £50 Efficiency Dividend be made to eligible households in 2022/23.</p>				
<p>A11</p>	<p><u>Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2021-2051</u></p> <p>Key decision? Yes</p> <p>RESOLVED that Cabinet recommended to Full Council that:</p> <p>A The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan, as set out in Appendix A to this report, is approved.</p> <p>B Authority is delegated to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to make minor amendments to the Plan, if necessary, following consultation.</p>	<p>The HRA Business Plan 2021-2051 is a formal update on the Council’s landlordservice over the next 30 years. Housing stock holding councils need to demonstrate that their business is sustainable over the long term.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>No</p>

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<p>A12</p>	<p><u>Housing Revenue Account Budget 2022/23</u></p> <p>Key decision? Yes</p> <p>RESOLVED that it was recommended to Full Council to:</p> <p>A Approve the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) estimates as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.</p> <p>B Approve a working balance of £4.563 million for the HRA (set out in paragraph 26 of the report).</p> <p>C Approve that tenant rents are increased by Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1 per cent (4.1 per cent) with effect from 4 April 2022. This equates to an average weekly rent of £97.49, an increase of £3.87 (set out in paragraph 3 of the report).</p> <p>D Approve that the rents and personal charges for temporary</p>	<p>The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reflects the statutory requirement under Section 74 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 to account separately for local authority housing services. It is a ring fenced account containing the costs of managing the Council's housing stock which is offset by tenants' rents, tenants' and leaseholders' service charges and other contributions. The Council has a statutory responsibility to set a balanced HRA budget and avoid any deficits.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>No</p>

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	<p>accommodation are increased with effect from 4 April 2022 as set out in paragraph 4 of the report.</p> <p>E Approve that garage rents within the 'retain and invest' category are increased by 5 per cent with effect from 1 April 2022. This equates to an average weekly rent of £11.76, an increase of £0.56. Also approve the proportionate increases for other garages, car ports and car spaces (set out in paragraph 5 of the report).</p> <p>F Approve that tenant service charges are increased to recover full cost with effect from 4 April 2022 (see paragraphs 6 to 8 of the report and Appendix 2 attached to the report).</p> <p>G Approve that other housing related support charges for sheltered accommodation are</p>				

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	<p>increased to recover full cost with effect from 4 April 2022 (see paragraphs 9 to 13 of the report and Appendix 2 attached to the report).</p> <p>H Approve the tenant heating charges with effect from 4 April 2022. These equate to an average weekly heating charge of £10.96, an increase of £1.23. For tenants in sheltered accommodation, this equates to an average weekly charge of £6.75, an increase £1.68 (see paragraphs 14 to 16 of the report and Appendix 2 attached to the report).</p> <p>I Approve that the leasehold service charges are increased with effect from 1 April 2022 to ensure that all leaseholder costs are recovered (see paragraphs 17 to 21 of the report and Appendix 2 attached to the report).</p> <p>J Approve that all other tenant</p>				

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	<p>charges are increased with effect from 4 April 2022 in order to recover cost (see Appendix 2 attached to the report).</p> <p>K Approve that Harlow's Rent Policy is reviewed during 2022/23 with a view to moving towards the National Social Housing Rents Standard (2019) for when properties become empty and for types of rent to be charged on newly acquired or newly built properties (see paragraphs 42 to 44 of the report).</p> <p>L Approve the options for tackling homelessness and prevention as outlined in paragraphs 45 to 48 of the report.</p>				
A13	<p><u>Capital and Treasury Report 2022</u></p> <p>Key decision? Yes</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Cabinet recommended to Full Council that:</p>	<p>A The Capital Strategy Report 2022/23 (attached as Appendix A to the report) covers the requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and</p>	None	None	No

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	<p>A The following Capital and Treasury Reports be approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The Capital Strategy Report (attached as Appendix A to the report). ii) The Investment Strategy Report 2022/23 (attached as Appendix D to the report). iii) The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2022/23 (attached as Appendix E to the report). <p>B The proposed revised Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2022/23 (attached as Appendix C to the report) be approved for implementation with effect from 1 April 2022.</p>	<p>Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code 2017, including the prudential indicators. The report should be approved by Full Council before the start of the new financial year.</p> <p>B The Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2022/23 (Appendix B) covers the requirements of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice 2017, including the treasury management indicators.</p> <p>C The Investment Strategy Report 2022/23 (Appendix C) covers the requirements of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) (formerly that Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government or MHCLG) Investment Guidance 2018, including the investment indicators.</p>			

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		<p>D The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2022/23 (Appendix D) covers the requirements DLUHC Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision.</p>			
<p>A14</p>	<p><u>Capital Programmes 2021/22 - 2023/24</u></p> <p>Key decision? Yes</p> <p>RESOLVED that Cabinet recommended to Full Council to:</p> <p>A Approve the 2022/23 Housing Capital Programme (HCP) totalling £30.169 million as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.</p> <p>B Approve of the inclusion in the Housing Capital Programme of an additional £25.939 million over 6 years for a Housing “Catch up Stock Need” as set out in Table 2 of the report.</p>	<p>Approval of the capital programme is a responsibility reserved for the Full Council and reflects its investment priorities and health and safety obligations. This is necessary because the approved programme gives authority for the procurement and resourcing of individual projects so that investment priorities can be delivered.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>No</p>

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	<p>C Approve the updated New Build programme as set out in Table 3 in the report, noting the removal of £155,000 expenditure incurred for both the Stackfield and Brenthall Towers schemes which are not proceeding.</p> <p>D Approve the 2022/23 Non Housing Capital Programme totalling £18.603 million (attached as Appendix 2 to the report), noting the additional £2.19 million investment in response to Business Cases received as detailed in Table 11 of the report.</p>				
<p>A15</p>	<p><u>Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2021/22: Mid-Year Review</u></p> <p>Key decision? No</p> <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <p>A The Mid-Year Review of the</p>	<p>Compliance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice requires that Council is presented with a mid-year report on the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS).</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>No</p>

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	Treasury Management Strategy, attached as Appendix A to the report, be noted and referred to Council for consideration.				
A16	<p><u>HGGT - Proposed Future Governance Arrangements</u></p> <p>Key decision? No</p> <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <p>A Cabinet agreed ‘in principle’ to explore the creation of a Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Joint Committee, consisting of representation by all five Partner Councils.</p> <p>B The details of the constitution, priorities and operating model of the proposed Joint Committee will return to Cabinet for further consideration.</p>	To progress work to the next detailed stages and to enable implementation of new formalised governance arrangements for the beginning of the new municipal year, a formal decision by all five Partner Councils on the principle of the new governance arrangements for the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town is required.	None	None	Yes

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<p>A17</p>	<p><u>Approval of London Road North LDO Amendments</u></p> <p>Key decision? Yes</p> <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <p>A Cabinet noted the responses received to the consultation on the draft updated LDO, and how they were taken into consideration in finalising the updated LDO.</p> <p>B Cabinet adopted the updated LDO (thereby revoking the existing LDO).</p> <p>C Subject to recommendation B, authority be delegated to the Director of Strategic Growth and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, to make minor or inconsequential amendments to the Order as may be required following adoption.</p>	<p>A To ensure that the consultation responses have been appropriately taken into account.</p> <p>B To follow the required procedure to adopt the LDO to ensure it becomes a material planning consideration, so that greater flexibility can be provided in the delivery of development at the Harlow Innovation Park site and to overcome some barriers to appropriate development which have become apparent through the practical implementation of the planning framework.</p> <p>C To ensure that any required amendments, which do not affect the function of the LDO, can be easily and swiftly made.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Yes</p>

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<p>A18</p>	<p><u>Award of Framework Agreement - On-line Law Library Services</u></p> <p>Key decision? No</p> <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <p>A A Framework Agreement is entered into with to Supplier A for the provision of on line legal library services and hard print encyclopaedias.</p> <p>B Officers provide processes to support ease of access to the framework and implement procedures to check and report on use and value.</p>	<p>A To secure continued support and access to timely and accurate legal library services.</p> <p>B To drive efficiencies and best value across 28 partner authorities in Essex, Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Suffolk.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>A19</p>	<p><u>Energy Procurement Framework Renewal</u></p> <p>Key decision? No</p> <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <p>A Cabinet agreed to renew the framework arrangement with Inspired Energy for the</p>	<p>The renewed framework agreement commits the Council to a long term energy supply contract, ensuring that the Council is able to achieve better value for money. In addition, the framework agreement provides added benefits that create operational efficiencies whilst</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Yes</p>

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	<p>procurement of gas and electricity via the Procurement for Housing framework from April 2023 to March 2026, with an option to extend to March 2028.</p> <p>B The Council entered into a long term supply agreement for gas and electricity from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026, subject to compliance with Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.</p>	<p>continuing to deliver robust energy supply procurement.</p>			
A22	<p><u>Matters of Urgent Business</u></p> <p>Key decision? Yes</p> <p>A Cabinet agreed that Harlow Council seeks to acquire the land at Parnall Road, as set out in the report, on an unconditional basis for a sum no higher than the maximum figure as detailed in the report.</p> <p>B Authority be delegated to the</p>	<p>A To enable the Parnall Road site to be purchased and be used as part of the wider Council House New Build Programme.</p> <p>B To facilitate the wider regeneration of the Staple Tye area.</p>	None	None	<p>No – This decision has been dealt with under urgency provisions as the decision must be implemented by 3pm on 28 January 2022. The right to call-in the</p>

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	<p>Director of Strategic Growth and Regeneration and Director of Finance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration to submit the bid and confirm and finalise the purchase of the Parnall Road site should the Council's tender bid be accepted by the Vendor.</p>				<p>decision was waived by the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee as required under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012</p>